

HIS 105-04
Latin American Fiction and History
 Professor Willie Hiatt, Spring 2010
 MWF • 8-8:50 a.m. • Clough Hall 300

OFFICE: Clough Hall 311

OFFICE HOURS: 9-11 a.m. Monday and Wednesday; 1-3 p.m. Tuesday; and by appointment

PHONE: Office: 901-843-3656;

Cell: 859-285-7037

E-MAIL: hiattw@rhodes.edu



COURSE OVERVIEW

This introduction to Latin American history exposes you to broad literary, social, and cultural currents in the modern period, roughly covering independence from Spain to today. You will analyze novels, short stories, poetry, and plays as historical documents that illuminate national identity, race, gender, class, and politics at specific historical moments. The course engages *costumbrismo*, modernism, vanguardism, *indigenismo*, magical realism, and other literary and historical currents from Mexico and the Caribbean in the north to the Andes and Argentina in the south. You will address a number of important questions: How can we read fictional texts as historical documents? How does fiction expand our knowledge of Latin America's colonial and postcolonial past? What does literature tell us about the region that no other historical documents do? And what does writing across culture and language mean for modern identity and national authenticity?

The course covers a number of important themes:

- Colonial Legacies and Republican Possibilities
- Nation-Building
- Civilization vs. Barbarism
- Cultural Emancipation
- Liberalism vs. Conservatism
- *Indigenismo* (a political, intellectual, and artistic project that defended indigenous masses against exploitation)
- Imperialism
- Magical Realism

COURSE READINGS

You may purchase required books at the Rhodes College bookstore or at local and online retailers. Copies of many books also are on two-hour reserve at Barrett Library. Additionally, PDFs of supplemental readings are located on Moodle. Required texts are:

- Azuela, Mario. *The Underdogs: A Novel of the Mexican Revolution*. New York: Penguin Classics, 2008. ISBN: 978-0143105275.
- Carpentier, Alejo. *The Lost Steps*. Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press, March 2001. ISBN: 978-0816638079.
- Chasteen, John Charles. *Born in Blood and Fire: A Concise History of Latin America*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co. 2005. ISBN: 978-0393927696.
- Fernandez de Lizardi, Jose Joaquín. *The Mangy Parrot: The Life and Times of Periquillo Sarniento, Written by Himself for His Children*. Translated by David L. Frye and Nancy Vogeley, abridged. Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett Publishing Company, 2005. ISBN: 978-0872206700.
- García Márquez, Gabriel. *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2006. ISBN: 978-006088327.
- Matto de Turner, Clorinda. *Birds without a Nest: A Novel*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1996. ISBN: 978-0292751958.

Literature selections available as PDFS on Moodle:

- Cortázar, Julio. “The Night Face Up.” In *The Oxford Book of Latin American Short Stories*. Edited by Roberto González Echeverría, 337-344. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. [PDF]
- Dias Gomez, Alfredo. *Payment as Pledged*. In *The Modern Stage in Latin America: Six Plays*. Edited by George Woodyard, 43-117. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1971. [PDF]
- Echeverría, Estéban. “The Slaughter House.” In *The Oxford Book of Latin American Short Stories*. Edited by Roberto González Echeverría, 59-72. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. [PDF]
- Faustino Sarmiento, Domingo. *Facundo: Civilization and Barbarism*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2003. [PDF]
- Fuentes, Carlos. “Chac Mool.” In *Burnt Water*. Translated by Margaret Sayers Peden, 3-14. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1986. [PDF]
- Lillo, Baldomero, “The Devil’s Pit.” In *The Devil’s Pit and Other Stories*. Translated by Esther S. Dillon and angel Flores. Washington, D.C.: Organization of American States, 1959. [PDF]

- Luisa Bombal, María. “The Final Mist.” In *House of Mist and The Shrouded Woman*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1995. [PDF]
- María Arguedas, José. “The Pongo’s Dream.” In *The Peru Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. Edited by Orin Starn, Carlos Iván Degregori, and Robin Kirk, 259-263. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1995. [PDF]
- Selections from Palma, Ricardo. *Peruvian Traditions*. Translated by Helen Lane. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. [PDF]
- Selections from *The Poetry of Pablo Neruda*. Edited by Ilan Stavans. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003. [PDF]
- Selections from *Selected Poems of Rubén Darío: A Bilingual Anthology*. Edited, translated, and with an introduction by Alberto Acereda and Will Derusha. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2001. [PDF]
- Selections from *Songs of Life and Hope*. Edited and translated by Will Derusha and Alberto Acereda. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2004. [PDF]
- Selections from *Selected Poems of Rubén Darío*. Translated by Lysander Kemp. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1965. [PDF]

