

LAH 3931 – Special Topics: History of Asylum Seeking

Spring 2025

Class Meetings: T 10:40 – 11: 30 & R 10:40-12:35 in FLI 111

Instructor: Dr. Fernanda Bretones Lane, PhD

Office Location: Grinter Hall 333 **Email:** f.bretones@ufl.edu

Office Hours: T 2:30-4:30PM & W 9:00-10:00 AM

Course Description

This special topics course explores the history of asylum seeking as it relates to slavery in Latin America & the Atlantic world. The course excavates the deep roots of asylum traditions going back to Antiquity and the Middle Ages to explore how traditions of asylum evolved over time, and to consider the threads that informed the creation of a sui generis slave asylum legislation in Latin America. The course also considers the legacies of this policy in creating a jurisprudence on asylum that contributed to the establishment of free soil legislation and territorial asylum in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We will read a number of scholarly articles by historians and legal scholars, as well as primary sources. Because a significant portion of the material is of a legal nature, this course counts toward credit requirements for the Legal History Certificate / Specialization (more information at: <https://history.ufl.edu/undergraduate-studies/legal-history-certificate/>). This class is designed as an upper-level, reading-intensive and discussion-forward course. Students should adjust their expectations accordingly.

Objectives

- 1) Understand and be able to explain how asylum has changed over time
- 2) Interpret primary and secondary sources
- 3) Improve reading and writing abilities
- 4) Develop note-taking skills and design your own note-taking system

Course Materials:

Course materials will be provided in Canvas, distributed in class, or they will be readily accessible on-line.

Grade Breakdown

Participation	15%
Leading Class	10%
Tests (2)	50% (25% each)
Short essay	10%
Primary Source Analysis	10%
Self-Assessment	5%

Grade Scale

A	100 %	to 94.0%	C	< 77.0 %	to 74.0%
A-	< 94.0 %	to 90.0%	C-	< 74.0 %	to 70.0%
B+	< 90.0 %	to 87.0%	D+	< 70.0 %	to 67.0%
B	< 87.0 %	to 84.0%	D	< 67.0 %	to 64.0%
B-	< 84.0 %	to 80.0%	D-	< 64.0 %	to 61.0%
C+	< 80.0 %	to 77.0%	F	< 61.0 %	to 0.0%

Grading in this class is consistent with UF policies available at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Schedule (subject to change)

Week 1 – Jan. 14 & 16 : Syllabus; Liz Ibarrola, “The Case for Sanctuary” *The Gainesville Iguana* Vol. 33, Issue 5/6 (May/June, 2019)

Week 2 - Jan. 21 & 23: Selected chapter from *The Oxford Handbook of Refugee & Forced Migration Studies*

Week 3 – Jan. 28 & 30 : Linda Rabben, *Sanctuary & Asylum*, Chapter 3 “A Thousand Years of Medieval Sanctuary”

Week 4 – Feb. 4 & 6 Karl Shoemaker, *Sanctuary and Crime in the Middle Ages, 400-1500*, Chapter 2 “Roman Aristocratic Traditions, Imperial Penal Law, and Sanctuary”

Week 5 - Feb. 11 & 13: Norman Maclaren Trenholme, “Sanctuary and Abjuration in Medieval Law” in *The right of sanctuary in England; a study in institutional history*, 32-46 (UF Libraries – Hathi Trust)

Week 6 – Feb. 18 & 20 Victor Uribe-Urán, “‘Iglesia me Llamo:’ Church Asylum and the Law in Spain and Colonial Spanish America,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49, No.2 (2007): 446 –472

Week 7 – Feb. 25 & 27: Michelle McKinley “Standing on Shaky Ground: Criminal Jurisdiction and Ecclesiastical Immunity in Seventeenth-Century Lima, 1600–1700,” *U.C. Irvine Law Review* 4:141 (2014)

Week 8 - Mar. 4 & 6 Jane Landers, “Spanish Sanctuary: Fugitives in Florida, 1687-1790” *The Florida Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 62, No. 3 (Jan., 1984), pp. 296-313

Week 9 - Mar. 11 & 13 Sue Peabody & Keila Grinberg (2011) "Free Soil: The Generation and Circulation of an Atlantic Legal Principle," *Slavery & Abolition*, 32:3, 331-339, AND Sue Peabody, "An Alternative Genealogy of the Origins of French Free Soil: Medieval Toulouse," *Slavery & Abolition*, 32:3 pp.341-362

WEEK 10 – Mar. 18 & 20 SPRING BREAK

Week 11 – Mar. 25 & 27 Cristina Nogueira Da Silva & Keila Grinberg (2011) "Soil Free from Slaves: Slave Law in Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Portugal," *Slavery & Abolition*, 32:3, 431-446, DOI: 10.1080/0144039X.2011.588480

