

LAH & WOH 3931: Special Topics - Comparative Slavery

Spring 2022 | T 10:40-11:30am & R 10:40am-12:35pm | FLI 119

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Student Hours: W 10-11am (Zoom only—sign up to receive link at <https://calendly.com/bretones/office-hours>) & R 2-4pm (in person)

Please note, this syllabus is subject to change at any point in the semester. If changes are made, the instructor will notify students in advance, in class and via the course Canvas page.

Course Description

Comparative Slavery is an upper-level, reading-intensive and discussion-oriented course that challenges the notion that slavery was a “peculiar institution” exclusively present in the US South. The course examines the history of slavery as it developed in different regions and social contexts other than the antebellum USA, focusing mostly on Latin America and the Caribbean. As well, we will consider the legacies of Roman slavery in Early Modern Iberian and Latin American iterations of the institution. How did these ancient roots shape slavery in Iberian colonies in the Americas? What similarities and differences existed between slavery in those colonies, and the system implemented in British or French colonies in the Americas? How did these differences impact the life of enslaved individuals? Our readings will guide us in these and other related questions. Students are required to participate actively. Each student will summarize and present the week’s readings twice in the semester (in pairs or trios, depending in final enrollment numbers), and all are required to engage in class discussion as well as in a series of in-class assignments designed to assist you in achieving the course objectives.

Goals

By the end of the semester, students in this course will:

- Understand, and be able to explain, the different systems of slavery that have existed in the West
- Develop an effective strategy for note-taking (for lectures and readings)
- Process and deliver information in both written and oral format
- Improve critical thinking skills (primary source analysis)

Required Texts

-Blackburn, Robin. *The Making of New World Slavery*. New York: Verso, 1997 –referred in the weekly schedule as Blackburn, MNWS [E-book available @ UF George A. Smathers Libraries]
 -Seijas, Tatiana. *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico: From Chinos to Indians*. Cambridge University Press, 2015. [E-book available @ UF George A. Smathers Libraries]

Additional required readings (book chapters and scholarly articles) will be available on Canvas.

Course Format

Following the University's mandate, this course will meet face to face in the classroom at the scheduled times and place. However, if conditions such as a quarantine or illness require you to attend remotely, please let me know in advance. With proper notification, you may attend remotely. Contact me as soon as possible and no later than 8am the day before a class meeting, and I will send you the Zoom link for that day's session. Please stay in contact regarding your status, as this class will default to face to face instruction. I understand that you may attend class remotely for an extended period of time, but there are no permanent HyFlex sections of this course.

Assignments

Participation	10%
Leading Class	10% (x2 = 20%)
Annotated readings	10% (x3 = 30%) [choose 3 from items marked * in schedule]
Primary Source Analysis	10% (x2 = 20%)
Writing Assignment	20%

Grading Scale

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

A	94 – 100% of possible points		C	74 – 76%
A-	90 – 93%		C-	70 – 73%
B+	87 – 89%		D+	67 – 69%
B	84 – 86%		D	64 – 66%
B-	80 – 83%		D-	60 – 63%
C+	77 – 79%		E	<60

GRADING CRITERIA

A Work that goes beyond instructor's expectations: is careful, thoughtful, original, and thorough. Truly outstanding work – even for a “good” student.

A- Very good work with most of the attributes of “A” work but either deficient in some technical aspect, in thoroughness and care or not as strikingly incisive, original, or creative as “A” work. Excellent.

B+ Better than good, competent work, even for the typical student at this university. Some aspects are very strong, but not uniformly excellent.

B Good competent work, which meets all standards/requirements the instructor could specify in advance. Reasonably thorough. Alternatively, work with some excellent aspects that are balanced by serious deficiencies.

B- Almost up to specifiable standards. Often characterized by vagueness and signs of lack of effort or insufficient engagement with the material. Sometimes the result of correctable misunderstanding. Sometimes the result of truncate writing that could improve with more attention/work. Talk to instructor.

C+ Below the specifiable standards for good work. Sometimes the result of poor writing that compromises quality of the work/clarity of ideas. Talk to instructor.

C Work showing serious misunderstanding or lack of effort or engagement. Talk to instructor

C- or below: Talk to instructor immediately.

