

Syllabus

Contemporary Latin America: LAH3300: Spring Semester 2024

Professor Jeffrey D. Needell

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12:30-1:30 and Thursdays, 1:30-3:30

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This course is intended to introduce the history of contemporary Latin America to students with some background in the region or to students interested in knowing something about the region's most recent past at a more sophisticated level. We will explore how many nations of the region achieved successful political integration under oligarchical rule and often managed economic integration with the world market in the era 1880-1914. We will go on to analyze the nature of development in the transitional era of industrialization and urban growth that began by World War I and shifted dramatically with government intervention by the 1930s. We will examine the increased role of populism and repression as characteristic responses to the socio-economic changes of the post-1930 era. We will conclude with observations regarding the trends visible by the beginning of this century. The region is a varied one, with more than a score of nations. Thus, we will concentrate on several countries suggestive of the many experiences common in the region: these countries are Brazil, Cuba, Mexico, and Peru.

Course Requirements: Students are expected to complete the weekly readings detailed below in a timely manner.

1. All students will take a **map examination** in the second week of class, during the first twenty minutes of the second session. The map examination is discussed on a sheet of paper separate from the syllabus; **note that, if a student fails to pass the examination, s/he must pass it before the midterm to avoid the penalty of a drop of one grade for the student's course grade.** Veterans of the instructor's other 3000-level courses in which the same examination was administered are excused from taking the examination again.
2. Students will also write a **historiographical essay** (see the criteria for this essay on the instructor's website, above) as their term paper. This will be an essay with a maximum length of ten pages. Such essays are to be printed double-spaced; they should be in formal academic style and format, with footnotes or endnotes when appropriate (parenthetical-style notes are not permitted). The format of such notes can be reviewed in the *Chicago Manual of Style*, or guides based on that source. The topic must be agreed upon in consultation with the instructor **by the end of the fourth week of the semester.** The research for this essay may be drawn from reading done in scholarly monographs, chapters from scholarly anthologies, and articles in scholarly journals. Students are expected to read works from four scholars, totaling around 400 pages. **The essay is due at the beginning of the first session of the twelfth week. Please see the penalties section below regarding late submission of this paper.**
3. Undergraduates will also take two **regular examinations:** a midterm and a final. The examinations will take place in class. They will be made up of essay questions, which will be selected at the time of the examination by the professor from a list of possible questions distributed to students a week before as a study guide. The midterm will likely be

administered during the last session of the ninth week; the final, as per the online *Schedule of Courses*.

Course Grades: Undergraduate students' grades will be computed from the average of three grades: those of the two regular examinations and that of the historiographical essay. Note the penalty for failure to pass the map examination, stated above and in the **Penalties** section of the syllabus, below.

Reading Responsibilities: Students will read the text noted below, keeping pace with the subject of each week's lecture.

Keen, Benjamin and Keith Haynes. *A History of Latin America*, vol.2, *Independence to the Present*, 8th ed.. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2009.

Lecture Schedule:

- I. Brazil: Fall of the Monarchy.
- II. Brazil: The Old Republic.
- III. Mexico: The Positivist Dictatorship.
- IV. Mexico: The Revolution.
- V. Peru: The Recovery from War, Domestic Conflict, and Dictatorship.
- VI. Peru: The Rise of APRA.
- VII. Cuba: The Wars against Spain.
- VIII. Cuba: Neo-colonialism and Nationalism.
- IX. MIDTERM (review and examination).

SPRING BREAK

- X. Brazil: The Vargas Years and Their Legacies.
- XI. Mexico: The Rise of the PRI and Its Crises.
- XII. Peru: The War Within.
- XIII. Cuba: The Revolution.
- XIV. The Spoken and the Unspoken.
- XV. Review

Advice:

Prudent students will note that the assigned reading, when combined with the additional reading for the term paper, demands disciplined, constant attention. It will be apparent that students who do not have a research topic worked out with the instructor by the date of the midterm risk a crisis in meeting their responsibilities. Since very few students are familiar with Latin American history, few come up with a topic quickly on their own. **The instructor does not expect you to develop a term-paper topic on your own. He expects you to consult with him during office hours at your earliest possible convenience to decide upon a topic and receive his guidance in regard to an appropriate bibliography.** If you have a scheduling conflict with his office hours, contact the instructor to make other arrangements.

Course Penalties and Course and University Policies:

1. Please note the map examination penalty noted above. Note, as well, that there are **severe penalties for missing the deadline of the term paper** (it must be submitted at the beginning of the session indicated; if it is turned in during the session, it is penalized a third of

a grade (e.g., if you would have earned an A+, you earn an A, instead; an A becomes an A-, and so on); if it is turned in after the session but within the twenty-four hour period following the deadline, it is penalized a full grade; if it is turned in within the second twenty-four hour period, it is penalized two full grades; and so on (e.g., your A+ becomes a B+, then a C+, and so on). “Turned in” means delivered by hand as hard copy; email attachments will not be graded, although they may be considered as proof of the time and date of the paper’s submission and penalty level. **Students who send an email attachment to prove the time and date of submission are still responsible for submitting the hard copy to the instructor as soon as possible.**

2. **All components of the course must be submitted to the instructor and a grade for each component recorded by the instructor in order to earn a course grade.** Thus, students who have completed everything else but do not have a recorded grade for, say, the midterm, will fail the course.
3. The instructor will not tolerate **cheating**. The instructor will not tolerate **plagiarism** (the use of others’ materials without appropriate citation, credit, or permission). A student guilty of either will fail the course and the matter will be referred to, and recorded by, the appropriate university authority. **Please see the university’s policies in this regard, below.**
4. **Class attendance and make-up policy:** The instructor does not keep records of **attendance or penalize students who do not attend**. It is his assumption that adults are the best judges their interest in this regard, and students missing lectures never do well in the examinations.
5. As life has been arranged so that **unexpected catastrophes** occur for which even the prudent and virtuous student cannot prepare, the instructor will be willing to review student petitions for a make-up examination or a waiver of penalty (or lessening of penalty) in regard to late assignments. Such waivers will be granted at the discretion of the instructor, and are most likely to be granted in those cases in which the instructor deems that the catastrophe is credible and reliably documented. There is no **extra credit** option or possibility in this course.
6. **Disability accommodation:** Students requesting classroom accommodation because of a **disability** must first register with the Dean of Students’ Office: Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). That office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide that same documentation to the instructor when requesting the appropriate accommodation.

The instructor is obliged to provide other information in regard to taking the course -- information on grading, cheating, and evaluation of the instructor.

1. For the university’s policies with regard to grades, [Grades and Grading Policies < University of Florida \(ufl.edu\)](#)
2. Regarding university policy on matters of honor, such as cheating or plagiarism UF students are bound by *The Honor Pledge* which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and

integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Honor Code](#). Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

3. Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. [Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. [Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here](#)