

Latin America During the National Period (HIST 140)

“Poor people inhabit rich lands”

- E. Bradford Burns

Spring 2012, Truman State University
MC 208, TR 1:30-2:50
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Description

This course surveys the history of Latin America from independence to the present. We will examine a variety of issues including economics, democracy, racism, class structures, gender, ethnicity, human rights, globalization, and popular movements. Rather than analyzing Latin America from a North American point of view, we will examine how Latin Americans view themselves and how their culture, economics, and politics have developed in different directions than the United States and Europe.

This course fulfills the history mode of inquiry in the Liberal Studies Program. In this mode, students will study a broad topic or major geographic area over an extended period of time and will demonstrate competence in one or more of the following areas, which characterize the work of historians:

1. thinking in terms of causation, change over time, contingency, context, and chronological frameworks;
2. the content and methodologies of humanistic and social-scientific disciplines to study and interpret the past;
3. analyzing the interplay between choices individuals have made and developments societies have undergone; and
4. understanding the social and aesthetic richness of different cultures.

Requirements

Our goal in this class is to challenge existing assumptions, engage alternative viewpoints, and encourage critical thinking. Through the study of history, we seek to empower ourselves to be better citizens, and to provide ourselves with the skills necessary to play a positive and educated role in society. We need to be active constituents rather than mere recipients of our education. To accomplish those tasks, we should strive to create an open and supportive learning environment. Regular attendance and active participation are also necessary. Please drop me a note if you are unable to attend, or if you have any concerns or suggestions for improving the class.

Readings

Following is the required book for this class. Read the assignments before class so that you are prepared to carry on an intelligent discussion of the material in class. Lectures and discussions will complement the readings and assume the base level of knowledge that they present, so it is critically important that you keep up with the readings.

Dawson, Alexander S. *Latin America Since Independence: A history with primary sources*. New York: Routledge, 2010. ISBN: 9780415991964

Assignments and grades

Course grades will be based on the following assignments. You can check your grade progress on the class Blackboard web page (there is a total of 1000 possible points in the class). Assignments are due at the beginning of class, and I do not accept “drop and run” papers. Grades on late assignments will be penalized 10 percent for each day that they are late. Successful completion of all assignments is required to receive credit for this class.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>
Daily identification terms (5 pts ea.)	100 pts
10 newspaper article analyses (5 pts ea.)	50
11 primary source analyses (50 pts ea.)	550
Midterm exam (March 1)	100
Final exam (May 1)	200

Daily identification terms. We will begin each class period with identifying and giving the significance of one identification term drawn from a list posted to the Blackboard web page for each of the weekly assigned readings from Dawson's *Latin America Since Independence*. These will be graded on a scale of 1 to 5 points. One point means that you are present, 2 points indicate that something was fundamentally wrong with your response, 3 points indicate a rote response from the text, 4 points represent analytical thought, and 5 points are for responses that reveal critical thought that extends significantly beyond the text and places the term in a broad historical context.

Newspaper reports. By noon on Thursday for 10 of the weeks (weeks 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13) during the semester, post an analysis of a newspaper article from the previous week on Latin America from one of the daily newspapers distributed on campus (*New York Times*, *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, or *USA Today*) to the discussion board on the Blackboard web page. If you would like to use a different source for this assignment, please have me approve it in advance. Briefly describe the content of the article and then analyze its historical significance. Be sure to include the title and author (if given) of the article, the name of the newspaper, and the date it was published, and the section/page numbers. Place the title of the article in the subject line of the post, and if someone has already written on your article post a response that extends the discussion of its significance. The critiques will be graded on a scale similar to the daily identification terms.

Primary source analyses. Analyze one of the primary sources from each chapter of *Dawson's Latin America Since Independence*. Consider these questions:

1. What type of source is this?
2. What is known about who created it, when, and where?
3. Who did the author consider the audience to be?
4. Why was the document created?

5. What views and perspectives does the document present? Are other views silenced or challenged?
6. What does this source tell a reader about a historical event? What are its limits in explaining those events?
7. How does this source fit into a larger historical narrative? Does it challenge a dominant narrative?

Using your own words, summarize the main points of the document, explaining what the document reveals, what it conceals, and how its contents were shaped by the experiences and perspectives of the author. Your analysis should be no more than one-page long, typed, double-spaced, and include citations and a bibliography.

Exams. The midterm and comprehensive final exams will draw on the class readings, films, and discussions.

Class Schedule

Week 1 (Jan 10/12) Intro & Geography

Read: Dawson, Introduction

Week 2 (Jan 17/19) Independence

Read: Dawson, ch. 1

Week 3 (Jan 24/26) Caudillos

Read: Dawson, ch. 2

Week 4 (Jan 31/Feb 2) Slavery

Read: Dawson, ch. 3

Week 5 (Feb 7/9) Export booms

Read: Dawson, ch. 4

Week 6 (Feb 14) Mexican Revolution

Read: Dawson, ch. 5

Week 7 (Feb 21/23) Imperialism

Read: Dawson, ch. 6

Week 8 (Feb 28/March 1) Review/Midterm

Week 9 (March 13/15) Populism

Read: Dawson, ch. 7

Week 10 (March 20/22) Cuban Revolution

Read: Dawson, ch. 8

Week 11 (March 27/29) Guerrillas
Read: Dawson, ch. 9

Week 12 (April 3/5) Human Rights
Read: Dawson, ch. 10

Week 13 (April 10/12) Bolivia
Read: Dawson, ch. 11

Week 14 (April 19) Pink Tides

Week 15 (April 24/26) Review

Final Exam: Tuesday, May 1, 11:30-1:20