Extensions

Students in this course can ask for a one-week extension, no questions asked, for any *one* assignment, without incurring in any grade deduction. In order to benefit from this opportunity, the student must contact the instructor via email up to 24 hours prior to the assignment deadline*. Each student can take advantage of this policy *once* in the semester. Students who anticipate obstacles in meeting subsequent deadlines should contact the instructor before the deadline to inquire about possibly turning in more late work. In these cases, acceptance of late work will occur at the discretion of the instructor.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory, and your preparedness and engagement are crucial for the success of the course. However, given the ongoing COVIDpp-19 pandemic, students who contract the virus must obey Florida Health policies regarding isolation. In those cases, students will not be penalized for absences. See the provisions above for how you may attend class remotely if you test positive for coronavirus but feel well enough to follow class. Additionally, to accommodate other unexpected life events, each student gets four unexcused absences during the semester, no questions asked. Poor attendance (extended absence without communicating with the instructor) is grounds for failing the course.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with [University of Florida Attendance Policies](#).

Weekly schedule	TUESDAYS, 10:40 - 11:30 AM	THURSDAYS, 10:40 AM - 12:35 PM		
Week 1 – Jan 6 Introductions	[no class today, semester starts 1/5]	Readings: 1) The syllabus		
Week 2 – Jan 11, 13 Definitions and periodization	Readings: 1) Blackburn, MNWS, “Introduction: Slavery & Modernity” pp.1-30			
Week 3 – Jan 18, 20 Legacies from the distant past	Readings: 1) Blackburn, MNWS, Chapter I “The Old World Background to New World Slavery,”* pp. 31-93			
Week 4 – Jan 25, 27 Slavery in Iberian	Readings: 1) Aurelia Martín Casares, “Free and Freed Black Africans in Granada in the Time of the Spanish Renaissance” In <i>Black Africans in Renaissance Europe</i> , ed. T. F. Earle and K. J. P. Lowe (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 247–60 (Canvas)* 2) William Phillips, <i>Slavery in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia</i> (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), Chapter 4 “To Live as a Slave,” pp. 79-102 (Canvas)*			
Week 5- Feb 1, 3 Slavery in Africa	Readings: 1) Igor Kopytoff and Suzanne Miers (Eds.) <i>Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives</i> , selected excerpt from Chapter 1 “African Slavery as an Institution of Marginality,” pp.1-49 (Canvas) 2) Paul Lovejoy, <i>Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa</i> (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), Chapter 2 “On the Frontiers of Islam, 1400-1600,” pp.24-44. (Canvas)*			
Week 6 – Feb 8, 10 The early Atlantic	Readings: 1) Blackburn, MNWS, Chapter II “The First Phase: Portugal and Africa” pp.95-125 2) Emily Berquist Soule, “From Africa to the Ocean Sea: Atlantic Slavery in the Origins of the Spanish Empire,” <i>Atlantic Studies</i> 15:1 (2017): 16-39 (Canvas)*			
Week 7 – Feb 15, 17 Slavery & colonialism: Iberian Americas	Readings: 1) Blackburn, MNWS, Chapter III “Slavery and Spanish America” and IV “The Rise of Brazilian Sugar” pp.127-184			
Week 8 – Feb 22, 24 Slavery & colonialism: The British West Indies	Readings: 1) Blackburn, MNWS, Chapter VI “The Making of English Colonial Slavery” pp.217-176			
Week 9 – Mar 1, 3 Slavery & colonialism: The French Caribbean	Readings: 1) Blackburn, MNWS, Chapter VII “The Construction of the French Colonial System”			
Week 10	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK

Week 11 – Mar 15, 17 Beyond African slavery	Readings: 1) Tatiana Seijas, <i>Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico: From Chinos to Indians</i>
Week 12 – Mar 22, 24	Readings: 1) Michelle McKinley, “Fractional Freedoms: Legal Activism & Ecclesiastical Courts in Colonial Lima, 1593-1700.” <i>Law and History Review</i> , 28:3 (2010): 749-90.*
Week 13 – Mar 29, 31	Readings: 1) Schwartz, Stuart B. “The Manumission of Slaves in Colonial Brazil: Bahia, 1684-1745.” <i>The Hispanic American Historical Review</i> 54, no. 4 (1974): 603–35.*
Week 14 – Apr 5, 7	Draft writing assignment due – in-class peer-review
Week 15 – Apr 12, 14	Readings: 1) Dale Tomich, <i>Through the Prism of Slavery</i> (selected chapter tba)*
Week 16 – Apr 19	Wrap-up discussion. Revised writing assignment due.

