

**University of West Georgia
Department of History**

**HIST 6686: Topics in European History:
French America**

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Course Description:

This course explores a crucial yet understudied aspect of American history: the French experience in North America and the Caribbean. Over the course of the 17th and 18th centuries, the French developed particular models of cultural interaction between Europeans and Native Americans that continue to shape the peoples of North America today. In addition, by the end of the 1700s, the French controlled the most profitable colony on the planet. In short, the French experience mattered. For students more familiar with Colonial American history, this class offers a comparative perspective with which to place the history of the future United States in its contemporary context. This class also provides a means of exploring Atlantic history—the story of the interactions of the peoples from the continents that border the Atlantic Ocean, Europe, Africa, and the Americas. Students will explore these crucial implications and interactions through examination of pivotal historiographic debates.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who complete successfully all assignments will demonstrate:

- an increased understanding of historiography and historiographical debates.
- familiarity with the development of French America as a disciplinary field, its major approaches, as well major criticisms.
- improved skills at oral and written analysis and communication.

Required Readings and Texts:

- *Read the entire work, unless where indicated:*

- *Articles and Book Chapters*

Bernard Bailyn, “The Idea of Atlantic History,” *Itinerario*, vol. XX, no. 1 (1996): 19-44.
http://www.estudiosatlanticos.com/documentos_mundo_atlantico_files/The_Idea_Atlantic_History.pdf

Alison Games, “Atlantic History: Definitions, Challenges, and Opportunities,” *The American Historical Review*, vol. 111, no. 3 (June 2006): 741-757.

[available on JSTOR through Ingram Library’s online databases]

Peter A. Coclanis, "Atlantic World or Atlantic/World," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, vol. 63, no. 4 (October 2006): 725-742.
<http://richardscenter.psu.edu/publications/richards-center-newsletters/Coclanis-Atlantic%20World%20or-Atlantic%20Slash%20World.pdf>

Laurent Dubois, "The French Atlantic," in Jack P. Greene and Philip Morgan, eds., *Atlantic History: A Critical Reappraisal* (Oxford University Press, 2008), 137-162.
[PDF to be made available via e-mail]

• *Books*

W. J. Eccles, *The French In North America, 1500-1783*, Revised Edition (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2010); ISBN 978-1554551668.

James Pritchard, *In Search of Empire: The French in the Americas, 1670-1730* (Cambridge University Press, 2007); ISBN 978-0521711111.

Peter N. Moogk, *La Nouvelle France: The Making of French Canada – A Cultural History* (Michigan State Press, 2000); ISBN 978-0870135286.

Allan Greer, *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits* (Oxford University Press, 2006); ISBN 978-0195309348.

Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge University Press, 1991); ISBN 978-0521424608.

Robert Englebort and Guillaume Teasdale, *French and Indians in the Heart of North America, 1630-1815* (Michigan State University Press, 2013); ISBN 978-1611860740.

Philip P. Boucher, *France and the American Tropics to 1700: Tropics of Discontent* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007); ISBN 978-0801887260.

Robert Harms, *The Diligent: Worlds of the Slave Trade* (Basic Books, 2002); ISBN 978-0465028726.

John D. Garrigus, *Before Haiti: Race and Citizenship in French Saint-Domingue* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); ISBN 978-0230108370.

Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Belknap Press, 2005); ISBN 978-0674018266.

Daniel H. Usner, Jr., *Indians, Settlers, & Slaves in a Frontier Exchange Economy: The Lower Mississippi Valley Before 1783* (University of North Carolina Press, 1992); ISBN 978-0807843581.

Shannon Lee Dawdy, *Building the Devil's Empire: French Colonial New Orleans* (University of Chicago Press, 2009); ISBN 978-0226138428.

Lawrence N. Powell, *The Accidental City: Improvising New Orleans* (Harvard University Press, 2012); ISBN 978-0674059870.

Grading and Policies:

Your final grade will be factored as follows:

3 Critical Essays (each 7 to 10pp)	60% (or 20% each)
Participation	40%

Detailed information regarding the assignments will be provided during the semester.

