

HIST 159-20: History of Modern Latin America
draft syllabus, subject to revision

Instructor: Douglas V. McRae
Term: Summer Session II - 2020
Room: ICC 213
Time: MTWR, 10:45-12:45 PM
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Office Hours: [TBA]
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Description: This course is an introduction to the history of modern Latin America, providing an overview of major events, trends and issues that have shaped the region's nations and people since the era of independence. In addition to covering political and social history, this course aims to introduce students to cultural and environmental matters that reveal the significance of the region in the making of the modern world. In this course, students will broaden their knowledgeable of the nation-states that emerged in the aftermath of the collapse of the Spanish and Portuguese empires in the Americas. Through engaged participation in class lectures and group discussions, as well as through written assignments and exams, students will demonstrate not just familiarity with the topics surveyed but also demonstrate the ability to use historical evidence to formulate arguments and interpretations of the region's historical trajectory and contemporary affairs.

Due to the breadth of the subject and the accelerated summer course schedule, it will be impossible to cover every country or subject in depth. Each week, however, will have a thematic and chronological focus from which we will be able to draw comparative case studies between different national experiences. Most days will be split between lecture on the day's topic and a discussion of reading, which will either be handed out in class or assigned beforehand. Several days will be devoted to viewing and discussing a film. As a participatory survey, this class requires that all students come prepared daily to engage in respectful and informed discussion with their peers.

Learning Goals:

At the end of this course, a student will:

- 1) Be knowledgeable about the major themes and issues in the history of modern Latin America
- 2) Be further prepared to absorb and evaluate historical evidence, including present understandings of key historical questions
- 3) Be comfortable reading and analyzing both primary and secondary sources
- 4) Have experience and critical feedback in writing argumentative essays
- 5) Be able to think about current events in Latin America from a historical perspective

Class Policies:

Attendance:

Daily attendance is mandatory. If you miss more than four classes, you will automatically fail the course.

Late Papers:

Due to the rapid pace of summer session, late assignments will be accepted only in situations of unforeseeable emergencies. Internships and job interviews do not qualify as such. Failure to complete assignments will result in failure of the course.

Electronic Devices:

Please turn off and put away your cell phone during class. You are not permitted to use laptops and tablets to take notes, unless you have a documented accommodation (see below). Always be respectful to your classmates and instructor.

Accommodations:

Students with documented physical, psychological, or learning disabilities should register with [the Academic Resource Center \(ARC\)](#) to arrange for reasonable accommodations under Georgetown University policies and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Within the first two weeks of the semester, you should present me with a letter that describes the accommodations that you have arranged with the ARC. Those who are not registered with the ARC or who do not comply with its procedures are not entitled to accommodations. Any student with a chronic condition that affects their performance in class should contact the ARC about possible accommodations on future coursework.

Although you may not be eligible for accommodations through the ARC, Georgetown possesses a number of resources for students who may experience life events or academic pressures that cause feelings of anxiety, confusion, depression, or loneliness. You can visit [Counseling and Psychiatric Services \(CAPS\)](#) in Darnall Hall. A free intake can be arranged by walk-in, or by calling 202-687-6985 during normal business hours or 202-444-PAGE (7243) for emergencies. You can also talk to your dean, who can connect you to the appropriate resources and help you work through your academic options. Lastly, you can communicate with me if anxiety or depression have disrupted class attendance and/or productivity.

Sexual Assault and Harassment:

As an instructor and a member of the Georgetown University community, I am committed to supporting the survivors of relationship violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and other forms of sexual misconduct. University policy requires me

nonetheless to communicate any disclosures about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator, who is responsible for coordinating the university's response to sexual misconduct. Georgetown possesses a number of confidential professional resources that can provide support and assistance to survivors of sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct. These resources include:

Jen Schweer, MA, LPC
Associate Director of Health Education Services for Sexual Assault Response and Prevention

Phone: (202) 687-0323

Email: jls242@georgetown.edu

Jennifer Wiggins, MA
Assistant Director for Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Services

Phone: (202) 687-8932

Email: jmw322@georgetown.edu

Brit Egan, MSW, LICSW, CCTP
Staff Clinician, Sexual Assault Specialist

Phone: (202) 687-0350

Email: sarp@georgetown.edu

For more information about campus resources and reporting sexual misconduct, please visit <http://sexualassault.georgetown.edu/>.

