

EARLY WESTERN COLONIALISMS

**HIS 362G
Unique: 39515**

Course Syllabus

General Information:

- (1) **Course title:** Early Western Colonialisms
- (2) **Semester:** Spring 2012
- (3) **Professor:** L. J. Andrew Villalon (Dr. V; Mr. V)
- (4) **Course number(s):** HIS
- (5) **Course section:** Section taught by Professor Villalon
- (6) **Days/Time of Class Meeting:** M-W-F/2-3 p.m.
- (7) **Classroom:**
- (8) **Campus Office:** GAR 4.120
- (9) **History Departmental Office:** First floor of Garrison Hall (GAR) (First door on the right when coming in the building's main entrance)
- (10) **Office Phone:** (512) 475-8004
- (11) **Departmental Phone:** (512) 471-3261
- (12) **Office Hours:** M: 2-3 pm, 5:10-5:45 pm; W: 2-3 pm, 5:10-5:45 pm; F: by appointment only.
- (13) **Email Address:** avillalon@austin.rr.com
- (14) **Name of professor's website on which all UT course materials appear:** WIRE PALADIN
URL: <http://www.webspaces.webring.com/people/ca/avillalon/>
- (15) **Webpage URL for this course:** <http://www.webspaces.webring.com/people/ca/avillalon/c-MedHist-index.html>

(If you do not have the URL to my website readily available or bookmarked, you can still find it easily by typing into Google "Andrew Villalon Wire Paladin". The website should come up as the first

entry on the resulting list of possible sites. You can then click through to it.)

(If you arrive for a meeting at the professor's office after 5 pm, the controlled access to the 4th floor requires phoning the professor's office either before or upon arrival in order to have the locked door opened.)

Course Description:

This course (which meets three times a week) will examine the role of colonialism in the history of the West. The course will compare and contrast a number of different colonial systems (what the course title refers to as ColonialismS) that have existed starting in the ancient period and up until the early nineteenth century. After briefly considering ancient precedents for colonization (Phoenicians, Greeks, and Romans) and several precedents from the Middle Ages (Vikings and Crusaders), the course will concentrate on the first great wave of overseas expansion that planted Europeans and their colonies around the globe. Many historians regard the year 1415 as the symbolic beginning of the modern colonial movement. In that year that the first colonial power, Portugal, attacked and overran the North African city of Ceuta, an attack that led directly to Portuguese expansion overseas. Arguably, this first phase of European colonization ended with the first great decolonization brought about by the revolutions of North and South America between 1775 and the early 1820s.

Satisfies the Requirements for the following University of Texas Programs:

European Studies Program

Center for the Core Curriculum

This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.

Course Topics:

- Early colonizing efforts undertaken by western peoples: in the ancient world, Phoenicians, Greeks, and Romans; in the Middle Ages, Vikings and Crusaders
- China's failed colonial experiment (c. 1400)
- Motives and means of European expansion: how did social, political, military, and technological factors existing at the end of the Middle Ages combine to promote European

expansion rather than that of some other region?

- The science and technology underlying expansion (ship building, navigation, gunpowder weaponry)
- The clash of civilizations (the West vrs. Islam and the Indian Empires of America) and the treatment of colonized peoples
- Colonial empires established by the “big five” European colonizers—Portugal, Spain, England, France, and Holland: Similarities and Differences
- Two Imperial Prototypes: Trading Empires vrs. Settlement Empires
- Influences of colonialism on both the mother country and the colonies
- “The Columbian Exchange”: People, animals, plants, products, and microbes
- The critical role of disease in European successes and failures
- Internal frictions: Treatment of the colonists and of indigenous population
- External frictions: Colonial rivalries, monopolies, and warfare
- The decolonization movements and why they occurred: Revolutions in North and South America

Course Goals:

- (1) To provide students with an understanding of the phenomenon we call colonialism and how it affected the history of the west from the ancient period to the early nineteenth century.
- (2) To provide some understanding of the various types of evidence available to scholars when they undertake to study and reconstruct the colonial past.
- (3) (Hopefully) To inspire in the student a continuing interest in studying this fascinating subject.

Course Webpages:

The webpages for Early Western ColonialismS are posted on the teaching section of Dr. Villalon's website, **Wire Paladin** (see above for the URL). Like the rest of my teaching materials, it can be reached by accessing the website's main index, then clicking on the chess knight beside **University of Texas Courses taught by Dr. Villalon**.

