**SYLLABUS: Modern Latin American History HIST 262 Fall 2016**

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Modern Latin America is arguably the most diverse region in the world and the most intimately intertwined with the United States. It includes twenty-five countries (and one colony) which represent a unique blend of indigenous, African, and European traditions and cultures. The region’s legacy of immigration also boasts large Lebanese, Japanese, Korean, and Jewish populations. The natural environments include some of the driest and coldest places on earth and also the largest expanse of tropical rainforest left on earth. Latin America’s past is full of revolution, inequality, and violence but also social innovation, intense beauty, and unexpected acts of brilliance. At its core, this is not a politics or economics course; it is a class about people and their personal lives.

This class is a methods-based inquiry into the past that investigates the ways historians seek out the voices of the voiceless. We will read a personal story and then try to see how historians go about understanding that individual and the various influences on his or her life. We consider the life stories of particular people as ways of illustrating larger trends. Instead of starting with national or regional themes—nationalism, war and conflict, revolution, indigenous peoples’ and workers’ rights—that have been central to Latin America’s past, we spend time with Ernesto, María, Rigoberta, and Lurgio. We will interpret the themes listed above (and others) and also ask questions about the production of history: Who gets to speak? How and in what form? How does the form influence interpretation and reception? There are many ways of knowing Latin America; in this course we will attempt to understand it from the testimony of individual witnesses paired will specific examples of historical scholarship. This course is run seminar-style meaning there are very few lectures and you must come prepared to discuss the readings at-length in class every day. There will be group work, individual work, and entire class work in order to best grapple with the issues raised in these texts.

We focus largely on the twentieth century as the modern era. There is much to say about the nineteenth century belonging in this period as well, there are simply fewer compelling personal texts in English about that era. We concentrate mainly on the countries of Mexico, Argentina, Cuba, Guatemala, and Peru plus sustained attention to relationships between the US and Latin America.

**Course Objectives**:

By the end of the semester you should have mastered these skills:

1. Historical Context.
   1. You will be able to thoughtfully engage with the chronology of broad issues and developments in Modern Latin American history.
2. Comparison:
   1. You will be able to evaluate the methodological and substantive differences between diary, oral history, autobiography, biography, and testimony.
   2. You will be able to compare and contrast historical experiences and their significance.
3. Deep reading:
   1. You will be able to apply strategies and methods of critical reading to a variety of primary sources.
   2. You will be able to demonstrate this reading in effective notes and oral discussions.
4. Applied Writing:
   1. You will develop and be able to apply critical writing skills including clear argumentation and appropriate use of evidence.
   2. You will be able to draw upon evidence to produce interpretive historical arguments applicable to real life scenarios.

**Assignments:**

We will read four books and you will write four papers plus a brief autobiography (twice). Each paper is different but they build on the skills outlined above. There are a number of in-class quizzes and assignments that allow you to practice these skills in preparation for the larger papers. All assignments are based on my belief that the skills you develop reading and writing history prepare you to be not only an excellent consultant or advisor for various constituencies but an informed global citizen. Each paper should consider the main issues at stake for your audience, make a clear and compelling argument based on compelling historical evidence, and practice historical empathy.

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| **Assignment** | **Instructions** | **Length** | **Date Due** | **% of Final Grade** |
| Self: | Explain your life story in contrast to life in Latin America. | Max. 2 pages | Aug 25th Dec 15th | 5% each = 10% |
| Diary: | A tour company wants to run a tour around Che’s life. Advise them. | 4-6 pages | Sep. 22nd | 15% |
| Oral History: | Write a manifesto for change that will help workers in Latin America dated 1968. | 4-6 pages | Oct. 11th | 15% |
| *Testimonio*: | Render a verdict on Menchu’s text to reform judicial proceedings. | 4-6 pages | Nov 10th | 15% |
| Autobiography: | Retell Lurgio Gavilán Sánchez’ life story. Use it to advise the UN on policies. | 4-6 pages | Dec 15th | 15% |
| Quizzes (written in class) | 1 Map Quiz; 5-10 essay quizzes explaining readings or relevant issues. | 1-2 pages | periodic | 20% |
| Participation and Attendance | Active listening, asking questions, offering comments, responding to ideas, taking notes, engaging in debate, regular presence. | During each class | All semester | 10% |

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\*\*\*Please note, if you are unsatisfied with your grade on one of the written assignments (Self, Diary, Oral History, *Testimonio* or Autobiography) you may redo the paper after consultation with me.

