HIST 234/CLAS 234: MODERN LATIN AMERICA
Spring 2016: M, W, F 2:30-3:30pm, Piskor Rm 15

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Course Description:

This course traces the historical trajectory of the region (including South and Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean) from the late nineteenth century through the present. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries heralded an era of great transformation throughout Latin America. The region emerged from struggles for independence and subsequent nation-building efforts with lingering colonial legacies and the rising shadow of U.S. intervention. Internal national debates over how to shape the new republics were fought by diverse groups along lines of race, gender, class, religion, culture and ideology. This contestation over power and social justice spanned throughout the twentieth century, and continues to this day.

The course is broken into four separate units, representing distinct historical periods in modern Latin American history. The first unit explores the nineteenth century, focusing on the concrete influence of economic, social and political legacies from the earlier era of colonial rule. This unit also covers the shifting influence of Europe and the United States on local and international relations. The second unit covers the rise of mass politics in the first half of the twentieth century, beginning with the Mexican Revolution in 1910 and ending with an exploration of populist regimes, which promised reform and greater social justice, yet were undermined by internal and external opponents.

The third unit begins with another seminal revolution in Cuba (1959), and traces the rise of radical revolutionary movements, counterrevolutionary dictatorships, and the economic dictates of the Washington Consensus. This period demonstrates the profound impact global Cold War politics had on local conflicts, and vice versa. The fourth and final unit explores the aftermath of neoliberal economic models, focusing on different forms of resistance and adaptation, from the fair trade movement to the rise of the left-leaning “pink-tide” governments.

Lectures provide the historical base to help place the assigned monographs, articles, and primary documents into context. Assignments include participation in discussion, weekly forum posts on the readings and three short essays, described in more detail below.

Course Objectives:

• Introduce students to a broad overview of the different historical currents in Latin America from the late 1800’s to the present.
• Consider the shifting power dynamics between diverse groups within Latin America along lines of race, ethnicity, class, and gender. Also reflect on how social location within different societal hierarchies helped shape interactions and contestations between and within groups.
• Train students in the evaluation of arguments from secondary scholarship.

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• Build critical thinking and writing skills and instruct students how to construct convincing arguments through the use of multiple forms of evidence.

Required Books:


Books are available at the St. Lawrence University Bookstore. All other assigned readings can be found on the course’s Sakai webpage.

Assignments:

There are six principal activities that will form the basis of evaluation for a student’s performance in the course:

1. **Weekly Participation in Class: 20%** - Students are responsible for reading and critically engaging with the assigned texts each week, and arriving prepared to discuss and exchange ideas with the rest of the class. Since this is a smaller sized class, I will be running Fridays seminar-style. Note that Fridays also have heavier reading loads, with a focus on secondary scholarship. We will design a grading rubric for general participation together as a class at the beginning of the course. The final grade for general participation will be a collaborative effort between the student and professor, and will include a student self-assessment at the midterm point and end of the course.

2. **Co-leading of Class Discussion: 10%** - Each student will be responsible for co-leading Friday discussion with the professor twice during the semester. A sign up sheet will be distributed at the beginning of the course to select co-leading dates. Each co-leading experience is worth 5%.

3. **Weekly Forum Postings on Readings: 10%** - Students should post written reactions to each week’s assigned readings on the class’s Discussion Forum on Sakai. Each post should contain three components: 1) one paragraph that summarizes the author’s principal argument and points, 2) one paragraph that critically reflects on your own reaction to the argument and evidence – this could be a comment on an insight that particularly impressed you, or a problem you saw with the author’s argument or evidence – either way this paragraph should go beyond just summarization of the material to include your own assessment or opinion of the work; and 3) end your post with a lingering question, either with the reading specifically or an issue that the readings inspired in you. These should be posted no later than Friday at 8am to allow time for everyone to read your posts prior to discussion on Friday afternoon. Posts will begin the second week of class. Your posts will be graded on a check, check-plus, check-minus.
basis. You are not required to post on the two days you co-lead class, but you should read every one else’s posts for those days, to help prepare you for discussion leading. Students are also allowed to miss two additional weekly posts during the semester. Any missed posts beyond those two will result in a half percent drop in your final grade.