Class Policy Regarding Electronic Devices

Given the nature of this class and the fact that most of our readings are available in digital format, the use of electronic devices is allowed for the exclusive purposes of note-taking and text-referencing. Improper use of the device will result in penalized participation grade.

In light of a recent Florida legislation, UF has implemented the following policy regarding in-class recording (read closely):

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium,

to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Classroom Etiquette

Respectful and courteous behavior is expected from each and every one of us in this class. Argument is an important part of intellectual discussion, so I expect and encourage lively debates that will give us opportunities to work through problems, ask questions, and evaluate answers and interpretations together in a respectful way. When discussing ideas/concepts/interpretations, we may disagree, but we may never insult/dismiss/diminish others and their ideas just because they may be different from our own. Uncourteous behavior will not be tolerated and may result in removal from a class period, or worse.

Everyone is expected to arrive to class on time. If you arrive late, please be as unobtrusive as possible. If you must leave early for a medical appointment or other university-sanctioned business, please notify me in advance and also try not to be too disruptive as you exit. Given the ongoing pandemic, please keep your masks on and refrain from drinking/eating in class. On days when we meet for two class periods (Thurs.), I will offer a short break halfway through the class.

Communicating with the Instructor

Student Hours

The best way to reach me is during Student Hours (also known as “Office Hours”). This is my preferred method of communication. Student Hours (or Office Hours) are specific times when my office is open to you, students, to discuss any issues pertaining to the class, such as content questions, clarifications, requests for extensions, etc. You are also welcome to attend office hours to discuss other topics such as request for recommendation letters, questions about going to graduate school, your general interests in Latin American and Caribbean history, or if you want to know more about my current and future research projects. Students are highly encouraged to visit Professors during office hours. I hold regular Student Hours according to the schedule noted on the top of this document (also available on the course Canvas site).

Electronic Communication

If you are unable to attend Student Hours and you have pressing concerns/questions that cannot wait for an alternative meeting time, my second most preferred method of communication is via email. You may send your queries to f.bretones@ufl.edu. When emailing, please use your own @ufl.edu account (refrain from using your personal email account, as those get filtered to my spam box). I generally check and respond to emails once daily during the workweek, between 8am-6pm. Please allow up to 24 hours for a response. There are moments in the semester when my response time may increase to up to 48 hours. I do not respond to work emails during the weekend. Pro-tip: Professors love to hear from students, but keep in mind that emailing your professors or T.A.s is not the same as emailing (or texting) your friends. For some useful tips on how to email Professors,

see “[How to Email Your Professor \(Without Being Annoying AF\)](#)”. It is the student’s responsibility to check and respond to professional emails in a timely fashion.

Canvas Messages

I use Canvas messages to send general course-related messages that are addressed to the entire class (including reminders about upcoming deadlines, clarifications, notices, etc), or, if I deem relevant, to individual students. But for you to reach me, email is strongly preferred. I generally do not read or respond to individual Canvas messages from students (it gets very cluttered and it is impossible for me to keep track of unread/unanswered messages in the system). It is the students’ responsibility to check messages on both Canvas and their UF email regularly for important information relating to the course, and to respond in a timely fashion when necessary.

Communicating About Grades

Students who wish to discuss their grades should wait 24 hours after receiving their grade to contact the instructor. I am happy to offer further clarification on assignments, but please note that grades are only re-evaluated in case of mathematical error. for alternative times to be available.

Accommodations

Students requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>). Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter, which *must* be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You can deliver a hard copy in class, bring one to me during office hours, or send me an email with the letter attached. In any case, please act on this as soon as possible in the semester so I can plan accordingly.

Academic Integrity

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/scer/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Plagiarism is not tolerated. Unintentional plagiarism results in an “E” for the assignment. Intentional plagiarism results in an “E” for the course, or worse.

Campus Resources

UF is a big school, but there are many resources available to help students navigate campus life. Here is a sample of some useful resources:

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/> or call 392-1575

Hitchcock Field And Fork Food Pantry: For anyone experiencing food insecurity, with no requirement to verify income or need. <https://pantry.fieldandfork.ufl.edu/>

The Molm Family Gator Career Closet: An on-campus, lending closet for students to borrow professional clothing and accessories free of charge. Valid with UF ID <https://career.ufl.edu/closet/>

Police Department: 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies) <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learningsupport@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.

<https://career.ufl.edu/>

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

Student Complaints On-Campus: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honorcode-student-conduct-code/>

On-Line Students Complaints: <http://distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process/>

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. [Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner.](#) Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. [Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here.](#)