

Modern Latin America

TR 9:30-11:00

CAS 229

Course Description

This course explores the interconnectedness between culture, politics, and economics in Modern Latin American nations. Concerned with the roots of ethnic conflict, social inequality and political instability in modern Latin America, we will study 19th C conflicts over "civilization" vs. "barbarism," liberalism vs. conservatism, and the legacy of the colonial Counter-Reformation. We will study democracy and military rule in the twentieth century within a global history perspective, as Latin America engaged with global nationalistic movements such as socialism and fascism. We will also address inter-American networks, including immigration, drug wars, and Latinos in the USA. Through the course of the semester, students will encounter novels, essays, poems, manifestoes, films, and art—evidencing the connection between culture, politics, and society. Special emphasis will be placed on the interplay between the individual and the state in the creation of modern Latin America.

Course Objectives

1. To introduce students to the forces, events, and conflicts that defined the process of nation-building in the Americas, including:
 - The legacies of Spanish imperial rule on the nation states of Latin America.
 - The historical processes of inclusion and exclusion in building new nations.
 - The role of indigenous people in building and contesting modern Latin American societies.
 - The role of the United States and Europe in shaping the politics, ideologies, and economies of modern Latin America.
 - The expressions in Latin American popular culture of the tensions within society.
2. To understand and use a variety of sources that provide the core of historical inquiry.
 - Primary written sources, and their particular challenges.
 - Secondary sources, and how to read them critically.

Readings

The assigned textbook for this course is Skidmore, Smith & Green *Modern Latin America*, 7th edition (**SSG**). Additional readings will come from James A. Wood and John Charles Chasteen, *Problems in Modern Latin America History: Sources and Interpretations*, 3rd edition (**WC**); Julie A. Charlip's *Latin America: An Interpretive History*, 9th edition (**AC**); as well as various additional sources compiled by the professor and distributed electronically weekly.

All reading assignments are due the day they are listed.

All listed films or film excerpts will be watched in class.

Course Requirements

Students are expected to do all the assigned reading and writing, and to participate in an active and informed way in class discussions. Assignments will consist of a midterm exam, a group cultural project, and a final paper. Guidelines for all to be provided by professor.

Grading will be calculated as follows:

Class attendance (10%) + participation (10%) = 20%

Midterm Exam = 30%

Creative Group Project = 20%

Final Paper = 30%

Course Policies

Changes to the Syllabus: The syllabus is a contract between the instructor and the students. The instructor will strive to stick to the syllabus throughout the course of the semester. However, the instructor reserves the right to add additional readings and make adjustments to the syllabus for the benefit of the course.

Submission of Assignments/Late Assignments: Unless otherwise stated by the instructor, all assignments must be submitted/presented during class on the designated due date.

Cell/Smart Phones: Mobile phone/tablet use during class will not be tolerated. Phones should be silenced or turned off during class. Any student who repeatedly has issues with personal electronics use will be asked to leave class and will be marked absent for the day.

Laptop Computers: The use of laptops is not allowed during class.

Academic Conduct Code: BU has a strict Academic conduct code, which addresses the university's plagiarism policy among other misdemeanors. Please see:

<http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/>

Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. If students are experiencing difficulty with an assignment, or if they are concerned about meeting a deadline, they should talk to the instructor and/or seek the appropriate support from university services.

ADA Statement

Boston University is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. Accordingly, if a student has a documented disability, and as a result, needs a reasonable accommodation to attend, participate, or complete course requirements, then s/he shall inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. All information will be kept confidential.

Diversity Statement:

Every student in this class will be honored and respected as an individual with distinct experiences, talents, and backgrounds. Students will be treated fairly regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identification, disability, socio-economic status, or national identity. Issues of diversity may be a part of class discussion, assigned material, and projects. The instructor will make every effort to ensure that an inclusive environment exists for all students.

COURSE PLAN

Week One: Getting Started

Tuesday January 19: Introduction and Expectations

Thursday January 21: Conquest, Inquisition and Slavery in the Americas

Reading: “Loa to the Divine Narcissus” by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

Week Two: Wars for Independence and Nationalist Revolutions

Tuesday January 26: Order, Progress, and Liberalism: Independent Republics

Reading: AC Ch. 4 All

Thursday January 28: Order, Progress, and Revolt: The Mexican Revolution

Reading: SSG Ch. 3; AC Ch. 7 All

Week Three: US Interventions and Central American Nationalism

Tuesday February 2: From Martí to Sandino

Reading: SSG Ch. 4; WC Ch. 7 Doc. 5; AC Ch. 6 José Martí: “Our America, 1891”

Thursday February 4: The Panama Canal

Film: “The Panama Deception”

Week Four: Cuba and Chile: Communist America?

Tuesday February 9: Cuba’s American Socialism

Reading: SSG Ch. 5; AC Ch. 9 pp. 116-123

Thursday February 11: Chile’s Democratic Socialism

Reading: SSG Ch. 10, AC Ch. 9 pp.128-130

Week Five: Chile’s Aborted Experiment

Tuesday February 16: **No Class** (BU Monday Schedule)

Thursday February 18: The Individual and the State

Reading: Ariel Dorfman, *Heading South, Looking North* (excerpt)

Week Six: Course Midterm

Tuesday February 23: **Midterm Exam**

Thursday February 25: Terror in the Southern Cone

Reading: AC Ch. 10 pp.146-8

Week Seven: Between Revolution and Reform, Latin America and the Cold War

Tuesday March 1: Reckoning in Chile

Film: “Nostalgia for the Light”

Thursday March 3: Reckoning in Chile Continued

Spring Break: March 6-12

Week Eight: The Global and the National in the Argentine Path to Terror

Tuesday March 15: Populism versus Neo-colonialism

Reading: SSG Ch. 9; WC Ch. VIII Doc. 4; AC Ch. 8 pp.109-112

Thursday March 17: National Security State/National Societal Nightmare

Reading: Jacobo Timerman *Prisoner without a Name, Cell Without a Number* (excerpt)

Week Nine: Gendered Reckoning in the Southern Cone

Tuesday March 22: Feminist Culture and Truth-telling after Violence

Film: “The Official Story”

Thursday March 24: Feminist Culture Continued

Reading: Marjorie Agosín, *Circles of Madness* (excerpt); Charlotte Delbo, “Madwomen of May”

Week Ten: Globalization, Export Economies and Women’s Activism

Tuesday March 29: Is the World Flat? NAFTA and Women’s Rights

Reading: WC Ch. 12 All

Thursday March 31: Migration within Latin America and US “Globalization”

Film: “Maquilapolis”

Week Eleven: Illegal Traffics of Latin America: Drugs

Tuesday April 5: Understanding the Drug Trade in the Americas

Reading: “Latina Imprisonment and the War on Drugs” in Bosworth and Flavin, pp. 184-195

Thursday April 7: Drug Trade Continued

Film: “Traffic”

Week Twelve: Borderland Violence

Tuesday April 12: Expendable Bodies: Power and the Borderlands

Reading: Marjorie Agosin, *Secrets in the Sand* (selections)

Thursday April 14: Testimony to Silence

Film: “Señorita Extraviada”

Week Thirteen: Latinas’ and their Choices in the USA

Tuesday April 19: Domestic Workers

Reading: Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo, *Doméstica: Immigrant Workers Cleaning and Caring in the Shadows of Affluence* (excerpt)

Thursday April 21: Domestic Workers Continued

Film: “Maid in America”

Week Fourteen: Creative Projects & Closing Thoughts

Tuesday April 26: Group Cultural Presentations

Thursday April 28: Closing Thoughts

Final Exam date: Final Paper Due