HISTORY 335a: Topic: Latin America in Revolution

Spring 2015
Jeremy Baskes, Department of History
Ohio Wesleyan University
jabaskes@owu.edu
To make an appointment, go to: http://meetme.so/baskes

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course investigates dominant trends in 20th century Latin American history with special attention to revolutionary upheaval.

BOOKS REQUIRED FOR THIS COURSE: The student is required to obtain and read the following books as well as the packet of photocopies.


COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Weekly Study Guides: Students will be required to prepare and hand in weekly guides to each week's readings. Guides should include 4-6 broadly conceived questions that can be used to help spark class discussion. In addition, students should select 4-5 discussion issues that they consider interesting and worthy of discussion. Please provide a brief explanation as to what it is that you find interesting and identify relevant passages where these issues are discussed (include page numbers) in the readings. (See attached guidelines)

Reading Essays: Over the course of the semester, each student will write 3 essays of roughly 5 pages each, discussing some issue addressed in that week’s reading. Students should write 1 on Guatemala, 1 on Cuba & 1 on Nicaragua. You do not need to do a study guide in the week that you write your essay. (See attached guidelines)

Final Essay: Students will write an analytical essay about some aspect of Revolution in Latin America that they find interesting and that is dealt with in the readings. Please identify an issue that will apply to multiple countries. Students will select their own topics but must obtain approval from the professor. A topic proposal (see immediately below) is due in week 10. Final papers should be roughly 10-12 pages (2000-2500 words) and use a variety of different sources from the semester. This assignment does not require the use outside sources. Consult syllabus for deadlines.

Paper Topic Proposal: Students are expected to submit a 500 word proposal for their analytical essays in week 10 (proposals are welcome earlier). The proposal should indicate the topic of the paper, preliminary thoughts, and an explanation for why you think that this topic is worth examining.

• LATE PAPERS: Papers submitted late will be penalized one full grade per day. (From A to B for example). Papers are due IN CLASS. Anything handed in after class will be treated as late.

• PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism is a serious offense. Students caught plagiarizing will be failed for the course.

Oral Participation:
HISTORY 335a: Topic: Latin America in Revolution

Class Participation: Attendance is mandatory but not sufficient. Effective oral participation in class is also expected of all students. Effective participation means that students come to class well prepared and contribute extensively to class discussions. A significant percentage of the final grade depends on this oral participation. Students will be penalized for any absences or coming to class unprepared. Students with more than two absences will have their final grades reduced by one full grade (A to B, for example) per missed class.

Research Presentation: Students will present their research projects at the semester’s end. Details provided in class.

GRADES: Final grades will be determined as follows:

- Class preparation & participation (2.5% per class – weeks 2-13)) 30%
- Weekly study guides (9) (2% each) 18%
- 3 Reading Essays (1 per country) (10% each) 30%
- Paper proposal 2%
- Paper & presentation 20%

WEEKLY READING ASSIGNMENTS:

WEEK 1: (15 Jan) COURSE INTRODUCTION

WEEK 2: (22 Jan) THE UNITED STATES CONFRONTS LATIN AMERICA

Rabe, The Killing Zone, Intro & chapters 1-4.

WEEK 3: (29 Jan) THE UNITED STATES CONFRONTS LATIN AMERICA (cont.)

Rabe, The Killing Zone, chapters 5-7 & Aftermath.

WEEK 4: (5 Feb) ) THE GUATEMALAN REVOLUTION

Piero Gleijeses, Shattered Hope, pp. 8-49, 85-107, & 117-207

WEEK 5: (12 Feb) THE GUATEMALAN REVOLUTION (cont.)


WEEK 6: (19 Feb) GENOCIDE IN GUATEMALA

Daniel Wilkinson, Silence on the Mountain, pp. 3-156.

WEEK 7: (26 Feb) GENOCIDE IN GUATEMALA (cont.)

Daniel Wilkinson, Silence on the Mountain, pp. 157-251; 307-59
WEEK 8: (5 March) THE CUBAN REVOLUTION – BACKGROUND TO REVOLUTION


From Chomsky etal, *The Cuba Reader*:
- Neocolonialism, pp. 143-45.
- The Platt Amendment, by President Theodore Roosevelt, pp. 147-49.
- The Invasion Of The Tourists, by Rosalie Schwartz, pp. 244-52.
- The United States Confronts The 1933 Revolution, by Sumner Welles and Cordell Hull, pp. 283-86.
- The United Fruit Company In Cuba, by Oscar Zanetti, pp. 290-95.
- Reminiscences Of The Cuban Revolutionary War, by Che Guevara, pp. 315-20.

