

Christopher Columbus and the Great Age of Discovery

HIST 351: Fall 2010

Instructor: Ronald Fritze

Credit: 3 hours.

Office hours: Unless I am in class or a meeting, I will be working in my office Monday through Friday from 8:00-4:30.

Office: Founders Hall 221

Telephone: 233-6524; email: ron.fritze@athens.edu (Feel free to contact me either by phone or email. Email will probably get you a prompter response).

For Website at Planet Clio, go to:

http://www.corndancer.com/fritze/discovery3/disc3_home.html

This site has the syllabus posted along with instructions for assignments.

Textbooks:

Alfred Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*

Edward Dreyer, *Zheng He: China and the Oceans in the Early Ming Dynasty*

Ronald Fritze, *New Worlds*

Mathew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*

Geoffrey Symcox, *Christopher Columbus and the Enterprise of the Indies: A Brief History with Documents*

Course Description: This class will survey the era of European expansion from 1400-1600 with a focus on the career of Christopher Columbus. It will also study the ancient and medieval background of the early modern expansion of Europe and the biological, cultural, social and economic impact of the discovery of the Americas and the sea-road to Asia.

Course Objectives:

1. Students will gain a working knowledge of the main events of the Age of Discovery and their chronological order.
2. Students will become familiar with the individuals who played an important role in the Age of Discovery.
3. Students will become acquainted the secondary literature and the reference materials dealing with the Age of Discovery and write a critical book review. .
4. Students will sample and evaluate primary sources from the Age of Discovery.
5. Students will conceive, research, and write a research project dealing with some topic related to the Age of Discovery.
6. Students will use their knowledge to evaluate and to critique films and documentaries related to the Age of Discovery.

Class Attendance: Coming to classes is an integral part of the learning experience. Students need to try to make every class meeting. If they cannot make it to class they need to inform the instructor ahead of time, if possible. They definitely need to explain their absence, after the fact, if they did not explain it beforehand. Four absences, both excused and unexcused will result in the student being dropped from the class.

Academic Misconduct: For definitions and procedures regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism, see your Student Handbook.

Examinations and Quizzes: (midterm= 20%; take-home final=10%, and quizzes= 40%)
The tests in this class will consist of eight five reading quizzes on the Dreyer, Symcox, Fritze, Crosby, and Restall books. The midterm exam on 3 Nov. will be over the lectures and the readings. The reading quizzes will be objective and/or short answer questions. The midterm will be essay and possibly some objective questions. The take-home exam will be due on 1 Dec. and if possible should be type-written and not shorter than 6 pages and not longer than 8 pages. Late penalty will be a whole grade each day the paper or take home final is not turned in by 4:30pm of the due date.

Grading: This class will consist of 500 total points.

100 (20%) major project

100 (20%) midterm

50 (10%) take-home final on Columbus film festival

50 (10%) book review of Columbus biography

25 (5%) Symcox assignment and quiz

175 (35%) quizzes (7 or each quiz equals approximately 5%)

500 (100%) total

450 and above= A

400-449= B

350-399= C

300-349= D

Class Participation: Students are expected to come to class and be prepared to discuss the various topics at the appropriate times.

Research Project: See separate handout or document on website.

Schedule:

Aug. 25 Introduction of course readings and assignments. *Rediscovering America* or *First Americans* video.
Lecture: Legendary and Pseudo-Discoverers of the New World.

- Sept. 1 Lecture: Legendary and Pseudo-Discoverers of the New World.
Video comparison: *Vikings in America* and *In Search of: Vikings*.
Discussion of documentaries
Quiz One on *New Worlds*, chs. 1 and 2.
- 8 *Shape of the World*: video and discussion.
Geographical Knowledge of Antiquity and Medieval Europe.
Quiz Two *New Worlds*, chs. 3 and 4.
- 15 *Vinland Map*: Video and discussion.
Geographical Knowledge of Antiquity and Medieval Europe.
Pick topic for major research project and turn in title.
Quiz on Symcox
- 22 Lecture on Spain, Portugal and the Mediterranean world in the Middle Ages
Turn in reviews of Columbus biography.
Discussion groups on Columbus and his biographers.
- 29 Lecture on Spain, Portugal, and the Mediterranean World in the Middle Ages.
Hand in bibliographies for research projects.
1421 video and discussion
Quiz Three *Zheng He*
- Oct. 6 Early Portuguese explorations
Quiz Four *New Worlds*, chs. 5 and 6.
- 13 Early English and French Explorations of the Americas.
Progress reports on research projects.
Quiz Five on Crosby, chs. 1-3.
- 20 Intellectual and Cultural Consequences of the Discovery of America.
Quiz Six Crosby, chs. 4-6.
- 27 *Aguirre: The Wrath of God* video
Finish up lectures and Quiz Seven on *Seven Myths of the Conquest*
- Nov. 3 **MAJOR EXAM**
- 10 *Christopher Columbus* (Frederic March version, 1941) and *Christopher Columbus: The Discovery*
- 17 *1492*
Research papers and projects due.

- Dec 1 Take home final due; Project presentations.
- 8 Finals Day: Project presentations.

Last day to drop or withdraw: 23 Nov.