4. **Mini-Historiography (4-5pp): 20%** - Students will write an analytical review that compares Ada Ferrer’s *Insurgent Cuba* with one other historical journal article or book. The outside article or monograph must have been written at a minimum five years before or after Ferrer’s publication date (1999). Your essay will explore how Ferrer’s monograph changed the interpretation of Cuban independence (in the case of work published prior to Ferrer’s) or how subsequent scholarship has built upon or altered Ferrer’s argument (in the case of work produced after Ferrer’s). A list of potential themes and articles will be passed out before the essay is due, although students are not limited to these suggestions.

5. **Documentary Analysis (5-6pp): 20%** - Students will craft their own historical question, and then will answer that question through an analysis of primary source material linked to Units 2 or 3. Students will pick two to three primary documents, make an argument about what they reveal, and place them in historical context. This paper will combine the selected primary sources with other course materials and lectures to make an argument about one of the themes covered in either Unit 2 or 3. At least one document should come from a source not read in class. A list of potential internet and published readers with primary documents will be provided along with a more detailed description of the assignment. Students may also select the outside primary document through their own searches. Students will hand in a worksheet to help organize the essay before the final due date.

6. **Self-Reflexive Contemporary Scenario Essay (4-5pp): 20%** - Students will write an essay in response to one of three prompts. Each prompt will ask the student to place themselves into a hypothetical scenario related to the contemporary themes of the last unit of the class. This exercise will encourage students to think of the practical applications of the knowledge they have gained through the class. It will also help them reflect on their own positionality in relation to issues of power and justice in present day Latin America.

**Attendance Policy:**

Perfect attendance is expected. As emergencies do occur, three excused absences will be allowed during the term. Any absences beyond those three will result in a half percent drop in the final grade. If you have a valid excuse for missing class beyond the three allowed absences (death in the family, illness, etc.), you will be permitted to make up the absence without penalty to your grade through written or oral work outside class time.

**Email Policy:** I only check my email once a day, and the time of day varies widely depending on my schedule (and my internet connection). Therefore, you should expect to receive a response within 24-48 hours. If you have an intellectual question about the readings or assignments, please come see me during office hours instead of using email, since direct conversation is a more effective manner of talking through ideas. Plus I would like to get to know you all better as individuals, so please drop by whenever you have a question or just want to chat!
Office Hours: I will have open, walk-in office hours every Wednesday, from 5-6pm and Thursdays from 2-4pm. If you need to speak with me, and cannot attend regular office hours, we can arrange to meet at an alternate time.

Disability Accommodations: If you have a disability and need accommodations please be sure to contact the Disability and Accessibility Services Office (x5537) right away so they can help you get the accommodations you require. If you will need to use any accommodations in this class, please talk with me early (within the first two weeks) so you can have the best possible experience this semester. Although not required, I would like to know of any accommodations that are needed at least 10 days before an exam, so there is proper time to make arrangements for alternate testing. For more specific information visit the DASO website http://www.stlawu.edu/disability-and-accessibility-services

Course Schedule:

UNIT ONE: POST-COLONIAL LEGACIES

Week 1 (January 20-22): Colonial Legacies in Latin America

Wednesday (1/20) - (LECTURE TOPIC): Introduction to course + Syllabus

Friday (1/22): (SHORT LECTURE + DISCUSSION): Overview of Colonial Period and General Discussion of Region
Readings: (book) Ada Ferrer, Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation and Revolution, 1869-1898

Week 2 (January 25-29): Independence and New Republics

Monday (1/25) - (In-Class Movie): The Last Supper (1977) directed by Tomas Gutierrez Alea. 110 minutes.