Week 12 - Apr. 1 & 3 Aurelia Martín Casares & Margarita García Barranco (2011) "Legislation on Free Soil in Nineteenth-Century Spain: The Case of the Slave Rufino and Its Consequences (1858–1879)," *Slavery & Abolition*, 32:3, 461-476

Week 13 Apr. 8 & 10: Ada Ferrer, "Haiti, Free Soil, and Antislavery in the Revolutionary Atlantic," *The American Historical Review*, Volume 117, Issue 1, (February 2012): 40–66

Week 14 – Apr. 15 & 17 Keila Grinberg "Illegal Enslavement, International Relations, and International Law on the Southern Border of Brazil," *Law and History Review* February 2017, Vol. 35, No. 1

Week 15 Apr. 22 – LAST CLASS

ATTENDANCE POLICY

- **You are expected to attend and actively participate in each and every class meeting, having completed all readings and assignments following the course schedule.**
 - I do not penalize students who miss class due to sickness, personal/family emergencies, or other unexpected life events that prevent you from being in class.
 - For the occasional absence occurring out of the above-mentioned circumstances, I do not require notification or documentation. However,
- Students who miss a class are encouraged to consult classmates for any missed content (it is OK to share lecture notes for missed classes) and to visit the Professor during office hours for lingering questions or clarifications.
- Poor attendance (excessive absences without communicating with the Professor and/or presenting valid, documented justification) is grounds for failing the course.
 - I am invested in your success! Please communicate with me clearly and in a timely manner whenever obstacles arise, so that we can work together to allow you to successfully complete the course.
- Students who miss 40% or more class meetings without justification will automatically fail the course.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in the course are consistent with university policies. [See UF Academic Regulations and Policies for more information regarding the University Attendance Policies](#)

ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. *See the “Get Started With the DRC” webpage on the Disability Resource Center site.* It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATION (AKA GATOR EVALS)

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. 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 <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

UNIVERSITY’S HONESTY POLICY REGARDING CHEATING, PLAGIARISM, ETC.

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 Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. See the UF Conduct Code website for more information. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

You are required to submit your own original work. Work that raises questions about authenticity, including papers generated by AI (ChatGPT and the like), is subject to further scrutiny to verify authorship (including, but not limited to: oral examination by the Professor to assert originality of the ideas; presentations of sources; re-writing the assignment by hand, in the Professor’s office).

COMMUNICATING WITH THE INSTRUCTOR

1) Office Hours

- I hold regular Office Hours (check schedule) and you are all welcome to drop by during office hours! This is the best way to reach me outside of class.
 - **What are office hours for?** This is a time when my door is open to students (on a first-come first-serve basis) to discuss issues pertaining to the class (content questions, clarifications, attendance issues, research assistance, etc), or other topics such as request for recommendation letters, inquiries about Honors Thesis advising, questions about going to graduate school, your general interests in Latin American history, etc. or if you want to know more about my current and future research projects and course offerings.
 - Please note, conflicts in schedule involving University-related business, academic obligations, health issues, or medical appointments may occasionally result in cancellation of Office Hours in a particular week. You will be notified if that happens.
 - If you are unable to attend office hours and you have questions/concerns that have not been addressed in class and cannot be answered by consulting the syllabus, send me an email to request an appointment (limited availability).

2) Communicating via email

- If you are unable to attend Office Hours and you have pressing concerns/questions that cannot wait for an alternative meeting time, send me an email at f.bretones@ufl.edu. Provide enough information for me to assist you.
- 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.
 - Please email from your @ufl.edu account—I do not respond to student messages from non-UF accounts.
 - I generally check and respond to emails once daily during the workweek, between 8am-5pm. Please allow up to 24 hours for a response.
 - Professors love to hear from students, but keep in mind that emailing your professors 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 \(Without Being Annoying AF\)](#)".

3) Canvas Messages

- I do not read or respond to individual messages sent via Canvas. Please use one of the two methods noted above to communicate with me. You may receive messages and announcements in Canvas from me when the content is relevant to the whole group.

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:

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

Multicultural and Diversity Affairs (<https://multicultural.ufl.edu/>) (352-294-7850) celebrates and empowers diverse communities and advocates for an inclusive campus.

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.

Disability Resource Center (DRCaccessUF@ufsa.ufl.edu | 352-392-8565) helps to provide an accessible learning environment for all by providing support services and facilitating accommodations, which may vary from course to course. Once registered with DRC, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodations. Students should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

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/>