

**Cornell-In-Seville – Course proposal (Fall 2017)**  
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La experiencia colonial en la América española (The Spanish American colonial experience)

This course offers a general overview of the history of Spanish America from pre-Columbian times to independence in the early-nineteenth century. Themes such as the colonial economy, social organization, European-indigenous relations, the African experience, science, imperial reforms, inter-imperial rivalries, and colonial rebellions, among others, will be discussed as part of four large sections organized chronologically. The first section is designed to help students understand the many factors that explain the conquest of the Americas. The second section will focus on the workings of the colonial economy and the multiple hierarchies that ordered colonial society in Spanish America. The third section will turn students' attention to the transformative nature of the eighteenth century, emphasizing the changing geopolitical context of the Atlantic World. From these transformations, the fourth section moves to the traumatic transformations of the early nineteenth century, stressing the different political options opened to Spanish and Portuguese Americans as a result of Napoleon's invasion of the Iberian Peninsula.

In the topics covered, the class would resemble a Colonial Latin America survey I regularly teach at Cornell. Teaching it in Seville would allow me to use the city as classroom through visits to important historical sites. Potential activities include: a visit to Seville's Cathedral to study its *tesoro catedralicio* (cathedral treasury) as means to introduce a discussion on the economic and religious aspects of Spanish colonialism; a lecture on mercantilism and commercial monopoly accompanied by a visit to the Universidad de Sevilla, where the Royal Tobacco Monopoly was located during the eighteenth century; conversations about sailors and navigation via a walk from the Torre del Oro across the Guadalquivir into Triana, home of many anonymous sailors who crossed the Atlantic with Columbus; a guided visit to the Archivo General de Indias (AGI) to understand the administrative structure of the Spanish empire. In addition, the AGI would make it possible to incorporate its temporary exhibits to my class discussions (past exhibits included displays of some of AGI's cartographical treasures, historical reconstructions of the voyages of famous Spanish ships, and visual narratives of piracy in Spanish America) and to invite historians doing research at the AGI to give guest lectures.

In order to familiarize students with colonial documents and some Spanish-language "classics" of colonial historiography, I plan to assign selections of the following texts:

- Richard Konetzke (ed.), *Colección de documentos para la historia de la formación social de Hispanoamérica, 1483-1810*
- Leslie Bethell (ed.), *Historia de América Latina*
- Eduardo Galeano, *Las venas abiertas de América Latina*

The goal of the class is for students to learn history through primary documents, lectures, and presentations. Beyond learning history, the methodology of the class, which would rely on conversations and presentations co-lead by students and the instructor, would allow students to strengthen their Spanish skills. They would not only listen to the professor speak Spanish, but would themselves speak Spanish both in the classroom and during the excursions.