Spring Break

WEEK 9: (19 March) THE CUBAN REVOLUTION (cont.)


From Chomsky etal, *The Cuba Reader*:
- Women In The Swamps, by Margaret Randall, pp. 363-69.
- The Literacy Campaign, by Oscar Lewis, Ruth M. Lewis and Susan M. Rigdon, pp. 389-94.
- The Family Code, by Margaret Randall, pp. 399-405.
- Silence On Black Cuba, by Carlos Moore, pp. 419-23.
- Revolutionary Sport, by Paula Pettavino and Geralyn Pye, pp. 475-479.
- Mea Cuba, by Guillermo Cabrera Infante, pp. 481-87.
HISTORY 335: Topic: Latin America in Revolution

WEEK 10: (26 March) THE CUBAN REVOLUTION (cont.)

- Paper proposal due in class.

Aviva Chomsky, *A History of the Cuban Revolution*, ch. 6-7

From Chomsky et al., *The Cuba Reader*:
- The United States Government Responds to Revolution, by Foreign Relations of the US, pp. 530-35.
- Operation Mongoose, by Edward Lansdale, pp. 540-43.
- The Assassination Plots, by Select Committee To Study Governmental Operations, pp. 552-56.
- City On The Edge, by Alejandro Portes and Alex Stepick, pp. 581-87.
- Cuban Medical Diplomacy, by Julie Feinsilver, pp. 590-94.
- Zippy Goes to Cuba, by Bill Griffith, pp. 604-06.
- A Dissident Speaks Out, by Elizardo Sánchez Santacruz, pp. 664-65

WEEK 11: (2 April) THE NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION


WEEK 12: (9 April) THE NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION (cont.)


WEEK 13: (16 April) THE NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION (cont.)


WEEKS 14-15: (23 April & 30 April) STUDENT RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

- Final essay due in class on Week 15.
- Presentations of final essay in weeks 14 & 15.
RExEGHSSS

Students will submit three reading essays over the course of the semester, one on each of the countries examined. In these 5 page essays, students will analyze (not summarize) some issue or theme that strikes them as important and interesting.

Some questions to ask yourself as you read the assignments and prepare your essay:

1. What is the issue (or issues) that you have identified?
2. What is the author’s main argument or objective about the issue?
3. What preconceptions (assumptions e.g.) does the author have regarding it?
4. How might the arguments have been influenced by the authors’ biases (cultural, economic, ethnic, etc.)
5. What facts or evidence does the author bring to bear in support of his/her arguments? Does the factual evidence seem valid? Well chosen? Complete?
6. What are the strengths or weaknesses of the author’s discussion?
7. Given the evidence presented, what alternative interpretations or arguments might be possible?
WEEKLY STUDY GUIDES

Each week, except when you do a Reading Essay, you will be required to prepare and submit a study guide. These consist of two parts, a list of questions and a list of discussion issues. You should have around 4 of each.

Questions: prepare broad based questions that would be effective in sparking class discussion. These questions should not have simple factual answers; instead they should be analytical or speculative. Below are several examples:

1. Why does the author call the Mexican Revolution the “defining moment in twentieth century Latin America?” (Rivera, 66)
2. How did the Bolivian Revolution influence race relations in the country?
3. In what ways was the US response to the Chilean Revolution different from its reaction to Cuba’s?

Discussion Issues: select a number of passages in the readings that sparked your interest about some issue. Provide a brief explanation about what you find interesting and be sure to cite the location of the passage(s). Below are some examples.

1. Gender: I found interesting Randall’s discussion (111-14) of the impacts of revolution in Nicaragua on gender relations. She argues that the revolution sought to liberate women from their traditional roles but that despite legislation, “little actually changed.” (Randall, 113). Randall uses the example of the ways that men contribute in the household. Despite the fact that women and men are supposed to share the burden, in reality men refuse to do so. It makes me think about the ways that laws might bring about unintended consequences.

2. Land reform: Wilson suggested (23) that land reform in Cuba was not so important to the poor. He says that this is due to the legacy of slavery. I find this interesting though I am not sure I am convinced. Ex-slaves toiled long hours on the plantations. Why wouldn’t they relish the idea of receiving land after the revolution? I recall that land reform was the major issue in the Mexican revolution. Is there something unique about Cuba?