Wednesday (1/27) - (MOVIE+ DISCUSSION):

Friday (1/29): (DISCUSSION)
Readings: (book) Ada Ferrer, Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation and Revolution, 1869-1898
Week 3 (February 1-5): Social & Political Challenges Faced in the New Century

Monday (2/1) - (LECTURE TOPIC + ESSAY 1 INSTRUCTIONS)

Wednesday (2/3) - (LECTURE TOPIC + DISCUSSION): Race and the Myth of Progress

Friday (2/5): (DISCUSSION)

Week 4 (February 8-12): The Economy and Labor in the New Century

Monday (2/8): (LECTURE + HISTORIOGRAPHY UPDATE)

Wednesday (2/10): (LECTURE + DOCUMENT DISCUSSION)

Friday (2/12): (DISCUSSION)

UNIT TWO: THE RISE OF MASS POLITICS, 1910-1959

Week 5 (February 15-17): Conflicting Strands of the Mexican Revolution

Monday (2/15) - (LECTURE TOPIC + DOCUMENT DISCUSSION): Mexican Revolution Part 1

Wednesday (2/17) - (LECTURE TOPIC + DOCUMENT DISCUSSION): Mexican Revolution Part 2

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Week 6 (February 22-26): The Agrarian Problem

**Monday (2/22) – (LECTURE TOPIC + WRITING SELF-REFLECTION)**
*(Mini-historiography DUE IN-CLASS: WEDNESDAY February 22)*

**Wednesday (2/24) - (LECTURE TOPIC + DISCUSSION): Agrarian Populists in Comparative Perspective**

**Friday (2/26): (DISCUSSION)**

Week 7 (February 29 – March 4): Urban Populism

**Monday (2/29) - (LECTURE TOPIC + DOCUMENT DISCUSSION): Populism in Brazil**

**Wednesday (3/2) - (LECTURE TOPIC + DOCUMENT DISCUSSION): Populism in Argentina**

**Friday (3/4) – (DISCUSSION)**

Week 8 (March 7-11): Motorcycle Diaries


**Friday (3/11) - (MOVIE & DOCUMENT DISCUSSION + SECOND PAPER INSTRUCTIONS)**

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UNIT THREE: REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS AND COLD WAR DICTATORSHIPS, 1959-1989

Week 9 (March 14-18): The Cuban Revolution - Its Causes and Consequences

Monday (3/14) - (LECTURE TOPIC + DOCUMENT DISCUSSION): Cuban Revolution – Precedents, Beginnings, and Revolutionary Reform

Wednesday (3/16) - (LECTURE TOPIC + DOCUMENT DISCUSSION): Legacies of the Cuban Revolution

**(Document Analysis Worksheet DUE IN-CLASS: Friday March 18)**

Friday (3/18) – (DISCUSSION)

SPRING BREAK: March 23-29

Week 10 (March 28 – April 1): Next Wave Revolutionaries and Civil War in Central America and the Andes

Monday (3/28) - (LECTURE TOPIC+ DOCUMENT DISCUSSION): Next Wave Revolutionaries: Guatemala

Wednesday (3/30) - (LECTURE TOPIC + DOCUMENT DISCUSSION): Revolutionary Terror: Peru

Friday (4/1) – (DISCUSSION)
**Week 11 (April 4-8): Dictatorship, Popular Suppression, and the Rise of the Washington Consensus**

**Monday (4/4) -** (LECTURE TOPIC + ORAL HISTORY DISCUSSION): Dirty War Dictatorships in the Southern Cone

**Wednesday (4/6) -** (LECTURE TOPIC + ORAL HISTORY DISCUSSION): Neoliberalism: Implementation and Impact

**Friday (4/8) –** (DISCUSSION)

**UNIT FOUR: ‘ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE’, 1990-present**

**Week 12 (April 11-15): Free Trade to Fair Trade – Consequences and Responses to Neoliberal Solutions**

**(Document Analysis DUE IN-CLASS: MONDAY April 11)**

**Monday (4/11) -** (LECTURE TOPIC + DOCUMENT DISCUSSION): Challenging the Neoliberal World Order: Mexico and the EZLN

**Wednesday (4/13) -** (LECTURE TOPIC): From Free Trade to Fair Trade

**Friday (4/15) –** (DISCUSSION)

**Week 13 (April 18-22): New Social Movements and the Rise of Identity Politics**

**Monday (4/18) -** (LECTURE TOPIC+ DOCUMENT DISCUSSION): Women’s Movements

**Wednesday (4/20) -** (LECTURE TOPIC + DOCUMENT DISCUSSION): Indigenous Movements

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**Friday (4/22)** – (DISCUSSION)