In brief, the three critical essays will ask you to respond to the assigned reading in the form of a 7 to 10 page paper. In terms of general parameters for written assignments: all assignments must be typed, double-spaced, in 12-pt Times New Roman font, with regular margins (1.25 left and right, 1.0 top and bottom). You must write the full page-length of the assignment—that means, any space devoted to your name, the date, the class, etc. at the top of the first page does not count towards fulfilling the page length.

Debating ideas and defending arguments professionally is a central skill at the graduate level and, therefore, participation is a central component in this class, comprising forty percent of your final grade. For each discussion meeting, I expect you to have read the assigned works closely and to be ready to debate the strengths and weaknesses of their broad arguments and approaches within the larger historiographic context. Failure to be engaged actively in the class and focused on the required material will negatively affect your grade. In addition, if you plan on taking a laptop to class, please remember it is to be used to take notes only. Discovery of any violations of this policy will result in a general ban of electronic devices.

It should go without saying that in a graduate class, I expect professionalism at all times. That includes: attendance at all class sessions; being prepared and engaged in class at all times; participating actively in all seminar discussions; and, avoiding all instances of plagiarism—the use of someone else’s words or ideas without proper citation. For any instance of plagiarism discovered, the same policy applies: failure for the course and the reporting of the incident to relevant authorities, including the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair. Turning in the same paper in multiple classes does count as plagiarism. Furthermore, you are to treat your colleagues, undergraduate and graduate, and me with the utmost respect at all times. If such issues arise, they will be reported to relevant authorities and further actions may be taken. I cannot imagine problems occurring, but policies need to be stated, regardless.

It should also go without saying that at the M.A. level, you should be using direct citations to support your arguments and following correct Chicago-style formatting. Consult either the Chicago Manual of Style or Kate Turabian’s Guide for Writers. For a brief description, see the page at UGA’s library: www.libs.uga.edu/ref/turabian2009.pdf.

Finally, I reserve the right to modify this syllabus during the semester if circumstances warrant. You will be informed at all times of any changes. If changes are substantial, I will issue a revised syllabus.

Course Outline

I. Intro to the Issues and Approaches – What is Atlantic History?

08/24: Bailyn, “The Idea of Atlantic History.”

Alison Games, “Atlantic History: Definitions, Challenges, and Opportunities.”

Peter A. Coclanis, “Atlantic World or Atlantic/World.”

Laurent Dubois, “The French Atlantic.”

II. Surveys of French America

08/31: Eccles, *The French In North America, 1500-1783*.

09/07: **Labor Day – No Class**

09/14: Pritchard, *In Search of Empire: The French in the Americas, 1670-1730*.

III. New France and the Interior of North America

09/21: Moogk, *La Nouvelle France: The Making of French Canada – A Cultural History*.

Week of 09/21: Critical Essay 1 DUE (by Thursday 5PM in hardcopy at my office)

09/28: Greer, *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits*.

10/05: White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*.

10/12: Englebert and Teasdale, *French and Indians in the Heart of North America, 1630-1815*.

IV. The Caribbean

10/19: Boucher, *France and the American Tropics to 1700: Tropics of Discontent*.

Week of 10/19: Critical Essay 2 DUE (by Thursday 5PM in hardcopy at my office)

10/26: Harms, *The Diligent: Worlds of the Slave Trade*.

11/02: Garrigus, *Before Haiti: Race and Citizenship in French Saint-Domingue*.

11/09: Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution*.

V. Louisiana

11/16: Usner, Jr., *Indians, Settlers, & Slaves in a Frontier Exchange Economy: The Lower Mississippi Valley Before 1783*.

11/23: **Thanksgiving Break – No Class**

11/30: Dawdy, *Building the Devil's Empire: French Colonial New Orleans*.

12/07: Powell, *The Accidental City: Improvising New Orleans*.

Week of 12/07: Critical Essay 3 DUE (by Thursday 5PM in hardcopy at my office)