\*\*\*Please note that all Essay Quizzes are open note but closed computer. You must bring something to write with to every class and you are encouraged to write out notes longhand (or print them and bring them with you for use in class).

**Books**:

All required books are available for purchase in the Campus Bookstore or from online retailers.

**Required**:

Ernesto “Che” Guevara, *The Motorcycle Diaries: Notes on a Latin American Journey,* (New York: Ocean

Press, [1993] 2003).

Daniel James, *Doña Maria’s* *Story: Life History, Memory, and Political Identity*, (Durham, NC: Duke

University Press, 2001).

Rigoberta Menchú and Elizabeth Burgos Debray, ed. *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in*

*Guatemala,* 2nd. ed. (New York: Verso, [1983] 2009).

Lurgio Gavilán Sánchez, *When Rains Became Floods: A Child Soldier’s Story,* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, [2012] 2015).

Optional: John Charles Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire: A Concise History of Latin America,* any edition but page numbers are given from the most recent, fourth edition.

**Seminar Schedule:**

Readings are expected to be completed on the dates they are listed in the schedule. Readings from books are listed referring to author’s last name; readings found on Course Blackboard site have a **B.**

Week 1: Intro to Latin America

Tu Aug 23 Introductions.

Th Aug 25

Due: Self Paper—write a two-page summary of your life, if possible, contrast it to what you know about Latin America.

Reading: Chasteen, Introduction, **B**

Winn, View from the South, **B**

Skidmore and Smith, Why Latin America? **B**

**Part 1: Images: *Mexico: The Revolution and Beyond***

**Week 2**: Images as a voice: The Mexican Revolution

Tu Aug 30 What was the Mexican Revolution? Murals as interpretation.

Reading: Alan Knight, “The Mexican Revolution” *History Today*, 30:5(May 1980). Available online here: <http://www.historytoday.com/alan-knight/mexican-revolution>

*Optional: Chasteen, “Neocolonialism,” Chapter 7, 193-225.*

Th Sep 1 Photographs as interpretation.

Reading: Douglas R. Nickel, “’Impressed by nature’s hand’: Photography and Authorship” in Matson and Howells, *Using Visual Evidence,* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2009). **B**

Excerpt from Pablo Ortiz Monasterio, ed. *Mexico: The Revolution and Beyond: Photographs by Agustín Victor Casasola 1900-1940”* (New York: Aperture Foundation, 2003). **B**

**Part 2: Diary of the Region: Ernesto “Che” Guevara, *Motorcycle Diaries***

**Week 3**: Getting to Know the Man and the Region

Tu Sep 6 Reading a Diary.

Reading: Guevara, 1-63.

MAP QUIZ in class.

*Optional: Chasteen, “*A Tour of Latin America” M2-12.

Th Sep 8 Understanding Perspectives.

Reading: Guevara, 64-89 + Images in insert

**Week 4**: Witnessing Inequality

Tu Sep 13 The role of the past in the present.

Reading: Guevara, 90-140.

Paulo Drinot, “Introduction” to *Che’s Travels: The Making of a Revolutionary in 1950s Latin America,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), p 1-20.

Th Sep 15 Foreignness and Nationalism.

Reading: Guevara, 141-165

*Optional: Chasteen,* “Revolution” p267-292

**Week 5**: The Cuban Revolution and beyond.

Tu Sep 20 Guevara, 166-175

Michael Casey, “Introduction” and “Havana, May 5, 1960: A Frozen Millisecond” from *Che’s Afterlife: The Legacy of an Image,* (New York: Vintage, 2009).

