

**Latin America Revolutions (HIST 391):
Personal Narratives**

*“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 2009, Truman State University
MC 212, TR 1:30-2:50
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Description

This course will present a critical comparative analysis of twentieth-century revolutionary theories in Latin America. The goal of this class is to acquire a more complex understanding of the nature of exploitation in Latin America, intellectual responses to that oppression, and 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

The following are the required books for this class. We will run this course as a seminar (rather than a lecture course) in which class time will be focused on discussion, so it is critically important that you keep up with the readings.

Belli, Gioconda. *The Country Under My Skin: A memoir of love and war*. New York: Knopf, 2002. ISBN: 0375403701

Guevara, Ernesto. *The Bolivian Diary*. Melbourne, Vic, London: Ocean Press, 2006. ISBN: 1920888241

_____. *Reminiscences of the Cuban Revolutionary War*. Melbourne, Vic, New York, London:

Ocean Press, 2006. ISBN: 1920888330
 Ulloa Bornemann, Alberto. *Surviving Mexico's Dirty War: A political prisoner's memoir*.
 Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007. ISBN: 1592134238
 Vásquez Perdomo, María Eugenia. *My life as a Colombian Revolutionary: Reflections of a
 former guerrillera*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005. ISBN: 1592131018

The following is a recommended textbook to give a broader background on the material we will discuss in class:

Keen, Benjamin and Keith Haynes. *A History of Latin America*, 8th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2009. ISBN: 9780618783212

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). 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 (6 x75 pts ea)	450
Secondary source analysis (Feb 17)	75
Primary source analysis (March 3)	75
Research paper (April 30)	200
Final exam (May 5)	100
Participation	100

Reaction papers: Critique the argument in each of the books that we are reading in this class. The essays should be about three pages long, typed, double spaced, follow good essay form (have an intro, thesis, conclusion, etc.) and include citations, a bibliography, and page numbers. A similar essay is also due on the readings and films from the first three weeks of the semester (75 pts each).

Research paper: Each student is required to write a research paper on a topic related to Latin American revolutions. The paper must be 10 to 15 pages long, be typed, double spaced, and include page numbers, citations and a bibliography. The format should follow Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. In addition, you must use a minimum of six scholarly sources (books and journal articles) and one primary source. This project will be developed in a series of stages. Keep each of these assignments in a portfolio or folder, and hand in the entire portfolio with each subsequent assignment. Meeting all of these deadlines is a requirement to receive credit for the research paper.

Feb 3: Research paper proposal, including a paragraph describing your project, the research questions you seek to address with the project, a hypothesis of what you expect to find

(the thesis statement of your research paper), and a preliminary bibliography of sources that you plan to use.

Feb 17: Analyze one of the major secondary sources you will use in the writing of your research paper. This paper should be typed, double-spaced, about 3 pages long, and include citations a bibliography, and page numbers (75 pts).

March 3: Select a primary source from the Latin American history microfilm collection (http://library.truman.edu/microforms/subject_list.htm#Latin%20American%20History). Try to find something that relates as closely as possible to your research topic. Have me approve the source, and then write a paper (typed, double-spaced, about 3 pages, with citations, bibliography, page numbers) analyzing the document and its historical significance for your research topic. Attach a copy of the document to the essay (75 pts).

April 21: Peer review of research papers. Bring a draft of your research paper to exchange with another student. Read and comment on the other student's paper and return by the next class period.

April 30: Final research paper due. When handing in your final draft, please be sure to include copies of *all* of the previous assignments including the peer-reviewed draft (200 pts).

Final exam: The final exam is cumulative (100 pts).

Class Schedule

Week 1 (Jan 13-15) Introduction

Read: John Beverley, "The Margin at the Center: On Testimonio (1989)," in *The Real Thing: Testimonial discourse and Latin America*, ed. Georg M. Gugelberger, 23-41 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), on blackboard.

Week 2 (Jan 20-22) History

Read: Keen

Thursday, Jan 22: Meet in the library classroom, Pickler 103.

Week 3 (Jan 27-29) Revolutions

Films: *The Weather Underground* (TRUMAN Media DVD HN90.R3 W43 2004, 90 min)
Battle of Algiers (TRUMAN Media DVD PN1995.9.F6714 B373 2004, 123 min)

Weeks 4-5 (Feb 3-12) Cuba

Read: Guevara, *Reminiscences of the Cuban Revolutionary War*

Assignment: Research paper proposal (due Tues, Feb 3)

Weeks 6-7 (Feb 17-26) Bolivia

Read: Guevara, *The Bolivian Diary*

Assignment: Secondary source analysis (due Tues, Feb 17)

Weeks 8-9 (March 3-19) Mexico

Read: Ulloa Bornemann, *Surviving Mexico's Dirty War*
Assignment: Primary source analysis (due Tues, March 3)

Weeks 10-11 (March 24-April 2) Nicaragua
Read: Belli, *The Country Under My Skin*

Weeks 12-13 (April 9-16) Colombia
Read: Vásquez Perdomo, *My life as a Colombian Revolutionary*

Week 14 (April 21-23) Presentations
Assignment: Peer review (due Tues, April 21)

Week 15 (April 28-30) Final Reviews
Assignment: Research paper (due Thurs, April 30)

Final exam: Tuesday, May 5, 11:30-1:20