The webpages contain almost all of what the student will need in order to take this course: the course syllabus, lecture notes, study guides, most of the course readings, schedules and announcements, etc. (The only important exception is the one outside book that has been assigned in the course.)

Throughout the term, these webpages may undergo occasional updating. You are responsible for periodically consulting it to see if anything new has been posted. If you are reading this syllabus, you are already aware that it is also posted on the webpage. Your first assignment is to **READ THIS**

SYLLABUS CAREFULLY.

Course Work:

Throughout the semester, in-class lectures will alternate with selected videos. There will also be assigned readings to be done outside of class.

Notes on the lectures as well as questions concerning the readings and videos will be made available to students through the course webpages. (Students will only have to think about these questions; they will not be required to submit written answers.)

Students will have to purchase only one book--Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange*--of which there are numerous inexpensive, second-hand copies available from Amazon.com, Alibris, Abe Books, etc. All other reading will be made available through the web. There will be one article by a leading historian, Arnold Toynbee, posted on the website and a number of short, primary sources on different aspects of colonization. In most (if not all) cases, these readings will also be posted on the class website. If they are not there, links to them will be provided.

Many of the best documentaries made in the last few years for broadcast on PBS, A&E, and the History Channel have dealt with the Age of European Expansion and related topics. In the course of the semester, a number of these videos will be shown to complement the professor's lectures. It is important that students attend these classes since notes on the contents of the video will not be provided.

Supplemental Instruction:

In the spring semester of 2012, the course will be part of the Supplemental Instruction Program. As a result, the Teaching Assistant will also serve as a Supplemental Instructor and as such, will hold weekly sessions to help students with the readings and with the writing of their papers. (These sessions will be on a voluntary basis; students do not have to attend. On the other hand, if students who choose to attend will be afforded an opportunity to discuss the readings and given help preparing to write the paper.)

This course will provide the student with a solid understanding of how Europeans came to dominate much of the rest of the world during the last few centuries. It will also provide a solid grounding for students who decide to pursue the study of expansion and colonization in other courses taught at the University of Texas.

Reading List:

a. Class Notes

There is no textbook assigned in this course. Instead, most basic course material will be conveyed through a series of highly-developed lecture notes posted on the website.

When studying these notes in preparation for each exam, the student should make careful use of the

study guide. Each study guide has been carefully synchronized with the actual exam.

b. Book assigned to the class:

Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange* (Any edition)

In addition, it is recommended, but not required that the student read another book that has become a classic in the field: Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (New York: WW Norton and Company, 1999). This work explores the fundamental question: why the West and not some other region of the globe?

c. Readings posted on the website.

Contacting the Professor:

There are three very reliable ways to contact this professor:

(1) Speak with the professor either before or after class. If the subject requires a lengthier conversation, an appointment can be made to meet during office hours or communicate by means of email.

(2) Come to the professor's office during office hours (see above).

No appointment is needed; I am almost always available in my office (or very nearby) during office hours. If you do not at first find me, try in the main departmental office or at the photocopying machines on the third floor.

If, for whatever reason, I have to miss office hours (something that does not happen often), I shall try to leave a note on the door. If that occurs, let me apologize in advance.

(3) Contact the professor through email.

I check and respond to my email regularly and will try to reply to your message as soon as I get it.

Other means of getting in contact are much less certain. I have purposely omitted my home telephone number from this syllabus for the simple reason that I will not wish to receive student phone calls at home. Email serves the same purpose, more reliably and less obtrusively.

Criteria for Grading:

The lecture notes will be the principal basis of two in-class examinations as well as a final. These exams will also include some questions from the readings and videos.

For each examination, a study guide will be provided to help students prepare.

All three exams will be roughly comparable in length and will count equally. The final exam (the last of the three exams) will cover only the last part of the course. It will not be comprehensive.

In addition to the three exams, students will be required to write a short research paper (8-10 pages)

on some aspect of colonization from any of the periods that the course covers.

The examinations are entirely short answer (matching, fill-in-the-blank from a list supplied on the exam; true or false). Students who are simply willing to sit down and learn the material should not find them particularly difficult. It is the short paper (7-8 pages) that will provide an opportunity for creativity.

The average of the three examinations will count for approximately 2/3 of the grade; the paper for 1/3.

