

# ARH 6918: Colonial Arts of New Spain

University of Florida, Spring 2025 (3 credit hours)

Meetings: M | Periods 3-4 (9:35 AM - 11:30 AM)/ Period 4 (10:40 AM - 11:30 AM)

[FAC 201](#)

Final exam: 5/2/2025 @ 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

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## **Course Description**

This course examines the art and architecture of the Spanish Viceroyalty of New Spain, (which is sometimes reductively described as colonial Mexico). It covers roughly three hundred years of artistic production, picking up around 1492 and running until the Latin American independence movements of the early 1800's. The course will examine a diverse collection of art and architecture from the region, introducing multiple academic perspectives on the material culture of the Viceroyalty. In addition to studying seminal artworks from the region, we will examine important methodological and theoretical approaches to understanding the relationship between art, society, and colonial politics during this period.

The course is structured around three basic units. The first examines the early-colonial period and the role of art in and in the aftermath of the Spanish conquest and the foundation of the Viceroyalty. The second unit picks up with the baroque culture of New Spain, which flourished in the 1600s and the 1700s. The last of the three sections, which is the shortest, focuses on the through lines that connect Spanish imperialism with contemporary society. In this section students will carry out individual research into a single issue that connects our current lives to the period and its art, presenting their research to the class.

## **Assigned Reading**

There are no required texts for the course. Instead, we will use numerous book chapters and articles available on our Canvas page.

## **Requirements and Grading:**

### **Requirements:**

All students must:

- (1) attend class (see attendance policy below)
- (2) complete assigned readings *before* the classes for which they are assigned
- (3) participate in class discussions and activities
- (4) complete homework assignments, including reading analysis and popular media project
- (5) complete graduate-only research assignment
- (6) attend and complete the in-class midterm and final examinations.

### **Grade Break Down:**

20% Attendance and Participation

10% Assignments

30% Grad-Only Canon Assignment  
20% Midterm Synthesis Assignment  
20% Final Synthesis Assignment

**Attendance and Participation:** Attendance is extremely important for this class, as many of our learning outcomes can only be achieved by attending class and participating fully in the lecture and discussion. We will circulate a sign-in sheet each day in class. You will be allowed **TWO** un-penalized absences, which assumes that you will need a day here or there because you are sick, etc. For each subsequent absence you will lose 2 points from the “Attendance and Participation” portion of your final grade. (Note that in certain cases- eg. serious illness- absences can be excused with proper documentation; Also, note that excessive absences are grounds for receiving a failing grade for the class, and failure to sign in [if you are late, for example] will be counted as an absence.)

NOTE: Grads will need to schedule and attend an additional 1 hr meeting with the instructor on a roughly bi-weekly basis in addition to the regular class meeting. Attendance and participation in this meeting is vital.

### **Assignments**

#### **Discussions and In-Class Assignments**

Throughout the semester there will be intermittent assignments to complete. They will be announced in class or on canvas.

#### **Reading Analysis Assignments (RAA)**

Four times throughout the semester we will dig extra deep into a reading. I have selected a few rich readings specifically for this purpose. I have also developed a short canvas assignment that will help you learn to read critically and engage with diverse approaches to artworks and visual culture. These assignments will help you to develop the skills required to engage with scholarly material, read critically, and identify strong organization and argumentation. The RAA's will be discussed in-depth during class so they must be completed *before* the start of class on the day indicated and uploaded to canvas. Because we will talk about the readings in class (and answer all the questions), no late assignments will be accepted.

#### **Due Dates for Reading Analysis Assignments**

Monday Feb 3, Burkhart  
Wednesday February 19, Dean and Leibsohn  
Monday March 24, Alcalá  
Wednesday April 2, Mundy and Hyman

#### **Object Study:**

Graduate students will complete a collective project wherein they need to select 20 artworks that they feel accurately reflects the “canon” and state of the field. The precise contours of this project (exact goals, deadlines etc.) will be determined collectively during our first graduate only meeting.

### **Midterm (25%)/ Final Exam:**

Graduate students will complete take-home synthesis assignments instead of in-class exams for this course. More information about the precise nature of the assignment will be forthcoming.