Academic Integrity:

It is expected that all students will abide by the Georgetown University Honor Code regarding plagiarism and all other subjects. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with me.

Required Texts:

All books will be available for purchase at the Georgetown University Bookstore. I will place copies on 4-hour reserve at the Circulation Desk in Lauinger Library. You may purchase or otherwise acquire any edition of these books (cheaply available via online sellers.)

- Miguel Barnet, *Biography of a Runaway Slave*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2016 [1966].
- Mark Danner, *The Massacre at El Mozote*. New York: Vintage, 1994.
- Patricia Galvão (Pagú), *Industrial Park: A Proletarian Novel*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993 [1933]).

Supplementary reading (Will be placed on 4-hour course reserve. Purchase not required but may be useful for further reading.)

- Virginia Garrard-Burnett, Peter V.N. Henderson and Bryan McCann, *Latin America in the Modern World* (Oxford University Press, 2018)

Grading Breakdown:

Map Quiz: 5% (label key cities and geographical features of the region)

First Essay: 20% (4-5 pp.)

Second Essay: 25% (4-5 pp.)

Take Home Final: 30% (open-ended essay questions)

Class Contribution: 20%

-attendance, participation, brief reaction papers

Course Schedule:

Week 1: The Era of Independence

7/6: Course Introduction

Independence and Fragmentation

7/7: Liberals, Conservatives and Caudillos

7/8: Film/Discussion: *Bolívar Soy Yo [I am Bolívar!]* (2001)

7/9: Slaves and Peasants: Everyday Life in the 19th Century

Discussion: Barnet, *Biography of a Runaway Slave*, 'Slavery' and 'Abolition of Slavery'

First Essay assigned

Week 2: 19th Century Nation States: In Search of Prosperity

7/13: Lecture: Export Economies and Tropical Commodities: Coffee, Guano, Bananas, Rubber

Map Quiz

7/14: Urbanization and Elite Strategies of Modernization

7/15: The US and Latin America

Discussion: Barnet, *Biography of a Runaway Slave* 'The War of Independence' and 'Afterword'

7/16: Film: *El abrazo del serpiente [Embrace of the Serpent]* (2015)

First Essay Due, Friday 7/17, 11:59 PM

Week 3: Revolution and Reform in the 20th Century

7/20: Revolutionary Mexico

Film excerpts: *Viva Zapata!* (1952) and *And Starring Pancho Villa as Himself* (2003)

7/21: The Rise of National Capitalism: Vargas, Cárdenas, Perón

7/22: Latin American Women in Culture and Politics

Discussion: Galvão, *Industrial Park*, all.

7/23: Post-War Transitions: Agrarian Miracles and Developmentalist Solutions

Second Essay Assigned

Week 4: Cold War Crises

7/27: Mid-Century Uprisings: Guatemala, Bolivia, Cuba

7/28: Military Dictatorship and Resistance: Argentina, Brazil, Chile

7/29: Film/Discussion: [TBA]

7/31: Export Booms in the Northern Andes: Oil and Cocaine

Second Essay Due, Friday, 7/31 11:59 PM

Week 5: Contemporary Challenges

8/3: Central America at War

Discussion: Danner, *Massacre at El Mozote*, all.

8/4: Indigenous and Guerilla Movements in the Andes

8/5: Film/Discussion: *La teta asustada* [The Milk of Sorrow] (2009)

8/6: Neoliberalism and Its Discontents

Take Home Exam: Due by Wednesday, 8/12 11:59 PM

Note on Intellectual Property

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