NOTE WELL: *Except in extraordinarily rare cases, all work must be completed and handed in to receive a grade other than X or F.*

Do not assume that by simply taking exams and doing well on them, you will have done enough to pass the course and will therefore not have to do a paper. This is simply not the case.!

Grading Scale:

Grades in this class are computed using + and -; in other words, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, F. (No D- will be awarded.)

Concerning the Finality of Grades:

In most cases, final grades are indeed final. The obvious exception: if I have made a mistake in computing your grade. If you believe this to be the case, you should contact me or the TA immediately.

Instructions for Students Who Fail to Receive a Grade:

While this is usually the result of a failure to complete some part of the course work, it may also be an error on the professor's part. Under any circumstances, the student should contact the professor and/or the TA as soon as possible and arrange a meeting in order to determine what, if anything, can be done about the problem. In most cases, something can be done.

Retaining Copies of Work:

It is a good practice in any course to keep copies of everything that you have handed in. It is also a good practice to retain any work that is handed back **until you have received your (correct) final grade in the course**. Mistakes happen, especially in a large class. Items get lost and errors are made in recording grades. In such instances, the student cannot merely claim to have done the work. He/she must be able to produce it.

Attendance:

STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND ON A REGULAR BASIS.

Attendance is computed on the basis of how many times the student has signed the attendance sheet which circulates in each class.

Consequently, students who wish to have their attendance correctly recorded have two responsibilities.

- (1) They must sign the attendance sheet for the class.
- (2) If the professor forgets to circulate an attendance sheet (as sometimes happens), students should raise their hand and remind him. (Such an interruption will always be most welcome.)

Attendance in any course is important, but it is particularly important when that course is based heavily upon both in-class lectures and when there are videos that are shown only once. Although I provide detailed lecture notes based on what is discussed in each class, there are no notes supplied concerning the videos.

No habitual failure to attend is acceptable, regardless of the reason. While this may seem old-fashioned, I am a firm believer that part of a student's responsibility is to attend class. Gross failure to attend will almost certainly be taken into consideration in the final grade; and the professor reserves the right to deny a student a grade if the attendance is poor enough.

Furthermore, students should never skip a class simply because they feel unprepared. After all, you might miss something interesting or useful! Besides, there are no unannounced quizzes and I never seek to embarrass unprepared students.

Classroom Deportment:

Although I do not appreciate students who sleep, read, draw pictures or do work for other courses during class time, I very rarely reprimand them *in class* for their sins. Such offenses against the "academic order" may lead to a private discussion between us; and, if severe enough, may be taken into consideration when I award a final grade for the course. (Remember, as a historian, I have a very long memory!!)

Talking in class is a very different matter: a chronic talker may be asked to leave the class or, in severe cases, to bring a withdrawal slip for me to sign.

Furthermore, please do not start packing up your things to leave until the class actually ends. ***This class never gets out early.*** (To the chagrin of some students, it has even been known upon occasion to get out late, though I honestly try to minimize such intrusions into the student's time.)

Cheating or Plagiarism:

Everybody knows what cheating is, so there is no need for a definition.

On the other hand, some of you may not be familiar with the word plagiarism. It refers to any attempt to pass off as your own work something done by somebody else. Even when only part of a paper is copied from the work of another person, this is still plagiarism. While it is perfectly acceptable to quote from another person's work, such passages must be carefully footnoted.

Both the university and I regard cheating and plagiarism as extremely serious; as a result, I would recommend that you avoid them like the plague throughout your college career and, for that matter, afterwards. Although I shall treat both cheating and plagiarism on a case-by-case basis, the offender should not expect leniency. A substantial lowering of the final grade or even expulsion from the

course are the normal penalties for such offenses.

Cheating takes various forms: any student caught signing the attendance sheet for another student will be penalized a full letter grade (from an A to a B, a B to a C, etc.) So will the student whose name he/she signed, unless the latter can demonstrate to my satisfaction that he/she had no involvement. If this flagrant piece of dishonesty reoccurs several times, the student(s) involved will be asked to leave the course.

Withdrawal from the Course:

If you receive an F on several of the early tests, you should seriously consider dropping the course IMMEDIATELY and concentrating your efforts in another course which you have a better chance of passing!

As far as I am concerned, a student wishing to withdraw from the course for whatever reason will be allowed to do so without penalty, even if he/she is failing the course at the time of the withdrawal. It has always been my belief that losing time and tuition is enough of a penalty to pay for doing poorly in a course.

