

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)

Fall 2015, Truman State University
BH262, TR 10:30-11:50
Office: MC 227

Marc Becker
marc@truman.edu
Office Hours: TR noon-1pm
Phone: x6036

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. Personal and scholarly integrity are expected of everyone in the class. Plagiarized assignments will not receive credit and risks a failing grade for the course.

Readings

Each section of the syllabus has 3 readings that will be posted to Blackboard: A chapter from a textbook that the instructor is writing on Latin American revolutions, a published article-length essay, and a primary source. 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, and I do not accept “drop and run” papers or papers submitted without the physical presence of the student. 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 (7 x 20 pts ea)	140 pts
Presentation	200
Historiographic paper	200
Post presentation writing	20
Film critique (4 x 35 pts ea)	140
Final exam	200
Participation	100

Response papers: Prepare a one-page written response to each set of 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 the final day of each section of the syllabus, and must be typed, double-spaced, and include citations.

Historiographic paper: With a small group, write a ten-page historiographic paper on the topic for one section of the class. The paper should draw on at least six scholarly sources (including at least one book for each author) and compare the approaches, use of sources, and arguments in each source. The essay 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/guide.php?subject=LatinAmericanStudies>. The essay is due on the final day of that section of the syllabus.

Presentation: Lead a discussion of your group’s historiographic paper on the final day of that section of the syllabus. Begin with a ten-minute presentation on the material to the class, and follow with a discussion of the assigned readings (please feel free to suggest more appropriate readings for the class). Prepare a list of discussion questions for the class to guide the discussion.

Post presentation writing: On the next class meeting 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 the material and classroom discussions. If you are looking for a passive or “garb-garb” (garbage in, garbage out) learning experience, this is

perhaps not the class for you. My hope is that all of us will be richly rewarded with an active engagement with the material and concepts.

Film critique: View four films related to the topic from different sections of the syllabus and write a one-page critique that places the film in a historiographic context. A list of films is on Blackboard. Please confirm the use of any films not on this list with the instructor before completing the assignment. Due dates: Sept 17, Oct 6, Oct 27, and Nov 10

Final exam: The final exam is comprehensive and cumulative.

Class Schedule

Weeks 1 & 2 (August 20, 25, 27) Intro/Theory

Secondary: 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.

Primary: José Carlos Mariátegui, "The New Peru," *The Nation* 128, no. 3315 (January 16, 1929): 78-79.

Weeks 3 & 4 (Sept 1, 3, 8, 10) Mexican Revolution (1910–1920)

Secondary: 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.

Primary: Emiliano Zapata, "Plan of Ayala," in *The Mexico Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, ed. G. M. Joseph and Timothy J. Henderson, *The Latin America readers* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 339-43.

Thurs, Sept 3: Meet in Pickler 103

Weeks 5 & 6 (Sept 17, 22, 24) Guatemalan Spring (1944–1954)

Secondary: 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.

Primary: Decree 900 (agrarian reform)

Tues, Sept 15: No class (work on film critique, due next class period)

Weeks 7 & 8 (Sept 29, 5, 8) Bolivia's National Revolution (1952-1964)

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

Primary: The Union Federation of Bolivian Mineworkers, "Pulacayo Theses, 1946." http://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/9780195375701/pdf/SPD8_Bolivian_Revolution.pdf

Thurs, Oct 1: No class (work on film critique, due next class period)

Weeks 9 & 10 (Oct 13, 20) Cuban Revolution (1959–)

Secondary: James DeFronzo, *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements*, 4th ed. (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 2011), 203-48.

Primary: "First Declaration of Havana (September 2, 1960)," in *Cuban Revolution Reader: A Documentary History of 40 Key Moments of the Cuban Revolution*, ed. Julio García Luis, ed. (Melbourne, New York: Ocean, 2001), 45-51.

Thurs, Oct 22: No class (work on film critique, due next class period)

Weeks 11 & 12 (Oct 27, 29, Nov 3) Chilean Road to Socialism (1970–1973)

Secondary: Peter Winn, "Salvador Allende: His Political Life...and Afterlife," *Socialism and Democracy* 19, no. 3 (39) (November 2005): 129-60.

Primary: "Economic Development Program of the Popular Unity," in *The Chilean Road to Socialism*, ed. Dale L. Johnson (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1973), 130-34.

Thurs, Nov 5: No class (work on film critique, due next class period)

Weeks 13 & 14 (Nov 10, 12, 17, 19) Nicaraguan Sandinistas (1979–1990)

Secondary: 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.

Primary: FSLN, "The Historic Program of the FSLN," in *Sandinistas Speak*, edited by Bruce Marcus (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1982), 13-22.

Week 15 (Dec 1 & 3) Twenty-first-Century Socialism

Secondary: 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.

Primary: "Hugo Chávez Frías," *Z Magazine* (November 2006): 44–.

Final exam: Monday, Dec 7, 9:30-11:20