Th Sep 22 Diary or Documentary?

**Writing assignment due:** Summarize Che’s life in two pages. Write a strategic plan for how Revolutionary Tours LLC could use his personal journal as template for their tourism company.

Film *Motorcycle Diaries,* by Walter Salles, 2004.

**Part 3: Oral History in Argentina: Daniel James, *Doña Maria’s Story***

**Week 6:** Nationalism and Immigrants.

Tu Sep 27

Reading: James, Prologue p3-28

Eduardo Elena, “What the People Want: State Planning and Political Participation in Peronist

Argentina, 1946-1955,” *Journal of Latin American Studies,* 37:1(2005), 81-108.

*Optional: Chasteen,* “New Immigration” and “Nationalism 227-266.

Th Sep 29: “One woman’s story”

Reading: James, Doña María’s testimony, p29-58

**Week 7**: Workers and Politicians.

Tu Oct 4 Why participate in politics?

Reading: James, Doña María’s testimony, 58- 116 and Epilogue, p. 283-297.

Th Oct 6: Workers, men and women.

Reading in the Round: James, “Listening in the Cold,” p119-156 OR “The Case of María Roldán” 157-212 OR “Tales Told Out on the Borderlands: Reading Doña María’s Story for Gender”213-243.

**Week 8:** Women, Change, and Continuity

Tu Oct 11 Film, *Evita*

**Writing Assignment due:** Drawing upon specific instances in Doña María’s life, write a manifesto for change in Latin America dated 1968.

Th Oct 13 NO CLASS YALE CONFERENCE

**Part 4: *Testimonio* in Guatemala: Rigoberta Menchú**

**Week 9:** Introducing “An Indian Woman in Guatemala”

Tu Oct 18 Guatemala: Intimate ties to the United States

Reading: Primary documents from Holden and Zolov, *Latin America and the United States: A Documentary History,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 195-205. **B**

*Film: Bananaland,* 2014, excerpt

Th Oct 20 An Indian Woman: The account and the structure

Reading: Menchú, ix-107, Translator’s Note through XIII “Death of her friend by poisoning.”

**Week 10:** Details of Life

Tu Oct 25: The stories and the events

Reading: Menchú, 108-200, chapters XIV "A maid in the capital" through chapter XXIII "Political activity in other communities. Contact with ladinos"

Th Oct 27: Events of lasting significance.

Reading: Menchú. 201-290, chapters XXIV "The torture and death of her little brother, burnt alive in front of members of his family and the community." through "chapter XXXIV "Exile."

**Week 11:** The Reaction

Tu Nov 1: Reviews, Roundtables, Reflections

TBA

*Optional: Chasteen,* “The Reaction” 297-323.

Th Nov 3 The Critique:

Reading, David Stoll and Elizabeth Burgos, “Foreward to the 1008 Edition” and “Preface” and “Introduction” from David Stoll, *Rigoberta Menchú and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans,* (Philadelphia: Westview Press [1999] 2008), p ix-12.**B**

**Week 12:** Records and Interpretation

Tu Nov 8 Archives of Violence

Reading: Kate Doyle, “The Atrocity Files: Deciphering the Archives of Guatemala’s Dirty War” *Harper’s Magazine,* (Dec 2007), p52-65.

Browse: Greg Grandin and Francisco Goldman, “Bitter Fruit for Rigoberta” *The Nation* 268:5(8Feb 1999), 25.

Commission for Historical Clarification agreement, 1994. See description and link to the report here, <http://www.usip.org/publications/truth-commission-guatemala>

Th Nov 10 Film: *When the Mountains Tremble,* 1983.

**Writing Assignment due**: Render verdict on the text—who was right? What does it mean for Modern Latin America?

**Part 5: Autobiography in Peru: Lurgio Gavilán Sánchez**

**Week 13:** On Child Soldiers and Terror

Tu Nov 15 A Shining Path?

Reading: Gavilán Sánchez, ix-40.