OUTSIDE RESOURCES

An excellent and well-respected source for Latin American themes and concepts is the *Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture* (first-floor Reference section, F1406 .E53 1996, Vols. 1-5). This may prove especially helpful for class presentations.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

I expect you to participate in every class. At the end of each class I record a “√+” (excellent participation), “√” (average participation), or “√-” (no participation) beside each name. The cumulative total will largely determine your final participation score.

I expect you to complete all readings for the week *before class begins on Monday*.

Writing assignments require you to incorporate material from discussions and readings. We will spend significant class time discussing the texts to help you construct sophisticated arguments. Class discussions also give you an opportunity to talk about course readings and lectures and to ask clarifying questions.

You will have periodic quizzes on the reading material. By reading before class and thinking about weekly themes, you will be able to contribute to discussions and better prepare yourself for papers and the final exam. Failure to contribute regularly will lower your course grade.

ABSENCE POLICY

I expect you to attend every class. You are permitted *three* unexcused absences. All absences not accompanied by a doctor's note are unexcused. This includes sports absences, student conferences, minor illnesses, etc. More than three absences – including Week 1 for those admitted to the course – will adversely affect your grade. Here is the policy:

1-3 Absences	Permitted; no grade reduction
4-5 Absences	Significant reduction in <i>class participation score</i>
6-9 Absences	One-third of a letter grade deduction from <i>final grade</i> for each absence over five. For example, if you finish with an "A" but have seven absences, your final grade will be no better than a "B+".
10 Absences or more	Automatic failure; you will not be permitted to take the final exam

However, I understand that emergencies and the unexpected happen. In that case, please communicate with me and we will work together on a reasonable solution.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

You final grade will be determined by:

- Essay #1 10%
- Essay #2 15%
- Midterm Exam 10%
- Essay #3 15%
- Essay #4 15%
- Attendance, Participation, and Quizzes 20%
- Final Exam 15%

Essays: You are expected to write four essays of 4-6 pages employing fictional texts, class materials, discussions, and any other relevant sources. I am a challenging but fair grader. We will discuss in depth how to formulate an original historical argument; structure a formal, academic paper with an introduction and conclusion; and support assertions using substantial and specific evidence. Your essays should argue a specific point of view that forces the reader to agree or disagree. Before the first essay we will discuss how to write a strong thesis statement.

Papers should be no longer than six pages, double-spaced, in Times New Roman font with one-inch margins. *I will deduct one-third of a letter grade for each day papers are late*, including weekend days. I strongly encourage you to visit me during office

hours to discuss paper topics in advance. I will provide a more detailed essay prompt well before the due date.

Class Presentations: Each student will prepare at least one 10-15-minute presentation. The presentation will provide a brief overview of the work in the context of class readings, identify difficult or problem areas, and suggest avenues for class discussion. I will assign readings in the first full week of classes.

Final Exam: The final is cumulative in the sense that you will be expected to incorporate essential class themes. However, the last fictional texts that we read in the final quarter of the course – *Payment as Pledged*, *Lost Steps* and *Hundred Years of Solitude* – will carry more weight. The themes will include magical realism, colonial legacies, and alternative time/space/history.

Grading: Grades of “A” are difficult to earn. An “A” demands work of exceptional quality and depth. For assignments this means nearly error-free essays containing outstanding insights. For class discussion this means thoughtful, regular participation in every meeting.

Grades of “B” reflect work that is above average compared to your peers. A “B” requires hard work and a clear demonstration of a thorough knowledge of the subject matter. For essays and exams, this means solid knowledge and understanding of the course material with some deeper analysis. This means that you participate regularly and demonstrate that you have read all the assigned readings.

Grades of “C” reflect competent college-level work. This grade may reflect a lack of commitment or difficulty in grasping the subject matter. These papers and exams often reflect some confusion or gaps in coverage. In section, C’s most often reflect less than complete reading or less than full engagement in class meetings.

Grades of “D” and “F” should be difficult to earn. On assignments, this grade usually reflects a serious lack of effort or misunderstanding.

All work is pledged under the Rhodes College Honor Code.