### **Grading Scale**

Grades are tabulated on a 100-point scale and a letter grade is assigned as follows:

-----	94–100 A	90–93 A-
87–89 B+	84–86 B	80–83 B-
77–79 C+	74–76 C	70–73 C-
67–69 D+	64–66 D	60–63 D-
59 and below F		

If you have questions about how grade points are assigned by the University, go to:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

### **Reminders and Requirements**

**UF Requirements and Policy:** Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

**Statement Regarding the Honor Pledge:** 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. Click here to read the Conduct Code. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

**Accommodations:** I, along with the rest of the University community, am working to create inclusive learning environments. Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center.](#) It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with instructors and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester. So, please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation as soon as possible and we can work to find a solution.

**Respect and Community:** The intent is that we explore the content of this course in a way that is respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, ability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. The intent is also to present content that explores diverse points of view, which might be challenging. Maintaining a respectful environment will be our responsibility. The intent is that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated.

**Changes to the Syllabus:** While this document provides guidelines for the class, I do reserve the right to change the syllabus at any time during the semester if the need arises. Each class is different, and sometimes it takes some tweaking to get the right readings, topics, and assignments. Being flexible with the syllabus allows us to get it right.

**In-Class Recording:** 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 guest 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.

### **Notes on Technology and Communication**

- **Communication and Respect:** We all must strive to be good communicators to make this class successful. This means listening respectfully to others in class (faculty and students) and engaging in respectful conversation. It also, perhaps just as importantly, means maintaining professional standards while communicating via email and outside of class. With that in mind, please use formal, respectful, and professional standards when corresponding via email. This means beginning emails with a formal greeting, employing proper grammar, and avoiding unprofessional colloquialisms.
- **Canvas:** Please make sure that you are familiar with our course site on Canvas so that you will have access to announcements, assignments and readings, and pptx presentations you will need for your work.
- **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. 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/>.

### **Campus Resources: Health and Wellness**

- *U Matter, We Care*: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- *Counseling and Wellness Center*: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- *Student Health Care Center*: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).
- *University Police Department*: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center*: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).
- *GatorWell Health Promotion Services*: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

### **Campus Resources: Academic Resources**

- *E-learning technical support*: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or
- via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).
- *Career Connections Center*: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- *Library Support*: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- *Teaching Center*: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- *Writing Studio*: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### Week 1: Course Intro and Background on New Spain

M Jan 13: Overview of course and syllabus and course content

- Anne D'Allewa, "Fundamentals of Art History"

W Jan 15: Mesoamerica and the Mexica Empire

- Lauren Kilroy-Ewbank, "Introduction to the Aztecs (Mexico)," in *Smarthistory*, 19 March 2018, <https://smarthistory.org/introduction-mexica/>.

### Week 2: The Spanish Conquest

M Jan 20: No class- MLK

W Jan 22: Conquest and the Creation of la Ciudad de México

### Week 3: Representing (and Inventing) the Other

M Jan 27: Spanish representations of the Indigenous

- Elizabeth Boone, "Seeking Indianness: Christoph Weiditz, the Aztecs, and Feathered Amerindians," *CLAR*

W Jan 29: Nahua representations of the Spanish and Africans

- Kevin Terraciano, "Reading between the Lines of Book 12," in *The Florentine Codex*

### Week 4: Spanish Evangelization and the Mendicant Friars

M Feb 3: Monasteries and Mission Art

- Maya Jiménez, "Mission churches as theaters of conversion in New Spain," in *Smarthistory*, 9 Oct 2018, <https://smarthistory.org/missions-new-spain/>.
- Lauren Kilroy-Ewbank, "Engravings in Diego de Valadés's Rhetorica Christiana," in *Smarthistory*, 5 Nov 2019, <https://smarthistory.org/engravings-in-diego-de-valadess-rhetorica-christiana/>.
- Louise Burkhart, "The Missionary Missionized," in *Slippery Earth* (Tucson: U of A Press)

W Feb 5: Murals and Missions

- Jeanette Favrot Peterson, "Synthesis and Survival: The Native Presence in Sixteenth Century Murals of Spain," 14- 35, from *Native Artists and Patrons*.