However, I would strongly recommend to all students that once they have decided to withdraw, they should do so as soon as possible. It is always best to get this unpleasant task out of the way.

First of all, it is better to drop a "loser" and concentrate one's energies where they will they will do the most good, i.e. in courses where one is doing well.

Secondly, in putting off the inevitable, some students wait too long and pass withdrawal dates mandated by the university, after which withdrawing may become far more complicated, if not impossible. While I am always willing to approve a withdrawal, after a certain point in time, the university may not accept it.

Requirements and Student Complaints:

Within any academic discipline, a teacher tries to design a course which will present a body of knowledge, while developing critical thinking and skills in research and writing. He or she then evaluates carefully each student's performance in order to arrive at a grade, which will count toward college credit. Factors which the teacher may take into consideration when defining student performance include such things as exams (either in-class or take-home), other written work (papers, book reviews, journals), and various forms of classroom participation (discussion, oral presentations, answering questions). Each teacher will determine which of these factors to employ in arriving at a grade, as well as their relative weight. The student should also be aware that classroom deportment may be taken into consideration; in other words, anyone who habitually acts in a manner which tends to disrupt the learning process may well find that fact reflected in his or her grade.

In the end, it is the student who earns the grade by demonstrating the required knowledge and performing the required work within reasonable deadlines set by the teacher. Failure on the part of a student to accomplish this may result in a failing grade and the withholding of academic credit for the course. Again, let me emphasize: grades are earned, not given or negotiated!!

On the other hand, for students who believe that they have been unfairly evaluated, the University of Texas has established a grievance procedure. Grade appeals must be made in accordance with that

procedure, which mandates as its first step an attempt by the student and professor to resolve the grievance without any outside interference. At this point in the procedure, intervention by third parties such as parents, boyfriends, attorneys, department heads, administrators or other faculty members is inappropriate. If, after consultation with the faculty member, the student wishes to pursue the grievance, he or she should contact the department head. [For further information concerning the grievance procedure, see the university handbook which should be available at every college office.]

Brief Academic Biography of the Professor:

L. J. Andrew Villalon did his undergraduate work at Yale University where he earned honors in history and was elected a member of Phi Beta Kappa. He received his PhD. from that institution in 1984. After many years teaching at the University of Cincinnati, where he is now a professor emeritus, Villalon is currently a senior lecturer at the University of Texas at Austin. A specialist in late medieval and early modern European history, he has delivered numerous conference papers on such topics as Pedro "the Cruel", Don Carlos "the unhappy prince of Spain," Spanish involvement in the Hundred Years War and the battle of Najera, Sir Hugh Calveley, the political ideas of Niccolo Machiavelli, English military pardons in the Hundred Years War, and academic editing. His articles have appeared in collections and various academic journals including *The Catholic Historical Review*, *Sixteenth Century Journal*, *Mediterranean Studies*, and the *Proceedings of the Ohio Academy of History*. Currently, he is working on two book length studies, one on the canonization of San Diego, the other on the life of Sir Hugh Calveley, an English knight and mercenary soldier in the Hundred Years War. Villalon has co-edited with Donald J. Kagay five collections of medieval essays—*The Final Argument: The Imprint of Violence on Society in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (The Boydell Press, 1998); *The Circle of War in the Middle Ages: Essays on Medieval Military and Naval History* (The Boydell Press, 1999); *Crusaders, Condottieri, and Cannon : Medieval Warfare in Societies around the Mediterranean* (Brill, 2002); *The Hundred Years War: A Wider Focus* (Brill, 2005); and *The Hundred Years War: New Vistas* (Brill, 2008). At present, the pair are finishing up a third volume of their Hundred Years War collection and are collaborating on a joint monograph concerning the battle of Najera (1367). In addition to research in his major field, Villalon has published on automotive history and the history of World War I. He has held several grants for study in Spain, including a Fulbright; received two awards from the American Association of University Professors for defending academic freedom; and in 2001, was presented the Professional-Scholarly Activity Award for the University College at the University of Cincinnati. Villalon was the vice president of the Texas Medieval Association (TEMA) in 2007-2008 and president of that organization in 2008-2009. While serving as president, he organized TEMA's annual conference which was held that year in Austin. He is an associate editor of the *Encyclopedia of Medieval Warfare and Military Technology* put out by Oxford in 2009. (A [complete c.v.](#) is available on the website.)

