

HIST 194-01/LATI 194-01
Macalester College, Fall 2008
Introduction to Latin America and the Caribbean
TR 09:40 am-11:10 am, HUM 112

Professor: Ernesto Capello (ecapello@macalester.edu)
Office: Old Main 302 (x6772)
Office Hours: W 1:30-2:30; R 3:00-4:00 and by appt.

Overview

This course presents a survey of major themes and moments in the history of the variegated region somewhat reductively termed Latin America. It will follow a roughly chronological approach, beginning on the eve of encounter and ending at the late twentieth century. Three thematic foci will dominate our discussion: 1) the heterogeneity of Latin American cultures, traditions, and history; 2) the relationship between Latin America's great diversity and its relative sociopolitical volatility; and 3) the role of global socioeconomic and political climates in shaping the region's history. Throughout, we will interrogate the utility of the concept of "Latin America" through highlighting transnational similarities and the extreme differences between the region's many nations and peoples.

Books and Readings

The following books are available at the bookstore for purchase and will be on reserve in the library.

Bradford E. Burns and Julie A. Charlip, *Latin America: A Concise Interpretive History*.
Bartolome de las Casas, *Account, Much Abbreviated, of the Destruction of the Indies*.
Sandra Lauderdale Graham, *Caetana Says No*.
Mariano Azuela, *The Underdogs*
Ernesto Guevara, *The Motorcycle Diaries*.

Other readings will be distributed via the course moodle site (see below). Please note that this is a cross-listed course – only the History moodle site will be regularly updated.

Assessment

Assessment will also reflect both the ability to understand the narrative of modern Latin American history as well as the student's ability to engage critically with sources using the tools of the historian. Grading will be based on the following four elements:

1. 3 Document Analyses (2-3 pages) – 25 % (1st at 5%, 2 at 10%)

2. Mid-Term – 20%
3. Final Paper (8-10 pages) – 30%
4. Attendance/Participation – 25%

Document Analyses – 25%

Historians study primary sources (i.e., an original document from the era under scrutiny) in order to gain insight into the pathway of historical change. The documents themselves, whether written, oral, visual, architectural, or other sources in essence *are* history. This survey will require you to read and experience a series of documentary sources, which will be discussed in class. You will also be asked to write your own short response (2-3 pages) to 3 documents over the course of the term. The first two will be chosen from in-class reading; the third from your own research on your final paper (you will receive an orientation on how to identify primary sources at our Library orientation in October). These should explicate the source, i.e., summarize its main components and explain why it is important. What does it tell us about the complexities and tendencies of Latin American history?

The first analysis paper will be worth 5% and the second two each 10% for a total of 25% of your final grade. The due dates are: 9/12; 10/1; 11/14.

Mid-Term Exam – 20%

The mid-term exam will cover the first half of the semester and will be held on 10/14. It will consist of two parts. The first will ask you to identify five out of eight key terms (25 points) while in the second part you will write an essay responding to one of two questions (75 points). A study guide will be distributed beforehand which will consist of possible ID terms as well as a listing of possible themes which will intersect with essay topics.

Final Paper – 30%

The final paper will ask you to compare/contrast the historical experience of two individuals from different periods of Latin American history. These individuals may be archetypes (e.g., an eighteenth-century indigenous peasant) or historical figures (e.g., Che Guevara). This will be a research project in which you will delve further into the biographies/social context of these two figures. Further guidelines, including a list of potential pairings and benchmark deadlines will be distributed via moodle following Fall Break. The first step in crafting this paper will be expanding your bibliography, a process that will necessitate an orientation into the Dewitt Wallace Library's resources that will be conducted in late October. You will be expected to develop a preliminary bibliography for Prof. Capello's review by November 7 and to conduct your last

documentary analysis on one of the primary sources therein (due November 14. The final paper must show evidence of further research and will be due in our last class on December 4.

Participation – 25%

The success of our class depends upon your regular attendance and participation. Discussions will be one of the driving forces of this class – I expect you to have done the reading and be ready to courteously discuss the issues raised in readings. No cell phones, no loud foods, no laptops. If you are chronically absent, no matter how good you do on your papers, you will not pass the course.

General Paper Guidelines/Lateness Policy

All your essays will be graded for internal coherence, analytical rigor, and control over the material discussed. You may wish to avail yourself of the resources of the MAX Center, which offers drop-in advice and consultation regarding writing projects. They are located in Kagin Commons and is open seven days a week. For more information, see their website (<http://www.macalester.edu/max/>)

Papers should be handed in by 4 pm on their due date to a box outside Prof. Capello's office. Emailed papers will not be accepted but there is an option to turn in papers electronically via moodle – please notify me if you avail yourself of this option. *Papers turned in late will be penalized 1/3 grade per 24-hour period with a maximum penalty of two letter grades.* It is always better to hand in a late paper than no paper.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated. Be sure that your written work reflects your own ideas and be sure to properly attribute the work of others. For guidelines on how to avoid plagiarism, see <http://www.macalester.edu/max/writinghandbook/plagiarism.html>.

Moodle and Assignments

The course moodle site includes the course syllabus and will also serve as the distributor for weekly assignments, paper prompts, and as a repository for electronic copies of readings. Go to <http://moodle.macalester.edu/> to access moodle, and login with your Macalester username and password. Once you have logged in, click on the course link in the My Courses section (please use the History 194 link).

Weekly Topics

8/28 Introduction
9/2 Encounter
9/9 Transculturation
9/16 Mature Colonialism and Crisis
9/23 From Colonies to Nations
9/30 Persistence and Progress!
10/7 Exports and Imports
10/14 Midterm
 No class 10/16 – Fall Break
10/21 The Mexican Revolution
10/28 Corporate State Populism
11/4 From a Big Stick to a Good Neighbor
11/11 Cold War Radicalism
11/18 The Cuban Revolution
11/25 State Revolutions and Dirty Wars
 No class 11/27 - Thanksgiving
12/2 Neoliberalism and its Discontents