

HIS 262-01
Contemporary Latin America
 Professor Willie Hiatt, Spring 2010
 MWF • 11-11:50 a.m. • Palmer Hall 205

OFFICE: Clough Hall 311

OFFICE HOURS: 9-10:50 a.m. Monday and Wednesday; 1-3 p.m. Tuesday; and by appointment

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COURSE OVERVIEW

This introduction to Latin American history exposes you to broad social, cultural, religious, and economic currents in the modern period, roughly covering independence from Spain (1810-1824) to today. The course challenges you to address a number of fundamental questions: How do newly independent nations form a unique identity after three centuries of Spanish colonialism? Who speaks for the nation – the majority indigenous groups (in Peru and Mexico, for example), women and children, or “white” men of European descent? Why has violence, poverty, and extreme inequality seemingly characterized much of the history of Latin America? And what role has Europe and the United States played in perpetuating a state of “backwardness” and underdevelopment – at least relative to the Western “model.” To address these questions we will examine a wide variety of historical texts, fictional accounts, and films. Assignments challenge you to form sophisticated historical arguments using primary and secondary sources.

COURSE READINGS

You may purchase the following required books at the Rhodes College bookstore or online:

- Chasteen, John Charles. *Born in Blood and Fire: A Concise History of Latin America*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co. 2005. ISBN: 978-0393927696.
- Gutierrez, Gustavo. *A Theology of Liberation*. Orbis Books, 1988. ISBN: 978-0883445426
- Icaza, Jorge. *The Villagers*. Southern Illinois University Press, 1964. ISBN: 978-0809306534

- Skármeta, Antonio. *The Postman*. W.W. Norton and Company, 2008. ISBN: 978-0393330397.
- Usigli, Rodolfo. *The Impostor: A Play for Demagogues*. Latin American Literary Review Press, 2006.

Articles or selections available as PDFS on Moodle, Reserve, or as an E-book:

- Adamo, Sam. "The Sick and the Dead: Epidemic and Contagious Disease in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil." In *Cities of Hope: People, Protests, and Progress in Urbanizing Latin America, 1870-1930*. Edited by Ronn Pineo and James A. Baer, 218-239. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1998.
- Adelman, "Introduction: The Problem of Persistence in Latin American History." In *Colonial Legacies: The Problem of Persistence in Latin American History*, 1-13. New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Gómez de Avellaneda y Arteaga, Gertrudis. *Sab and Autobiography*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1993.
- Faustino Sarmiento, Domingo. *Facundo: Civilization and Barbarism*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2003.
- Fuentes, Carlos. "Chac-Mool." In *Burnt Water*. Translated by Margaret Sayers Peden, 3-14. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1986.
- Klubock, Thomas Miller. "Morality and Good Habits: The Construction of Gender and Class in the Chilean Copper Mines, 1904-1951." In *The Gendered Worlds of Latin American Women: From Household and Factory to the Union Hall and Ballot Box*. Edited by John D. French and Daniel James, 232-263. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997.
- Martí, José. "Coney Island" and "Our America." In *The America of José Martí: Selected Writings*. Translated by Juan de Onís, 102-110, and 138-151. [Copy made]
- Patch, Robert W. "Dependency and the Colonial Heritage in Southeastern Mesoamerica." In *Colonial Legacies: The Problem of Persistence in Latin American History*, 91-106. New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Rosenthal, Anton. "Dangerous Streets: Trolleys, Labor Conflict, and the Reorganization of Public Space in Montevideo, Uruguay." In *Cities of Hope: People, Protests, and Progress in Urbanizing Latin America, 1870-1930*. Edited by Ronn Pineo and James A. Baer, 30-52. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1998.

Any additional readings listed on the schedule are available as PDFs.

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 your 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 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

I understand that emergencies and unexpected problems 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: Colonial Legacies 15%
- Mid-term Exam: Indians and Modernization 15%
- Essay #2: Revolution and Power 20%
- Essay #3: Liberation Theology 20%
- Attendance, Participation, and Quizzes 15%
- Final Exam 15%

Essays: Beyond the mid-term and final exams, you are expected to write three essays of 4-6 pages using fictional texts, class materials, discussions, films, and any other relevant sources. I am a challenging but fair grader. We will discuss in depth how to formulate an original 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.

I will deduct a third of a letter grade for each day papers are late. 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.

Final Exam: The final is cumulative in the sense that you will be expected to incorporate essential class themes. However, material and films covered in the final weeks of the class will receive higher weight.