Shining Path and Mariategui, TBA

Th Nov 17 Choices and consequences

Reading: Gavilán Sánchez, 41-99

**Week 14:** Communities

Tu Nov 29 Rural villages

Reading in the Round: Miguel La Serna, *The Corner of the Living: Ayacucho on the Eve of the Shining Path Insurgency,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, **B**

OR Jaymie Patricia Heilman, *Before the Shining Path: Politics in Rural Ayacucho, 1895-1980,* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010) **B**

OR Deborah Poole and Gerardo Rénique, “Terror and the Privatized State: A Peruvian Parable” *Radical History Review,* 85(Winter 2003): 150-163. **B**

Th Dec 1 Religion

Reading: Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation,* (NY: Maryknoll, 1973).

*Optional: Chasteen,* “Liberation Theology” 293-296.

**Week 15:**

Tu Dec 6

FILM *State of Fear*

Th Dec 8

Conclusion

*Optional: Chasteen,* “Neoliberalism and Beyond” 329-355.

FINAL EXAM: Thursday Dec 15th 7:30am

**Writing Assignments Due**: Using Lurgio’s story, advise the United Nations on devising policies for and about child soldiers

Rewrite Self Paper: Drawing upon the lives of Ernesto, María, Rigoberta, and Lurgio, what insight have you gained into your own past?

**Additional Policies and Guidelines**:

Participation and Attendance:

Dynamic, engaged participation and attendance are required at every class. Participation includes active listening, asking questions about reading and lecture material, responding to the ideas of your classmates, taking notes, offering ideas and comments, completing reading assignments, engaging in intellectual debates, and considering alternative points of view. You must participate to succeed in this class. More than two (2) absences a semester will result in an automatic deduction from your participation grade for each subsequent absence. If you miss class for any reason you are unable to participate.

Office Hours and Email:

I welcome visits to my office during the listed office hours to discuss course material. If you are unable to make it to my office during those hours, I am available a limited number of other hours by appointment. I much prefer in-person inquiries to email communication. I will not respond to emails that discuss absences, missed work, or grades. Appropriate uses of email include appointment scheduling and assignment clarification.

Late Papers, Drafts, and Grade Disputes:

Late papers will be penalized one third of a letter grade per day late starting immediately after the time they are due. Plan ahead and prepare to avoid unnecessary hassles and penalties. I am willing to look over paper drafts if I receive your draft (by email or hardcopy) at least 48 hours before the assignment is due. I also welcome discussions about comments on graded papers, particularly if you have a mind towards improvement. Such conversations will often help you improve on future assignments. In the very rare cases where a student wishes to dispute the grade he or she earned, I require a written statement of at least one page outlining the specific reasons that call for a reconsideration of the grade you earned.

Electronic Devices:

Computers are a valuable tool and source of information, but in my experience they detract from respectful, engaged conversation. You may use them when it is appropriate or you will be asked to pack them away. Although many technologies enable us to do things with greater efficiency, when used inappropriately they lessen the quality of intellectual exchange. I expect our in-class time to be reserved for careful listening and conversation about the topics at hand. The use of cell phones or similar gadgets for any purpose is frowned upon and will greatly reduce your participation grade.

Special Needs:

If you have a need that may require an accommodation while taking this course, please meet with me as soon as possible (during the first two weeks of the semester). To request academic accommodations for a disability, contact the Educational Access Center by phone (208) 426-1583, or email, eacinfo@boisestate.edu. Students with disabilities needing accommodations to fully participate in this class should contact the Educational Access Center (EAC). All accommodations must be approved through the EAC prior to being implemented.  To learn more about the accommodation process, visit the EAC’s website at <https://eac.boisestate.edu/new-eac-students/>

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism, or representing another person’s ideas as your own, will not be tolerated regardless of circumstances. The basic rule is do NOT take ideas without attribution! It will result in a failing course grade and possible disciplinary action. For questions about plagiarism and suggestions on how to avoid it, visit the library’s guide at http://library.boisestate.edu/plagiarism/start.htm