

**Modern Latin America**  
University of Texas at Austin

Course Instructor: Dr. Frank A. Guridy

Course Description: This course surveys the history of Latin America from the period of the Wars for Independence in the early nineteenth century until the present. While the course aims to provide students with an understanding of the region as a whole, due to time constraints it will focus primarily on the histories of select countries, including Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, Cuba, and Colombia. Drawing upon primary documents, audio/visual materials, and works produced by historians, the class will explore the racial, class, and gender hierarchies that emerged out of the region's colonial and precolonial past and their impact on the lives of Latin American people. We will explore the struggle to create "nations" and the emergence of a neocolonial order in the nineteenth century. We will also examine the ways that popular mobilization against neocolonial social hierarchies led to the refashioning of the "nation" throughout the twentieth century. The course will conclude with an examination of the ways Latin Americans are navigating the increasingly transnational world of the early twenty-first century. Thus, the arc of the class prompts students to think about the history of the Americas as a history of transnational processes.

Course Objectives:

- (1) Enable students to develop a working knowledge of the key social, political, economic, and cultural developments in Latin American history since the Wars for Independence.
- (2) Expose students to the complex relationship between local level developments and transnational processes across time and space.
- (3) Encourage students to interrogate nationalism as a historical phenomenon, rather than a transhistorical given that stands outside of history

Course requirements:

**ATTENDANCE AND ACTIVE CLASS PARTICIPATION: The success of this course requires your consistent presence in class.**

For this reason you are expected to attend every session. Moreover, lateness will not be tolerated. Late arriving students disrupt class. Beginning the second week of the semester, your teaching assistants will take roll sometime within the first five minutes of class session. If you are not present when roll is taken, you will be considered absent. Leaving class early will also constitute an absence. **After three (3) absences, you will be penalized a full letter grade for each additional absence thereafter. No exceptions.**

This class is designed around lecturing, AS WELL AS discussion and group interaction. This means that prior to class you must do the readings, think critically about them, and be ready to discuss them. This advance preparation is essential to the success

of this class. You will not be judged on whether or not your instructor or classmates agree with your ideas, but rather on how well you articulate them. This requires you to be open to new perspectives posed by the course and your fellow classmates, to reflect on them, and to come up with your own thoughts on the various topics we will explore this semester. Class Participation is worth 20% of your final grade.

EXAMS: Each test will cover approximately one third of the course. Tests are not cumulative. Exams will cover weekly readings, lectures, as well as any in-class discussion. Each test will include a mixture of short identification and essay questions.

The breakdown of your grade is as follows:

First two tests at 25% each	50%
Final Exam	30%
Active Class participation	20%

EXTRA CONSIDERATION OPPORTUNITIES: Students seeking to improve their grades may write short reviews of various lectures and events that are relevant to Modern Latin American history that might take place on campus throughout the semester. These assignments must be well written and reflect your engagement with the issues/ideas raised by the event. Students must complete extra credit assignments within one week of the lecture/event. While I will identify “extra consideration” events throughout the semester, you can also suggest an “extra consideration” opportunity to me as well.

Grades will be determined as follows:

90-100=A	80-89=B	70-79=C	60-69=D	00-59=F
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#### PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

All students are expected to adhere to UT’s guidelines regarding plagiarism. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. Refer to the Student Judicial Services website for official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty. Please see me if you have any further questions about plagiarism.

ACADEMIC ACCOMODATIONS STATEMENT: The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-4641 TTY.

POLICY ON INCOMPLETES: Under no circumstances do I give incompletes. If you are finding that you are having difficulty keeping up with the work in class for whatever reason, please see me immediately.

Finally, some words about what you can expect of your instructor. As one who is concerned with the issues we are dealing with in this course, I am very invested in you

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finding this experience a satisfying one. For this reason, I have sought to provide you with the tools necessary to do well in this class, and more important, for you to walk away from this course thinking differently about the issues we will explore throughout the semester. You can expect from your instructor consistent feedback on your work and availability for any questions and concerns that you may have.

Required Books

John Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire  
José Vasconcelos, La Raza Cós mica/The Cosmic Race  
C. Peter Ripley, Conversations with Cuba

Select Articles on E Reserve (See below)

**Course Schedule**

Tuesday, January 19, Introduction to the Course

Thursday, January 21, The Making of Latin America

Tuesday, January 26, Colonial Legacies

Thursday, January 28, Colonial Legacies (cont.)  
Reading: Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire, Intro, Ch. 1-2

Tuesday, February 2, Independence and the Creation of New Nation-States

Thursday, February 4, The Creation of New Nations (Cont.)  
Reading: Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire, chapter 3 AND Lynch, "Society According to Bolívar," from Simon Bolívar: A Life (on E-Reserve)

Tuesday, February 9, "Civilization vs. Barbarism": State-Formation, *Caudillismo* and the Liberal/Conservative Struggle

Thursday, February 11, "Civilization vs. Barbarism" (cont.)  
Reading (On E-Reserve): Sanders, "'Citizens of a Free People,'" AND Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire, Chapter 4  
Movie: "Camila" Time and Place TBA

Tuesday, February 16, Postcolonial Latin America (Cont.)

Thursday, February 18, **EXAM**

Tuesday, February 23, "Order and Progress": Liberalism and the Emergence of a Neocolonial Order

Thursday, February 25, The Triumph of “Progress”? : Latin America During the Age of Empire

Reading: Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire, chapters 5 and 6

Tuesday, March 2, Remaking the Nation: The Mexican Revolution

Thursday, March 4, The Cultural Revolution in Mexico and Latin America

Tuesday, March 9, The Consolidation of the Revolution

Reading: Vasconcelos, The Cosmic Race/La Raza Cósmica, pp.3-40 and Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire, pp. 217-225

Thursday, March 11, Mexico and Populism in Latin America

Reading: Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire, pp. 225-246

SPRING BREAK NO CLASSES WEEK OF MARCH 15-20

Tuesday, March 23, **MIDTERM EXAM**

Thursday, March 25, Remaking the Nation Again: Nationalism and “Racial Democracy” in Brazil

Tuesday, March 30, Gendering the Nation

Reading (On E Reserve): Besse, Restructuring Patriarchy (excerpts)

Video: “Bananas is My Business”

Thursday, April 1, “Patria o Muerte!”: The Cold War and the Cuban Revolution

Tuesday, April 6, The Cuban Revolution (Cont.)

Thursday, April 8, Cuba in the Special Period

Reading: Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire, chapter 8 and Ripley, pp.1-68

Tuesday, April 13, Wither the Revolution?: Cuba in the Special Period (Cont.)

Thursday, April 15, Cuba (Cont.)

Reading: Ripley, Conversations with Cuba, 68-END

Tuesday, April 20, The Dirty Wars in Latin America

Thursday, April 22, The Dirty Wars (Cont.)

Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire, chapter 9

Tuesday, April 27, Neoliberalism and Its Discontents

Thursday April 30, Latin American Migration to the U.S.

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Reading (On E-Reserve): Guarnizo and Díaz, “Transnational Migration: A View from Colombia,”

Silvana Paternostro “Northern Ladies,” from In the Land of God and Man

Tuesday, May 4, Migration (Cont.)

Thursday, May 6, Looking Backward/Looking Forward: Reflecting on the Future of the Americas

Reading: Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire, chapter 10

**FINAL EXAM TBA.**