

Introduction to Modern Latin America

José Orozco
111 Hoover
Office Hours: M,W 10-11, Th 3-4
email: jorozco@whittier.edu
Phone extension: 4312

Fall 2019
Hoover 004A
Tuesday, Thursday 9:30-10:50

About the Course:

In this course the student will study the history of Modern Latin America with a special emphasis on the economic and cultural history of the Southern and Central America. While the course begins with an introduction to the history of Latin America between the 15th century and the 19th century, we will concentrate on the history of Latin America from 1880-2000. We will begin each section by reading a chapter from the main textbook, *Born in Blood and Fear*, by John Charles Chasteen. After gaining an understanding of the chronology, events, and individuals who were important in the period and the country under consideration, we will then read articles, primary documents, and books that will expand your knowledge and fine-tune some of the issues presented in your textbook. It is essential that you come to class prepared to discuss the material. Being physically present is not good enough. You have to have gone over the reading material in a thoughtful, purposeful manner. I do not usually lecture, so the usefulness of the class will be largely dependent on the student's ability to converse about the readings.

Students are expected to do all the readings and finish the written assignments in a timely manner. There is a map quiz at the beginning of the class worth 50 points. Four short papers (2-3 pages); each paper will be worth 150 points (600). Participation in class is worth 100 points. There will be a final oral exam worth 150 points. Finally, an oral presentation worth 100. There is a total of 1000 points possible. Because there is no final exam you should take care to do all of your reading as carefully as possible and participate in class discussions, as much of your grade is dependent on how thoughtful and careful your thinking is as presented in your papers and class participation. Overall, there are 1000 points up for grabs and you will be graded on the following scale:

A	1000-930 points
A-	929-890 points
B+	889-850 points
B	849-810 points
B-	809-770 points
C+	769-730 points
C	729-690 points
C-	679-650 points
F	549-000 point

You should take care to do all the reading as carefully as possible and participate in class discussions, as much of your grade is dependent on how thoughtful and careful your thinking is as presented in your papers and class participation.

About Tardies, Absences and Late Work

The student is expected to come to class prepared to engage classmates and the instructor in discussions that are centered around, but not limited to, the assigned readings. The student, unless otherwise previously excused, must arrive to class on time. Tardies will be counted as absences, after two absences from class every additional absence will result in a one-step grade reduction: from A to B+, B- to C, etc.

Late work will not be accepted unless the student has a prior agreement with the professor.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement:

“The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services.”

General Policy on Academic Honesty

“Because the preservation of academic honesty is as fundamental to our shared enterprise as the transmission of knowledge, the faculty and administration of the College regard educating students in academic integrity to be as important as inspiring them to rise to the challenge of learning. Students are expected to produce independent work and to cite sources of information and concepts. When these principles are breached and a student misrepresents his or her level of knowledge, the basic framework of scholarship is broken. In these instances, students will be held accountable and will face sanctions that range from a warning to expulsion from the College. Ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism or cheating is not a valid defense. If students are uncertain of policies, they should consult the instructor for clarification. Adherence to the policies delineated below reflects the commitment of our community to a single standard of truth, a standard binding on students, faculty, and administrators alike.”

Please read the rest of the policy and the list of sanctions, here:

<https://www.whittier.edu/policies/academic/honesty>

Learning Outcomes:

After completing the course, students

- will be conversant in the social, political, economic, cultural and historical origins of modern Latin American societies
- will understand the connections between the history and social economic privilege of the Global North and that part of the Global South that we call Latin America
- will recognize that the history and the living conditions of Latin American is not a discrete history and circumstance separate from their history and their living conditions
- will know the geography, topography, and ecology of Latin America
- will know about the environmental conditions and relations that have shaped Latin American history
- will gain knowledge regarding race, class, and gender relations in Latin America
- will have the ability to more effectively express their viewpoints on these topics orally and in writing
- will understand what primary document is, comprehend why they are important to the discipline, and be able to use these documents to think critically about the past

By the end of the semester, students will recognize the historical parameters of modern Latin American, including the state-building process;; historical relations with the United States, and they.

Readings:

- John Charles Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*
- Carolina Maria de Jesus, *Child of the Dark*
- Alicia Partnoy *The Little School: Tales of Disappearance & Survival in Argentina*
- Sonia Nazario, *Enrique's Journey*

Introduction to the Class: "We are here because you were there"

- 9/5 --NY Times, Simon Romero, "It Feels Like Being Hunted": Latinos Across U.S. in Fear After el Paso Massacre: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/06/us/el-paso-shooting-latino-anxiety.html>
- NY Times, Abigail Levine, Lisa Guenther, "White Power and the Fear of Replacement": <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/28/opinion/white-power-and-the-fear-of-replacement.html> ;
- Washington Post, Suketu Mehta, "I am an uppity immigrant. Don't expect me to be 'grateful.'": <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/i-am-an-uppity->

immigrant-dont-expect-me-to-be-grateful/2019/08/02/321d9b60-b483-11e9-951e-de024209545d_story.html

9/10 John Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*: "Introduction"; Gareth A. Jones, "Latin American Geographies,"

Colonial Background to Modern Latin America

9/12 *Born in Blood and Fire*: Chapter 1, "Encounter." **Map Quiz**

9/17 *Born in Blood and Fire*: Chapter 2, "Colonial Crucible"; Shawn William Miller, *An Environmental History of Latin America*, "Consuming Sugar," "Deadly Silver." **Moodle** Video: *The Curse of Silver*

19th Century

9/19 Juan Gonzalez, *Harvest of Empire*: "The Spanish Borderlands and the Making of an Empire (1810-1898)," **Moodle**

9/24 "*Born in Blood and Fire*: Chapter 6, 'Neocolonialism'; How to read a Primary Source Workshop

The Long 20th Century

9/26 Juan Gonzalez, *Harvest of Empire*: "Banana Republics and Bonds: Taming the Empire's Backyard (1898-1950)." Videos on bananas

10/1 *Born in Blood and Fire*: Chapter 7, "Nationalism."

10/3

10/8

Brazil

10/10 *Born in Blood and Fire*: Chapter 8, "Revolution."

10/15 Carolina María de Jesus, *Child of the Dark*, pp.1-80

Haiti and Dominican Republic

10/17 Video *Americas: Places in the Heart* (in class); Jarina De Marco, "Identity Crisis" (Video) <https://hiplatina.com/jarina-de-marco-addresses-identity-crisis-backlash/> Frances Negrón-Muntaner, "Jennifer's Butt," **Moodle**

Cuba

10/22 "Cuban Revolution," in Burkholder et.al, *Exploitation, Inequality, and Resistance: A History of Latin America*; Juan Gonzalez, *Harvest of Empire*: "Cubans: Special Refugees," **Moodle**

10/24 No Class

10/29 José Mariano Prieto, "Travels by Taxi: Reflections on Cuba," *The Nation*, Nov. 23, 2009 (<https://www.thenation.com/article/travels-taxi-reflections-cuba/>)

Argentina

10/31 *Born in Blood and Fire*: Chapter 9, 'Reaction;' George F. Kennan. "A Realist Views Latin America" **Moodle**
11/5 Video: *Americas: The Garden of the Forking Path*
11/7 Alicia Partnoy, *The Little School*

Central America

11/12 Juan Gonzalez, *Harvest of Empire*: 'Central Americans: Intervention Comes Home to Roost'; "What Happened at *Dos Erres*?" *NPR: This American Life* (listen at home); Freddy Peccerelli, A forensic anthropologist who brings closure for the disappeared,
https://www.ted.com/talks/fredy_peccerelli_a_forensic_anthropologist_who_brings_closure_for_the_disappeared#t-36584
11/14 NY Times, Sonia Nazario "Someone is Always Trying to Kill You"
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/05/opinion/honduras-women-murders.html>
'US: Protect Right to Asylum for Domestic Violence: Abuse of Women is a Human Rights Issue,'
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/01/23/us-protect-right-asylum-domestic-violence>

Neoliberalism

11/19 *Born in Blood and Fear*, Chapter 11, 'Neoliberalism'
11/21 Alma Guillermoprieto, "Mexico, 1992" in *The Heart that Bleeds: Latin America Now*, **Moodle**
11/26 tba

Thanksgiving Break! 11/27-11/28

12/3 Juan Gonzalez, *Harvest of Empire*: "Free Trade: The Final Conquest of Latin America," **Moodle**
12/5 Sam Quinones, "Atolinga," **Moodle**.

Read *Enrique's Journey* for final Oral Exam

