

LAH2020: Introduction to Latin American History

Fall 2024

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Office Hours: M 2-3:30 P.M & W 2-3:30 P.M, or by appointment

Office: Grinter Hall 333

Class meets: MWF 11:45-12:35 (Period 5)

Location: FLI 105

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What *is* Latin America? It is not a continent per se; neither can it be defined on the basis of language or religion alone. The term Latin America was coined by the French in the nineteenth century—prior to that, people referred to specific regions as defined by European colonizers (Portuguese America, Spanish America, sometimes simply “America,” or by more specific colony names such as Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, etc. or even imperial administrative units such as Viceroyalty of New Spain, Viceroyalty of Peru, etc.). Of course, before any European even set foot in these territories, they were known by various other names by their original inhabitants.

Our course thus begins with a consideration of the very term “Latin America,” and what it means to study its history in a survey format. We then study the Original Peoples of this region, before spending significant time learning about and evaluating the mechanisms and legacies of European colonization. In the second half of the course, we will turn to issues in modern Latin American history, including nationalism, liberalism, and the role of the USA in the region's history.

COURSE OBJECTIVES & EXPECTATIONS

In addition to developing an appreciation for, and an understanding of the history of Latin America, students will learn the basic skills that professional historians use to examine and write about the past. As such, this course emphasizes skills essential to the historical discipline. Reading, writing, and exchanging ideas is the bread-and-butter of the historical discipline. Students should expect to read anywhere from 40 to 100 pages of text per week (at home and in class), and to write academic essays en par with the course level. They should also be ready to engage in well-informed, thoughtful conversations with their peers and instructor about the various materials assigned and topics covered throughout the semester.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- * Learn how to distinguish between primary and secondary sources
- * Improve your text interpretation abilities (various levels of reading)
- * Work on, and improve your writing
- * Learn and practice basic research skills
- * Process and deliver information in both written and oral format

All of these are transferable skills that can be used in your future academic and professional endeavors.

REQUIRED BOOKS

- John Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire: A Concise History of Latin America* 4th Edition (Norton, 2016) (Referred in the weekly schedule as BBF).
 - Available at the UF Bookstore and other online vendors. Please obtain a print copy of the indicated edition. Students who obtain electronic copies should note the “Policy Regarding Electronic Devices” below.
- Additional required readings available in the course Canvas site and/or through UF Libraries. Bring a copy to class! (see schedule)



ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment	Description	Points	Percentage of Final Grade
Map Assignment	Identify modern Latin American nations on a map.	P/F	n/a
Participation	<i>See below for further details on how I assess participation</i>	100	5%
Tests (x2)	Test consisting of a combination of IDs, short answers, and essay based on a portion of the course	100	20% each (x2)
Historian’s Toolkit (x5)	Learn, practice, and perfect the skills that this course seeks to teach them. Full assignment	100	10% each (x5)

	instructions provided on the course Canvas site. Check the weekly schedule (below) for deadlines.		
Self-Assessment	At the end of the semester, write a brief self-evaluation (the Professor will provide guiding questions) and give yourself the grade you believe you deserve based on your performance throughout the course.	100	5%

Grading Scale

For information on current UF grading policies, including grade point calculation, visit:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

A	94 – 100%		C	74 – 76%
A-	90 – 93%		C-	70 – 73%
B+	87 – 89%		D+	67 – 69%
B	84 – 86%		D	64 – 66%
B-	80 – 83%		D-	60 – 63%
C+	77 – 79%		E	<60

GRADING CRITERIA

A Work that goes beyond instructor’s expectations: is careful, thoughtful, original, and thorough. Truly outstanding work – even for a “good” student.

A- Very good work with most of the attributes of “A” work but either deficient in some technical aspect, in thoroughness and care or not as strikingly incisive, original, or creative as “A” work. Excellent.

B+ Better than good, competent work, even for the typical student at this university. Some aspects are very strong, but not uniformly excellent.

B Good competent work, which meets all standards/requirements the instructor could specify in advance. Reasonably thorough. Alternatively, work with some excellent aspects that are balanced by serious deficiencies.

B- Almost up to specifiable standards. Often characterized by vagueness and signs of lack of effort or insufficient engagement with the material. Sometimes the result of correctable misunderstanding. Sometimes the result of truncate writing that could improve with more attention/work. Talk to instructor.

C+ Below the specifiable standards for good work. Sometimes the result of poor writing that compromises quality of the work/clarity of ideas. Talk to instructor.

C Work showing serious misunderstanding or lack of effort or engagement. Talk to instructor

C- or below: Talk to instructor immediately. A grade of C- or below will not confer GenEd credits.