### Week 5: Mendicants and Manuscripts

M Feb 10: Florentine Codex

- Selection, *The Florentine Codex: An Encyclopedia of the Nahua World in Sixteenth-Century Mexico*, Edited by Jeanette Favrot Peterson and Kevin Terraciano (Austin: UTP, 2019)

Wed Feb 12: No In-Person Class. Burdette at CAA conference in NYC

- Compare and contrast Samuel Edgerton and Savannah Esquivel's articles about missionary complexes.

- Samuel Edgerton, *Theaters of Conversion*, 2001 selection
- Savannah Esquivel, “Haunted Monasteries: Troubling Indigenous Erasure in Early Colonial Mexican Architecture” 2024
- **Object Study- Formal Analysis Due**

### **Week 6: Innovation and Change**

M Feb 17: Religious Sculpture and Cristos de Caña de Maíz

W Feb 19: Hybridity, localization, Nahuatization?

#### **\*Reading Analysis Assignment due- Dean and Leibsohn**

- Carolyn Dean and Dana Leibsohn. “Hybridity and Its Discontents: Considering Visual Culture in Colonial Spanish America,” In *Colonial Latin American Review*, V. 12, Issue 1, 2003: 5-35.

### **Week 7: Featherwork and Empire**

M Feb 24: Feathers and Nahuatizing Catholicism

- Allison Caplan, “The Living Feather”
- *Painting a New World* (Denver: Denver Art Museum, 2004), 94-105.

M Feb 26: Collecting and Cabinets of Curiosity

### **Week 8: Maps and the Relaciones Geográficas**

M March 3: Cartography and Place

- Barbara Mundy, *The Mapping of New Spain*, selection
- Dana Leibsohn, “Colony and Cartography”

W March 5: Exam Review

### **Week 9: Midterm Exam**

#### **M March 10: Midterm Exam**

W March 12: Research Workshop

### **Week 10: Spring Break**

### **Week 11: Miraculous Imagery and the Baroque**

M March 24: Virgin of Guadalupe and Miraculous Artworks

#### **\*Reading Analysis Assignment Due- Alcalá**

- Luisa Elena Alcalá, “The Image and its Maker,” in *Sacred Spain*

W March 26: The Virgin of Guadalupe and Painted True Portraits

- Jeanette Favrot Peterson, “The Reproducibility of the Sacred” Simulacra of the Virgin of Guadalupe,” in *Exploring New World Imagery*, 43- 78.

### **Week 12: Master Painters, Masterpieces and a New Approach**

M March 31: New Spanish Painting and Historiography

- Iлона Katzew, “Valiant Styles: New Spanish Painting, 1700- 85,” in *Painting in Latin America, 1550- 1820*, edited by Luisa Elena Alcalá and Jonathan Brown (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 149- 203.

W April 2: Reconsidering the Idea of the “Artist”

**\*Reading Analysis Assignment Due- Mundy and Hyman**

- Barbara E. Mundy & Aaron M. Hyman, “Out of The Shadow of Vasari: Towards A New Model of The ‘Artist’ in Colonial Latin America,” *Colonial Latin American Review*, 24:3 (2015) 283-317.

**Week 13: Art and Identity**

M April 7: Casta Paintings

- Mia Bagneris, “Reimagining Race, Class, and Identity in the New World,” in *Behind Closed Doors*, selection.
- **Object Study- Social Significance Assignment Due**

W April 9: Crowned Nun Paintings and Portraits

- James Córdova, *The Art of Professing in Bourbon Mexico*, selection

**Week 14: New Spain and the Globe**

M April 14: The Philippines and the Trans-Pacific Trade

- Dana Leibsohn, “Made in China, Made in Mexico,” In *At the Crossroads: The Arts of Spanish America & Early Global Trade 1492-1850* (Denver: Denver Art Museum, 2010), 11-40.

W April 16: Asian influence continued

- Sofía Sanabrais, “From Byōbu to Biombo: The Transformation of the Japanese Folding Screen in Colonial Mexico,” 779–790.

**Week 15: Innovative Approaches**

M April 21: New Approaches

- Leibsohn and Hyman, “Lost and Found at Sea”

W April 23rd: Review for the final

**Object Study- Exhibition Assignment Due**

**Final exam: May 2, 2025 @ 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM**