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LAH 4134: Abuse of Power in Colonial Latin America
Time and Room: TBA

In this undergraduate course, we will examine the historical and cultural evolution of corruption in colonial Latin America. Even though corruption is not exclusive to Latin America, researchers highlighted its detrimental effects in this region. It seems there is an academic consensus that corruption has undermined the modern and democratic development of Latin America, where such practice became rooted from early modern times. The analysis of corruption or abuse of power in colonial Latin America society demands to realize that contemporaries had different perspectives about the nature of corruption. Despite the lack of laws that defined and punished corruptive practices, colonial subjects understood corruption as the violation of justice or fairness. Obviously, perceptions of fairness also varied from person to person. These perceptions, available in protests, accusation, and defenses, unveil the historical process behind the cultural delineation or definition of corruption.

In this class, students will read bibliography pertaining to the definition of corruption, and its practice, understanding, and prosecution in the New World, for every class meeting. Based on these readings, students will identify the different practices contemporaries understood as abuse of power or corruption. Student will individually, write two papers, and four analytical comments during the term. As final project, students, in groups of four, will produce a report where they will evaluate, within the historical context, the career and performance of one of the colonial authorities we will see during the term. By the end of the semester, students will develop critical analysis, along with a better understanding of corruption, as a category of historical analysis.

How will this course help you succeed?

This is a Discipline-specific Global Learning course that counts toward your graduation requirement.

During the term we will:

Critically analyze the historical processes where abuse of power developed in colonial Latin America.

-Examine how some abusive practices became rooted within Latin America political culture.

-Learn how early modern notions of corruption differ from our modern perceptions of corruption.

-Realize that understandings of corruption varied according to local, regional, and international perspectives.

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Global Learning Objective. By the end of the semester, you will be able to:

- Construct evidence-based arguments demonstrating **both** how understandings of abuse of power evolved since early modern times **and** how these practices became rooted within Spanish America colonies (Global Awareness).
- Analyze different understandings of corruptions or abuse of power, across local, regional, and global scales during early modern times, and identify these perspectives in primary sources (Global Perspective).
- Engage with current discourses that define or denounce local, regional, and global practices and activities understood as corrupt (Global Engagement).

Instructor:

Dr. Judith Mansilla, Department of History, DM

Email: Jmansill@fiu.edu

Office Hours: TBA

Assignments:

Short Papers (1200 words, approximately 5 pages): This course requires you to write 2 short papers in response to a question you will receive at least 2 weeks before the deadline. Your paper should have a **thesis statement and be built around an argument**. Your thesis statement will be your response to the question you receive for that specific assignment and should be stated in the introductory paragraph. Build your argument and provide examples in following paragraphs. Reserve the last paragraph to strongly affirm, after showing evidence, your thesis statement. More guidance will be provided in class.

Analytical Comments: Every module, students will have to analyze one of the readings assigned for that specific module. In ONE paragraph (100-200 words), you will answer to the question that will post at the beginning of the module. In your response, you must include examples from the materials to show you have both read and understood its content. Comments are due the **only FRIDAY**, every last week of each module, at 11:59pm, unless otherwise indicated.

Grading Policy: It is your responsibility to keep track of your own performance in the course. I am always willing to meet individually with you during the semester to suggest ways in which you can perform at your best. I really encourage you to come see me during office hours to discuss the class and papers. The appropriate time to discuss your performance in the course is during the semester, not at the end of the semester. Incompletes, in general, will not be given. If you wish to discuss a specific grade that you receive, you must: 1) schedule an appointment to do so only after 24 hours after receiving the evaluation of your work and 2) before the

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appointment, submit a written statement (by e-mail is fine) explaining your question or doubts about the grade.

Participation: You are required to come to lectures meetings in order to participate. You must be prepared. In other words, you must complete your work and read the textbook pages, book chapters or articles indicated in the syllabus before coming to class. You may participate in class by answering oral questions or contributing to our lecture and discussion. You can also participate by asking questions, answering a classmate's inquiry, or introducing a topic that would motivate the discussion.

Tools to Succeed

Support: I look forward to working with you this semester. Remember, I am available to answer questions. You are encouraged to visit me in my office during office hours. You can also email me to set an appointment at a convenient time to meet.

Writing your Papers: You will not be allowed to rewrite your papers. Nonetheless, I will be willing to read drafts of them. You can email them to me up to 48 hours before the deadline, so I can have time to give you any feedback.

Teaching Assistant:

In addition to the instructor, this class has X teaching assistant/s, who will be grading your weekly comments and papers. TA will also, along with me, be there to provide general support to you through the class. Whether you have questions about papers, exams, readings, or how to get more out of the class in general.

TA name:

Email: TBA

Office Hours: TBA

History Tutoring: There are several history students working at the Department of History (DM 390) whose job is to tutor students in history classes. They are experienced upper-level history majors and graduate students who can help with papers and preparing for exams. To set an in-person or online appointment, please visit:

<https://history.yu.edu/tutoring/preparing-for-your-appointment/>

You can only reserve a slot at a time. Even if the system allows you to reserve more than one, the administrators will delete any additional appointment. Once you complete an appointment you can reserve another one. If you cancel or do not show up to an in-person appointment in three occasions, your name will be added to the list of those students who are not allowed to use the tutoring services. Online history tutors DO NOT allow not show-ups. If you fail to attend your online appointment, you will not allow to use the system for the rest of the term. Please, use this

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service wisely.

The Center for Excellence in Writing: It is freely available to you. The staff can help you with all aspects of writing, from approaching the question and brainstorming to techniques for editing. Their website: <http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/>

Class Policies:

Attendance: I will take attendance, and it is particularly important to attend each class. Excused absences may be granted in cases of serious medical issues (with a doctor's note), religious holidays, death of an immediate relative, military duty, court date, or participation in some college event. In any of any of these circumstances relates to you, contact me, in a timely manner, to request an absence justification. You are responsible to obtain notes or information of what was covered in class during your absence from classmates.

Classroom Behavior: Arrive on time and stay until the end of class. If class has begun, enter or leave the classroom without disturbing your instructor and classmates. *Cellphones may be turned on during class.* Everyone, including the instructor, must be focus on the class content. You are free to agree, disagree, challenge, or question your instructor or classmates' opinions and comments. You should do it respectfully without attacking classmates or the instructor.

Late Policy: Assignments are due **AT MIDNIGHT OF THE DUE DATE**. One-third of a letter grade will be reduced for each day a paper is late, including weekends, unless you obtained an extension from me, **IN ADVANCE**. No late assignments will be received during and after the last week of classes. Always try to submit your paper at least 30 minutes before the deadline to avoid technical issues. If you are unsuccessful to submit your paper because of Canvas issues, 1) email the paper to me right away, and 2) contact Canvas support to create a case of the issue. Canvas will investigate the issue to determine if it was a technical issue on its side, so they will reopen the assignment link for you. Instructors cannot upload students' papers on Canvas.

Academic Dishonesty: According to FIU student handbook (p.11) "In meeting one of the major objectives of higher education, which is to develop self-reliance, it is expected that students will be responsible for the completion of their own academic work." In this class, academic dishonesty is not tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarizing (presenting someone else's work as yours), or cheating on assignments or the final exam. If students do not adhere to these good practices, the penalty will vary from a zero on the assignment to failure in the course. I may also lead to a report in your academic profile.

Students with Disabilities: If you have or believe you might have a disability-related need for schedule modification or reasonable accommodation in this course, contact the Disability Resources Center (<http://drc.fiu.edu>). I will be happy to work with you and with them to

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accommodate you in the best way possible. Even if you do not need special accommodation, I highly advise you to let me know if you have a disability that might affect your performance in this class.

Accommodations: If you foresee any possible problems to fulfill any of the requirements of this course—attendance or on-time submission of assignments—please see me, to make any arrangements. **Don't wait until the last week of the course to bring up something you anticipated.**

I reserve the right to change the syllabus if necessary.

Grade Distribution

Weekly Comments	20%
Papers	20% each/40% total
Discussion/Class Participation	20%
Group project	20%

Required Readings

Paper 1: Christoph Rosenmüller. *Patrons, Partisan, and Patron Intrigues: The Court Society of Colonial Mexico, 1702 – 1710*. Calgary: University of Calgary, 2008.

Paper 2: Lance Grahn. *The Political Economy of Smuggling: Regional Informal Economies in Early Bourbon New Granada*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997.

Additional readings:

Michael Foucault. "Governmentality." *The Foucault effect. Studies in Governmentality with two lectures by and interview with Michael Foucault*, edited by Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, 87-104. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991.

Richard K. Matthews, ed. *Virtue, corruption, and self-interest. Political values in the eighteenth century*. Bethlehem (Pa.): Lehigh University Press, 1994.

Christoph Rosenmüller, ed., *Corruption in the Iberian Empires. Greed, Custom, and Corruption. Iberian Empires. Greed, Custom, and Corruption*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2017.

Schedule:

Module 1: Concepts about early modern government

Week 1

Introduction

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The art of government in early modern times
Michael Foucault. "Governmentality." 87-104

Week 2

Abuse of Power vs. Justice

Christoph Rosenmüller. "Corruption, Abuse, and Justice." *Corruption in the Iberian Empires*, 1 – 12.

Analytical Comment 1 due

Module 2: Common abusive practices

Week 3

Forgery

Jeremy Mumford, "Forgery and *Tambos*: False Documents, Imagined Incas, and the Making of the Andean Space." *Corruption in the Iberian Empires*, 13 – 32.

Week 4

Fraud as a Crime

Kris Lane, "From Corrupt to Criminal: Reflection on the Great Potosí Mint Fraud of 1649." *Corruption in the Iberian Empires*, 33 – 62.

Week 5

Bribery

Christopher Rosenmüller, "'The Ecclesiastical Offense of Fraud or Bribery': Corrupt Judges and Common People in the Visita of Imperial Mexico (1715-1727), *Corruption in the Iberian Empires*, 111 – 132.

Week 6

Smuggling

Fabricio Prado, "Addicted to Smuggling: Contraband Trade in Eighteenth-Century Brazil and Rio de la Plata." *Corruption in the Iberian Empires*, 197 – 214.

Analytical Comment 2 due

Module 3: Corruption within the colonial bureaucracy

Week 7

Corruption in colonial judicial courts

Rosenmüller. *Patrons, Partisan, and Palace Intrigues*

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Paper 1 is due

Week 8

Bad officials

Marc Eagle, "Portraits of Bad Officials: Malfeasance in *Visita* Sentences from Seventeenth century Santo Domingo," *Corruption in the Iberian Empires*, 87-110.

Week 9

Native lords as royal authorities

William Connell, "Clients, patrons, and Tribute: The Indigenous Aguilar Family in Mexico Tenochtitlan, 1644-1689," *Corruption in the Iberian Empires*, 63 – 86.

Week 10

Lack of Integrity

Mark Burkholder, "Honest Judges Leave Destitute Heirs," *Virtue, corruption, and self-interest*, 247 – 269.

Week 11

Seeking Good ministers

Francisco A. Elissa-Barroso, "'Our Delivery Depends on Appointing Good Ministers': Corruption and the Dilemmas of Appointing Officials in Early eighteenth-century Spain," *Corruption in the Iberian Empires*, 133 -150.

Analytical Comment 3 due

Module 4: Between law and custom

Week 12

Attack on customary corruption

Frances Ramos, "Custom, Corruption, and Reform in Early Eighteenth-Century Mexico." *Corruption in the Iberian Empires*.

Week 13

Contraband in the Lowlands

Grahn. *The Political Economy of Smuggling:*

Paper 2 is due

Week 14

Colonial authorities' private business

Catherine Tracy Goode, "Merchant-bureaucrats, unwritten contracts, and Fraud in the Manila Galleon Trade," *Corruption in the Iberian Empires.*, 171 – 196.

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Analytical Comment 4 due

Week 15

Political culture

Kenneth Andrien, "Corruption, Self-Interest, and the Political Culture of Eighteenth-Century Quito," *Virtue, corruption, and self-interest*, 270 – 296.

Week 16

Final Group Projects are due

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