*Week 14 (April 25-29): Latin America’s Pink Tide*

**Monday (4/25)** - (LECTURE TOPIC + DOCUMENT DISCUSSION): A Lighter Shade of Pink: Brazil

**Wednesday (4/27)** - (LECTURE TOPIC): A Deeper Shade of Pink: Bolivia

**Friday (4/29)** – (DISCUSSION)

**Week 15 (May 2-6): Movie**

**Monday (5/2)** - (MOVIE): *Even the Rain* (2010), dir. Icíar Bollaín. 103 Minutes.

**Wednesday (5/6)** - (MOVIE + DISCUSSION)

**ESSAY 3 DUE FRIDAY MAY 6th**

**Friday (5/6)** – (MOVIE + BOOK DISCUSSION + WRAP UP)

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**Deadlines at a Glance:**

1st Paper (Unit I)  Wednesday, February 22nd (due in class)
2nd Paper Worksheet  Friday, March 18th (due in class)
2nd Paper (Unit II & III)  Monday, April 11th (due in class)
3rd Paper (Unit IV)  Friday, May 6th (due in class)

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HISTORY DEPARTMENT COMMON STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Policies and sources on academic integrity
All scholarly endeavor builds on the work of others in the context of the community of learners of which both faculty and students are a part. The integrity of this community can be maintained only by the full, honest, and appropriate acknowledgement of the sources of our data and ideas. The History Department will not tolerate academic dishonesty, including plagiarism on papers, cheating on quizzes and exams, and turning in work you have already submitted in another class. The Department will uphold SLU’s policy on this.

From the Constitution of the Academic Honor Council (http://www.stlawu.edu/resource/student-handbook, 62-63):
“All students at St. Lawrence University are bound by honor to maintain the highest level of academic integrity. By virtue of membership in the St. Lawrence community, every student accepts the responsibility to know the rules of academic honesty, to abide by them at all times, and to encourage all others to do the same.”

“Plagiarism: Presenting as one’s own work the work of another person—words, ideas, data, evidence, thoughts, information, organizing principles, or style of presentation—without proper attribution. Plagiarism includes paraphrasing or summarizing without acknowledgment by quotation marks, footnotes, endnotes, or other indices of reference.”

“Responsibility for avoiding behavior or situations from which academic dishonesty may be inferred rests entirely with the students. Claims of ignorance, unintentional error, and academic or personal pressure are not excuses for academic dishonesty. Students should be sure to learn from faculty what is expected as their own work and how the work of other people should be acknowledged. Instructors are expected to maintain conditions which promote academic honesty.”

Further sources of information
We expect all of our students to familiarize themselves with the following:
• Your course syllabus and your professor’s stated expectations on class assignments.
• The full SLU policy on “Academic Integrity Procedures” (the basis of the Academic Honor Card that you signed in FYP), described in the SLU Student Handbook (http://www.stlawu.edu/resource/student-handbook)

For more information on plagiarism, see Mary Lynn Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History, 8th ed., chapter 6: “Plagiarism: What It Is and How to Avoid It.”

If, after reviewing these guidelines, you are still uncertain about anything or have questions, be sure to ask them before you turn in written assignments.

Policies on academic dishonesty
If your professor encounters a suspicious paper or exam, “s/he has the obligation to call the offending student(s) to account” (SLU Student Handbook, 63). Plagiarism cases brought before the Academic Honor Council have resulted in sanctions ranging from failure on the assignment, to failure of the course, to suspension from the University.

A final caveat: Do not underestimate your professors’ ability to detect plagiarism, or our willingness to have suspicious papers and exams investigated. If you can find it on the Web, so can we. Please don’t risk it.