PARTICIPATION

- Participation includes: completion of assigned reading and consistent, informed, thoughtful, attentive courteous and professional engagement with class materials, fellow students and instructor.
- Consistent high-quality class participation—in large and small groups—is expected.
 - “High-quality” in this case means: informed (i.e., shows evidence of having done assigned work); thoughtful (i.e., shows evidence of having understood and considered issues raised in readings and other discussions), and considerate (i.e., takes the perspectives of others into account).
- To align with my attendance policy (see below), participation points are assessed holistically for the semester, taking into account the quality of your contribution when you are present.
- If you have personal issues that prohibit you from joining freely in class discussion, e.g., shyness, language barriers, etc., see the instructor as soon as possible to discuss alternative modes of participation.
- In the absence of strong positive or negative indicators, participation grades will default to align with the student’s average overall grade on written work.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. [*See the “Get Started With the DRC” webpage on the Disability Resource Center site.*](#) It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

- **You are expected to attend and actively participate in each and every class meeting, having completed all readings and assignments following the course schedule.**
 - I do not penalize students who miss class due to sickness, personal/family emergencies, or other unexpected life events that prevent you from being in class.
 - For the occasional absence occurring out of the above-mentioned circumstances, I do not require notification or documentation. However,
- Students who miss a class are encouraged to consult classmates for any missed content (it is OK to share lecture notes for missed classes) and to visit the Professor during office hours for lingering questions or clarifications.
- Poor attendance (excessive absences without communicating with the Professor and/or presenting valid, documented justification) is grounds for failing the course.
 - I am invested in your success! Please communicate with me clearly and in a timely manner whenever obstacles arise, so that we can work together to allow you to successfully complete the course.
- Students who miss 40% or more class meetings without justification will automatically fail the course.

EXTENSIONS

- Students in this course can ask for a one-week extension, no questions asked, for any *one* assignment, without incurring in any grade deduction.
 - To benefit from this opportunity, you must contact the instructor via email no later than 24 hours prior to the assignment deadline.
 - Each student can take advantage of this policy *once* in the semester.
- Students who anticipate obstacles in meeting subsequent deadlines should contact the instructor ahead of time to inquire about possibly turning in more late work.
 - Acceptance of additional late work will occur at the discretion of the instructor and is not guaranteed.
- Please note that when late submissions occur, students must adjust their expectation regarding the timeline for instructor feedback. It may take the instructor more time to provide feedback on late assignments.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in the course are consistent with university policies. [See UF Academic Regulations and Policies for more information regarding the University Attendance Policies](#)

COMMUNICATING WITH THE INSTRUCTOR

1) Office Hours

- You are all welcome to drop by during office hours! This is the best way to reach me outside of class.
- I hold regular Student Hours according to the schedule noted on the top of this document, or by appointment when necessary.
 - **What are office hours for?** This is a time when my door is open to students (on a first-come first-serve basis) to discuss issues pertaining to the class (content questions, clarifications, attendance issues, etc), or other topics such as request for recommendation letters, inquiries about Honors Thesis advising, questions about going to graduate school, your general interests in Latin American history, etc. or if you want to know more about my current and future research projects and course offerings.
 - Please note, conflicts in schedule involving University-related business, academic obligations, health issues, or medical appointments may occasionally result in cancellation of Office Hours in a particular week. You will be notified if that happens.
 - If you are unable to attend office hours and you have questions/concerns that have not been addressed in class and cannot be answered by consulting the syllabus, send me an email to request an appointment (limited availability).

2) Communicating via email

- If you are unable to attend Office Hours and you have pressing concerns/questions that cannot wait for an alternative meeting time, send me an email at f.bretones@ufl.edu. Provide enough information for me to assist you.
 - Please email from your @ufl.edu account—I do not respond to student messages from non-UF accounts.
 - I generally check and respond to emails once daily during the workweek, between 8am-5pm. Please allow up to 24 hours for a response.
 - Professors love to hear from students, but keep in mind that emailing your professors is not the same as emailing (or texting) your friends. For some useful tips on how to email Professors, see “[How to Email Your Professor \(Without Being Annoying AF\)](#)”.

3) Canvas Messages

- I do not read or respond to individual messages sent via Canvas. Please use one of the two methods noted above to communicate with me.
- I use Canvas messages to send general course-related messages that are addressed to the entire class (including reminders about upcoming deadlines, clarifications, notices, etc), or, if I deem relevant, to individual students.
- It is the students’ responsibility to check messages on both Canvas and their UF email regularly for important information relating to the course, and to respond in a timely fashion when necessary.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

The schedule—as well as the rest of this syllabus—is subject to change at any point in the semester. If changes are made, the instructor will notify students in advance, in class and via the course Canvas page.

