

# INTRODUCTION

This curriculum was created by the University of New Mexico Latin American & Iberian Institute as the first of a series of workshops on or related to exploration and the conquistadores, cultural exchange, European and Indigenous encounters, and food. This specific curriculum focuses on discussing matters relevant to teaching about Columbus, rethinking how we present Columbus to our students, and providing teaching resources and lesson plans on Christopher Columbus. The curriculum provides resources and information that encourage teachers to rethink the traditional or standard story/history of Columbus, and the ramifications that Columbus' explorations had on the Americas.

The following unit is divided into three primary curriculum categories: **Introductory Activities**, **Content Activities**, and **Closure Activities**. The content activities have been organized into the following categories: Book Studies, Pictorial Input Charts, Reflective Reading and Writing Activities, Primary Source Activities, Writing Activities, and Music and Art Connections. The unit is designed so that all of the activities can be used in their entirety, or teachers can pick and choose the activities that best meet the needs of their curriculum and students. The majority of the activities can be adapted so that they can be used for all ages. At times a teacher may need to simplify or expand on the content or the expectations of the activity so that it is relevant for his or her particular grade level. Activities that are specific to a **middle or high school** have been listed at the end of the curriculum under that specific heading

The teacher resource book *Rethinking Columbus: The Next 500 Years* (2nd ed.) has been the foundation for putting this curriculum project together. The resource book is easily accessible—it can be ordered online from multiple sources and often can be found at public and university libraries. Many of the activities are taken directly from that book or adapted from ideas in the book. When activities are taken from the book, we provide specific citation information and draw attention to that page by highlighting it with a blue bar along the right-hand margin. Due to copyright issues the referenced sections cannot be provided in their entirety; page numbers are provided to guide teachers to the correct section in the resource book. From this point forward, *Rethinking Columbus: The Next 500 Years* (2nd ed.) will be abbreviated as “RTC”. If you decide to use the copyrighted excerpts, please respect the original author's copyright restrictions.

Other activities have been taken from various resources and citations have been provided accordingly. Yet other activities are ideas original to this curriculum, and graphic organizers or other materials have been created to illustrate them. For a complete list of resources used within this guide, please see the **Works Cited** list found at the end of this document.

If you find this material useful, we encourage you to visit the Latin American & Iberian Institute's website (<http://lail.unm.edu/outreach>) to access the following relevant resources:

- an electronic copy of this curriculum project;
- information pertaining to the subsequent workshops offered in this series; and,
- other Latin American-oriented K-12 teaching resources.

# LATIN AMERICAN & IBERIAN INSTITUTE

Because of the geographic location and unique cultural history of New Mexico, the University of New Mexico (UNM) has emphasized Latin American Studies since the early 1930s. In 1979, the **Latin American & Iberian Institute (LAI)** was founded to coordinate Latin American programs on campus. Designated a National Resource Center (NRC) by the U.S. Department of Education, the LAI offers academic degrees, supports research, provides development opportunities for faculty, and coordinates an outreach program that reaches diverse constituents. In addition to the Latin American Studies (LAS) degrees offered, the LAI supports Latin American studies in departments and professional schools across campus by awarding student fellowships and providing funds for faculty and curriculum development.

The LAI's mission is to create a stimulating environment for the production and dissemination of knowledge of Latin America and Iberia at UNM. We believe our goals are best pursued by efforts to build upon the insights of more than one academic discipline. We support research from the humanities and social sciences, as well as the natural sciences, health sciences, and other professional schools. Therefore when allocating materials and human resources, we give special consideration to broadly interdisciplinary projects that promote active collaboration from different schools, colleges, and/or departments.

The LAI works closely with the K-12 community to help integrate Latin American content materials into New Mexico classrooms across grade levels and subject areas. As part of this effort, the LAI provides educators with **professional development workshops**, a **database of teacher-designed lesson plans**, and related programs.

For more comprehensive information about the LAI and its resources for K-12 teaching related to the Americas, contact:

University of New Mexico  
Latin American & Iberian Institute  
801 Yale Boulevard NE  
MSC02 1690  
1 University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque, NM 87131

Phone: (505) 277-2961

Fax: (505) 277-5989

Email: [lai@unm.edu](mailto:lai@unm.edu)

Web: <http://lai.unm.edu>