

Rhodes College
Spring, 2007

History of Contemporary Latin America
Instructor: Michael J. LaRosa

Office: 311 Clough Hall
Phone: 843-3656
Hours: T, R, 8:30 am to 11 am and W 10 am to noon

This course is a history of contemporary Latin American history. Topics will be addressed in chronological order and thematically. Students will leave this course with a more complete understanding of the historical struggles and actors—and cultural uniqueness—of the Latin American region.

There are four required texts for this course. The Chasteen book is the primary course text; the LaRosa/Mejía “Atlas and Survey” is a secondary text.

Braun, Herbert. *Our Guerrillas Our Sidewalks* (second edition).
Chasteen, John Charles. *Born in Blood and Fire*.
García Márquez, Gabriel. *Collected Novellas*.
LaRosa, Michael J. and Mejía, Germán R. *An Atlas and Survey of Latin American History*.

Requirements: All students enrolled in this course will submit one midterm exam, a final exam, and two short essays. Each assignment will count 22 percent and about 12 percent of the final grade will be determined by attendance and participation.

Each Friday, two students from the class will prepare and deliver a quiz to the class based on the weeks' reading: the quiz will be collected but not graded.

Attendance and other policies: There are no excused absences from this course, unless you are participating in an official, college-sponsored event. Students who—for whatever reason—miss an unreasonable number of classes (more than 10 percent)—should not expect a satisfactory grade in this course. Students who miss about a third of the course will fail, regardless of the quality of their work or the reason for absence. Students must hand in all four assignments to pass the course. All work must be submitted on time and on paper—I do not accept late assignments or email submissions.

Email and office hours: I prefer to visit with students in my office. Please stop by during my hours, or at other times when I'm there. My door is never closed, unless I'm napping...I don't answer all emails, but I will take as much time as you need when you come to see me during my hours.

The Papers: By Wednesday of the second week of class, each student will submit a 500 word critical essay of the Gabriel García Márquez story “Chronicle of a Death Foretold.” This paper will be expanded and re-submitted at the end of the course and should reflect new knowledge and awareness of some important themes of Latin American history and culture. The final review will count as one of the assigned papers; the first effort will not be graded. The second paper is a short analytical essay review essay of the Braun text.

Films: We will watch one or two films during the semester, and a film question might appear on the final exam.

Weekly schedule of readings, lectures and assignments

Weeks 1-3: Introduction, review of independence struggle and era of caudillo rule.

Reading:

Week 1: "Chronicle of a Death Foretold" and JCC, 15-28.

Week 2: JCC, 88-117 (No class on Monday, MLK, Jr. Holiday). Paper due Wednesday.

Week 3: JCC, 119-148; LaRosa and Mejía, chapters 1-7

Weeks 4-6: Export-led growth, some civil wars and U.S. ambitions in the Caribbean region.

Reading:

Week 4: JCC, chapter 5; LaRosa and Mejía, chapter 8

Week 5: Judas at the Jockey Club (Reserve)

Week 6: Reading from *The United States Discovers Panama*, and *The Good Neighbor* (Reserve)
[Mid-term exam, Friday of week 6]

Weeks 7-9: Mexico in Revolution, *indigenismo* and a visual approach to Latin America.

Reading:

Week 7: JCC, chapter 7, 8

Week 8: LaRosa/Mejía, chapter 11

Week 9: Chapter from Fuentes (Reserve), plus view segment from "The Buried Mirror" in class (time permitting).

Weeks 10-12: Modern Brazil and Latin American Literature.

Reading:

Week 10: Spring break

Week 11: Reading from Eakin chapter (Reserve)

Week 12: *Collected Novellas* (Paper due on Friday)

Week 13-16: Revolutions, human rights, the case of Colombia and Latin American Liberation Theology

Readings:

Week 13: Chapters 9, 10, LaRosa/Mejía chapter 12; start Braun

Week 14: Finish Braun; film, "Men With Guns."

Week 15: LaRosa essay on Liberation Theology (Reserve). Braun essay due on Friday

Week 16: LaRosa and Mejía, chapters 9-10; Review for final exam.

Film: "Missing."

NB: Final exam will be held during the regularly scheduled final for this course.