

Latin America Revolutions (HIST 391)

“In this part of the world the possibility is almost totally gone for there to be a peaceful transition to socialism.”

- Ernesto “Che” Guevara (1963)

Spring 2012, Truman State University
MC 208, TR 3:00-4:20
Office: KB 225A

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Description

This course will present a critical comparative analysis of twentieth-century revolutionary movements in Latin America. We will examine these events through the lens of those who participated in these activities. What socio-political conditions led to a revolutionary situation? What were the differing responses to those conditions? What did these revolutions seek to accomplish? What were the outcomes of these revolutionary changes? In addressing these issues, we will emphasize the themes of nationalism, state formation, imperialism, agrarian reform, leadership strategies, and citizenship. The goal of this class is to acquire a more complex understanding of the nature of exploitation and oppression in Latin America and the continuing struggles for social justice.

This course meets the Intercultural Perspectives requirement of the Liberal Studies Program. As such, it will provide you with a greater knowledge and appreciation of cultural diversity through the study of encounters of Indigenous, European, and African worlds in the Latin America. Hopefully this course will make you more aware of how culture has been used for political and social ends, including confronting racial discrimination, economic exploitation, and social injustice.

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

Reading for each week's topic will be posted to Blackboard. Read the assignments before class so that you are prepared to carry on an intelligent discussion of the material in class.

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, 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>
Response papers (14 x 20 pts ea)	280 pts
Presentation	200
Historiographic paper	200
Post presentation writing	20
Final exam	200
Participation	100

Response papers: Prepare a one-page written response to each week’s readings. Briefly state the authors’ main arguments and the evidence that they use. Examine the use of sources, methodology, and theory. Provide your own assessment or critique of the readings. The essays are due each Thursday for that week's readings, and must be typed, double spaced, and include citations.

Presentation and historiographic paper: Groups of two will present on one of each week's topics and write a ten-page historiographic paper on that topic. As part of the presentation, in consultation with me select a primary source document for the entire class to read. This primary source should be an artifact (a letter, document, poem, image, etc.) from the period under discussion, and typically will be one-page in length. Have me approve the source in time to post to Blackboard the week before we will discuss the topic. Primary source documents can be found in our microfilm collection; see http://library.truman.edu/microforms/subject_list.asp#Latin%20American%20History.

On the Thursday of each week, the small group will begin with a ten-minute presentation on the material to the class followed by a discussion of the readings. Prepare a list of discussion questions for the class to guide the discussion.

Also on Thursday, submit a ten-page historiographic paper drawing on four to six sources related to the topic for that week, comparing the approaches, use of sources, and arguments in each source. The essays must be typed, double spaced, and include citations and page numbers. The library has a guide for locating sources for this assignment at <http://library.truman.edu/subsplus/subjects/display.php?subject=LatinAmericanStudies>. Erin Blankers <emb8773@truman.edu> is taking this class for graduate credit, and as part of her coursework will help groups assemble bibliographies and select primary sources.

Post presentation writing: On the Tuesday after your presentation, submit a one-page evaluation/critique of your presentation, indicating what went well and what could have been improved.

Participation: The participation grade is not based on attendance (although this is expected and required), but on an active engagement with classroom discussions.

Final exam: The final exam is cumulative.

Class Schedule

Week 1 (Jan 10/12) Intro

Read: Michael Löwy, "Introduction: Points of Reference for a History of Marxism in Latin America," in *Marxism in Latin America from 1909 to the present: an anthology*, ed. Michael Löwy (Atlantic Highlands, N.J: Humanities Press, 1992), xiii-lxv.

Tues, Jan 12: Meet in Pickler 103

Week 2 (Jan 17/19) Anarchism

Read: Peter H. Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible: A history of anarchism* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2010), 504-518; Ricardo Flores Magón, "Land and Liberty," in *The Mexico Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, ed. G. M. Joseph and Timothy J. Henderson (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 335-38.

Week 3 (Jan 24/26) Emiliano Zapata

Read: Dan La Botz, "¡Viva la Revolución!" *Against the Current* 35, no. 3 (147) (July/August 2010): 25-30; "¡Viva la Revolución! Part 2: The New Bonapartism, 1910-1940," *Against the Current* 35, no. 4 (148) (September/October 2010): 9-14; Paul J. Vanderwood, "Explaining the Mexican Revolution," in *The Revolutionary Process in Mexico: Essays on Political and Social Change, 1880-1940*, ed. Jaime E. Rodríguez (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1990), 97-114.

Week 4 (Jan 31/Feb 2) José Carlos Mariátegui

Read: Michael Löwy, "Marxism and Romanticism in the Work of José Carlos Mariátegui," *Latin American Perspectives* 25, no. 4 (101) (July 1998): 76-88; Harry E. Vanden, "The Making of a Latin Marxist: José Carlos Mariátegui's Intellectual Formation," *Revista Interamericana de Bibliografía* 36, no. 1 (1986): 5-28.

Week 5 (Feb 7/9) Communist International

Read: Manuel Caballero, *Latin America and the Comintern 1919-1943*, Cambridge Latin American studies, 60 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 43-62.

Week 6 (Feb 14) Guatemalan Spring

Read: Jim Handy, "'The Most Precious Fruit of the Revolution': The Guatemalan Agrarian Reform 1952-1954," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 68, no. 4 (November 1988): 675-705.

Week 7 (Feb 21/23) MNR

Read: Kenneth Lehman, "Revolutions and Attributions: Making Sense of Eisenhower Administration Policies in Bolivia and Guatemala," *Diplomatic History* 21, no. 2 (Spring 1997): 185-213.

- Week 8 (Feb 28/March 1) Cuban Revolution
Read: James DeFronzo, *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements*, 4th ed. (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 2011), 203-48.
- Week 9 (March 13/15) Che Guevara
Read: Matt D. Childs, "An Historical Critique of the Emergence and Evolution of Ernesto Che Guevara's Foco Theory," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 27, no. 3 (October 1995): 593-624.
- Week 10 (March 20/22) Guerrilla Wars
Read: Thomas C Wright, *Latin America in the Era of the Cuban Revolution* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2001), 93-109.
- Week 11 (March 27/29) Chilean Path to Socialism
Read: Peter Winn, "Salvador Allende: His Political Life...and Afterlife," *Socialism and Democracy* 19, no. 3 (39) (November 2005): 129-60.
- Week 12 (April 3/5) Sandinistas
Read: Roger Peace, "Winning Hearts and Minds: The Debate Over U.S. Intervention in Nicaragua in the 1980s," *Peace & Change* 35, no. 1 (January 2010): 1-38.
- Week 13 (April 10/12) Sendero
Read: Deborah Poole and Gerardo Rénique, "The New Chroniclers of Peru: U.S. Scholars and Their 'Shining Path' of Peasant Rebellion," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 10, no. 2 (1991): 133-91.
- Week 14 (April 19) Zapatistas
Read: Richard Stahler-Sholk, "The Zapatista Social Movement: Innovation and Sustainability," *Alternatives* 35, no. 3 (July-September 2010): 269-90.
- Week 15 (April 24/26) Venezuela
Read: Gregory Wilpert, "Venezuela's Experiment in Participatory Democracy," in *The Revolution in Venezuela: Social and Political Change Under Chávez*, ed. Thomas Ponniah and Jonathan Eastwood (Cambridge: Harvard Univ David Rockefeller, 2011), 99-129.
- Final exam: Thursday, May 3, 11:30-1:20