Week 1. Introduction

Fri. 8/23

Read:

- The syllabus

Week 2. Original Peoples

8/26, 8/28, 8/30

**Map Assignment to be completed by Fri. 8/30 (Canvas)*

Read:

- BBF Chap 1
- Martin and Wasserman, “The First Peoples of the Americas,” pp.1-30 (Canvas)

Week 3. Encounters & Conquest

~~Mon 9/2~~, Wed 9/4, Fri 9/6 → NO CLASS MON. 9/2 (LABOR DAY)

**Historian’s Toolkit Assignment #1: Reflection: How do we access the past? Due Wed. 9/6*

Read:

- BBF Chap 2
- Restall, “Invisible Warriors: The Myth of the White Conquistador,” 44-63 (Canvas)

Week 4. Conquest or Genocide?

9/9, 9/11, 9/13

Read:

- Mon. 9/9: Schwartz and Seijas, “States in Conflict,” pp.1-25 (Canvas) AND BBF Countercurrents: Friar Bartolomé de las Casas (50-53)
- Wed. 9/11: Tour of LACC → class meeting today in Library East Rom 100
- Fri. 9/13: primary source excerpts from *Latin American Voices- A Reader*, “Chronicles of the Encounter,” pp.12-32 (Canvas)

Week 5. Constructing Colonial Society

9/16, 9/18, 9/20

**Historian’s Toolkit Assignment #2: Primary Source Analysis 1 due Mon. 9/16*

Read:

- BBF Chap 3 excerpt, 55-82

Week 6. Slavery and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade

9/23, 9/25, 9/27

* Exceptionally this Fri. 9/27, students should bring a laptop or tablet for an in-class graded activity

**Historian's Toolkit Assignment #3: Database analysis due Fri. 9/27 (in class)*

Read:

- Restall & Lane, "Black Communities," pp. 169-192 (Canvas)
- Skidmore, "[The African Slave Trade and Slave Life](#)" (access hyperlink)

Week 7. Late Colonial Society & Independence

9/30, 10/2, 10/4

Read:

- BBF Chap 3 excerpt, 82-93
- BBF Chap 4
- Peter Blanchard, "The Slave Soldiers of Spanish South America" (Canvas)

**Test 1 – Friday 10/4 in class*

Week 8. The Haitian Revolution

10/7, 10/9, 10/11

Read: 1) Selections from David Geggus, *The Haitian Revolution: A Documentary History* (Canvas)

Week 9. The Challenges of Nation-Building: Latin America in the Nineteenth Century

10/14, 10/16, ~~10/18~~ → NO CLASS FRI. 10/18 (HOMECOMING)

Read: BBF, Chapters 5 and 6

Week 10. The American Century

10/21, 10/23, 10/25

Read: BBF Chapter 7

10/25 Guest lecture: The Mexican Revolution, with Thomas Miller, History PhD student

Week 11. Nationalism

10/28, 10/30, 11/1

**Historian's Toolkit Assignment #4: Primary Source Analysis 2 due Mon. 10/28*

Read: BBF Chapter 8

Week 12. Revolution

11/4, 11/6, 11/8

Read: BBF Chapter 9

11/8 Guest lecture: The Cuban Revolution, with Hélio Alves, History PhD student

Week 13. The Cold War in Latin America

~~11/11~~, 11/13, 11/15 → NO CLASS Mon. 11/11 (VETERANS' DAY)

Read: BBF Chapter 10

Week 14. Neoliberalism

11/18, 11/20, 11/22

Historian's Toolkit Assignment #5: Primary Source Analysis 2 due Mon. 11/18

Read: BBF Chapter 11

Week 15. No class – Thanksgiving Break

Week 16. Conclusions

12/2, 12/4, ~~12/6~~ → No class Fri. (READING DAY)

Mon. 12/2: self-assessment (in class)

Wed., 12/4: Test 2

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATION (AKA GATOR EVALS)

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

UNIVERSITY'S HONESTY POLICY REGARDING CHEATING, PLAGIARISM, ETC.

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 Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. See the UF Conduct Code website for more information. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

CLASS POLICY REGARDING ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of computers and other electronic devices is not allowed in the physical classroom, except when required for assignments as detailed in the syllabus. Students should plan accordingly, and bring pen and paper to lectures to take notes and, when possible, print copies of the readings. This decision relies on pedagogical studies that show that, unless essential for the subject of the course, [multitasking](#) on a laptop during class hinders users and nearby peers’ learning and can result in [lower testing grades](#). Studies also suggest that [taking notes in longhand](#) improves information processing and retention. Students should also be prepared to bring print copies of the required course materials.

CLASS POLICY REGARDING IN-CLASS RECORDING

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving

solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx> P: 392-1575

University Police Department 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

The Writing Studio: The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Hitchcock Field And Fork Food Pantry: For anyone experiencing food insecurity, with no requirement to verify income or need. <https://pantry.fieldandfork.ufl.edu/>

The Molm Family Gator Career Closet: An on-campus, lending closet for students to borrow professional clothing and accessories free of charge. Valid with UF ID <https://career.ufl.edu/closet/>

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.

<https://career.ufl.edu/>

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.