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

Lectures and Discussions

- Wednesday (January 13): Introduction
- Friday (January 15): Overview, discussion of “Chac Mool”

Readings

- Fuentes, “Chac Mool” [PDF]

WEEK 2

Lectures and Discussions

- Monday (January 18): **No Class: Martin Luther King Day**
- Wednesday (January 20): Three Centuries of Spanish Colonialism: An Overview
- Friday (January 22): The Independence Movement; discussion of “Jamaica Letter”
 - **Map quiz during first ten minutes of class**

Readings

- Simón Bolívar, “Jamaica Letter” [PDF]
- Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, 59-147

WEEK 3

Lectures and Discussions

- Monday (January 25): Colonial Legacies; discussion of Adelman
- Wednesday (January 27): What is the Nation?
- Friday (January 29): Caudillos and the Search for Political Order

Readings

- Adelman, “Introduction: The Problem of Persistence in Latin American History.” [PDF]
- Larson, Chapter 1 from *Trials of Nation Making*

WEEK 4**Lectures and Discussions**

- Monday (February 1): Discussion of *Facundo*
 - **Prompt for Essay #1 handed out at start of class**
- Wednesday (February 3): Liberals vs. Conservatives: A Nineteenth-Century Paradigm
- Friday (February 5): Daily Life in the New Nations; discussion of “Camila”

Readings/Film

- Sarmiento, *Facundo: Civilization and Barbarism* (selections)
- Film: “Camila” (1984) [Moodle]

WEEK 5**Lectures and Discussions**

- Monday (February 8): Confronting Slavery
- Wednesday (February 10): The Rise of Export Economies
- Friday (February 12): Discussion of *Sab*

Readings

- Gómez de Avellaneda, *Sab* (entire)

WEEK 6**Lectures and Discussions**

- Monday (February 15): Guano: Lucrative Bird Droppings or Fool’s Gold?
 - **Essay #1 due at start of class**
- Wednesday (February 17): Progress and Order
- Friday (February 19): Porfirio Díaz and Mexican Modernization

Readings

- Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, 149-178
- William Beezley, selection from *Judas at the Jockey Club*, TBA (PDF)

WEEK 7

Lectures and Discussions

- Monday (February 22): North America's Heavy Footprint: The Spanish-American War, Cuba, and the Panama Canal
 - **Prompt for mid-term exam handed out in class**
- Wednesday (February 24): Discussion of Martí
- Friday (February 26): Positivism as a State Weapon

Readings

- Martí, "Coney Island" (1881) and "Our America" (1891)
- Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, 181-214

WEEK 8

Lectures and Discussions

- Monday (March 1): Discussion of *Cities of Hope* articles
- Wednesday (March 3): **Mid-term Exam (In-Class Essay)**
- Friday (March 5): Peasant Movements and Indigenismo

Readings

- Rosenthal, "Dangerous Streets: Trolleys, Labor Conflict, and the Reorganization of Public Space in Montevideo, Uruguay." [PDF]
- Adamo, "The Sick and the Dead: Epidemic and Contagious Disease in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil." [PDF]

WEEK 9

Lectures and Discussions

- Monday (March 8): Indians, Airplanes, and the Construction of Cuzco Modernity [Prof. Hiatt's dissertation research]
- Wednesday (March 10): Discussion of *The Villagers*
 - **Prompt for Essay #2 handed out in class**
- Friday (March 12): The Mexican Revolution

Readings/Film

- Icaza, *The Villagers* (entire)
- "Herod's Law" ("La ley de Herodes") (1999) [Moodle]

WEEK 10

- March 15, 17, 19: **No Class – Spring Break**

WEEK 11**Lectures and Discussions**

- Monday (March 22): Aftermath of the Mexican Revolution
- Wednesday (March 24): Discussion of *The Impostor*
- Friday (March 26): Emergence of Nationalism

Readings

- Usigli, *The Impostor* (entire)

WEEK 12**Lectures and Discussions**

- Monday (March 29): Case Studies in Populism: Peronism, Lázaro Cárdenas, Getúlio Vargas
 - **Essay #2 due at start of class**
- Wednesday (March 31): Discussion of Women and Modernization text
- Friday (April 2): Guatemala: The U.S. Ousts a President

Readings

- Klubock, “Morality and Good Habits: The Construction of Gender and Class in the Chilean Copper Mines, 1904-1951.” [PDF]
- Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, 217-246

WEEK 13**Lectures and Discussions**

- Monday (April 5): The Cuban Revolution
- Wednesday (April 7): Liberation Theology: An Overview
 - **Prompt for Essay #3 handed out in class**
- Friday (April 9): Discussion of *A Theology of Liberation*

Readings/Film

- Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (selections TBA)
 - Recommended: Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, 249-277
 - Film: “Romero” (1989) [Moodle]
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WEEK 14

Lectures and Discussions

- Monday (April 12): Discussion of *A Theology of Liberation*, “Romero”
- Wednesday (April 14): Dependency Theory
- Friday (April 16): Chile and the U.S. Alignment with Dictators

Readings

- Patch, “Dependency and the Colonial Heritage in Southeastern Mesoamerica.” [PDF]
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WEEK 15

Lectures and Discussions

- Monday (April 19): Discussion of *The Postman*
 - **Essay #3 due at start of class**
- Wednesday (April 21): Latin American Violence, 1970s-today: Argentina, Peru, Guatemala, El Salvador
- Friday (April 23): Neoliberalism

Readings

- Skármeta, *The Postman* (entire)
 - Film: “Maria Full of Grace” (2004) [Moodle]
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WEEK 16

Lectures and Discussions

- Monday (April 26): Latin America and the Drug Wars
- Wednesday (April 28): Latin America today
- Friday (April 30): **Last Day of Classes**

Readings

- Gootenberg, *Andean Cocaine* (selection TBA)

Exam Schedule

- Final Exam – 1 p.m. Wednesday, May 5