READING SCHEDULE

Below is the reading schedule for the semester. I will outline the broad narrative of post-independence history in discussions; course readings provide both a detailed chronology as well as more specific thematic approaches to the period:

Week 1: Introduction

Discussions

- Wednesday (January 13): Introduction, Course Overview
- Friday (January 15): Discussion of short story, “The Night Face Up”

Readings

- Cortázar, “The Night Face Up” [PDF]
- Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, 59-89

Week 2: Theoretical Foundations: Writing the Nation

Discussions

- Monday (January 18): **No Class: Martin Luther King Day**
- Wednesday (January 20): Literature and National Identity
- Friday (January 22): History through Fiction
 - **Map quiz first ten minutes of class**

Readings

- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1991: 1-46. [PDF]
- Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, 91-147

Week 3: Social Protest and Independence

Discussions

- Monday (January 25)
- Wednesday (January 27)
 - **First essay prompt handed out in class**
- Friday (January 29): How to Write the Perfect College Essay, Part I

Readings

- De Lizardi, *The Mangy Parrot*, 1-113, plus Chapters 28, 36-37, and 52

Week 4: Colonial Legacies: Civilization vs. Barbarism

Discussions

- Monday (February 1)
- Wednesday (February 3)
- Friday (February 5)

Readings

- Sarmiento, *Facundo*, 9-85 (“Introduction” optional) [PDF]

Week 5: Colonial Legacies: Europe's Shadow**Discussions**

- Monday (February 8)
 - **First essay due at start of class**
- Wednesday (February 10)
- Friday (February 12)
 - **Second essay prompt handed out in class**

Readings

- Echeverría, "The Slaughterhouse" [PDF]
- Selections from Palma, *Peruvian Traditions*, TBA [PDF]
- Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, 149-178

Week 6: Who Participates in the Nation?**Discussions**

- Monday (February 15)
- Wednesday (February 17)
- Friday (February 19)

Readings

- Matto de Turner, *Birds without a Nest* (entire)

Week 7: Indians, Peasants, and the Underclasses**Discussions**

- Monday (February 22)
 - **Second essay due in class**
- Wednesday (February 24)
- Friday (February 26)

Readings

- Azuela, *The Underdogs* (entire)

Week 8: Indians, Peasants and Emancipation**Discussions**

- Monday (March 1)

- Wednesday (March 3)
- Friday (March 5)
 - **Mid-term Exam: In-Class Essay**

Readings

- “Pongo’s Dream” (Arguedas) [PDF]
 - Lillo, “The Devil’s Pit” [PDF]
-

Week 9: Coming to Terms with Modernity

Discussions

- Monday (March 8)
- Wednesday (March 10)
 - **Third essay prompt handed out in class**
- Friday (March 12)

Readings

- Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, 181-214
 - Poetry selections: Reactions Against Imperialism, U.S. Influence, TBA [PDF]
-

Week 10

No Class – Spring Break

Week 11: Coming to Terms with Modernity

Discussions

- Monday (March 22)
- Wednesday (March 24)
 - **Third essay due at start of class**
- Friday (March 26)

Readings

- Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, 217-246
- Poetry selections: Reactions Against Imperialism, U.S. Influence, TBA [PDF]

Week 11: New Subjectivities**Discussions**

- Monday (March 29)
- Wednesday (March 31)
- Friday (April 2)

Readings

- Luisa Bombal, “The Final Mist” [PDF]
- Dias Gomez, *Payment as Pledged* (first half) [PDF]

Week 12: Modernity vs. Tradition**Discussions**

- Monday (April 5)
- Wednesday (April 7)
 - **Fourth essay prompt handed out in class**
- Friday (April 9)

Readings

- Dias Gomez, *Payment as Pledged* (second half) [PDF]
- Fuentes, “Chac-Mool”
- Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, 279-309

Week 13: Entering the Boom**Discussions**

- Monday (April 12)
- Wednesday (April 14)
- Friday (April 16)

Readings

- Carpentier, *The Lost Steps* (entire)

Week 14: Entering the Boom**Discussions**

- Monday (April 19)

- **Fourth essay due at start of class**
- Wednesday (April 21)
- Friday (April 23)

Readings

- García Márquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (first half)
-

Week 15: Magical Realism and the Boom**Discussions**

- Monday (April 26)
- Wednesday (April 28)
- Friday (April 30)

Readings

- García Márquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (second half)
-

Exam Schedule

- Final Exam – 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 4