History 1504: Latin American History II

Summer 2024

Instructor: Santiago Bestilleiro Lettini (sb1920@georgetown.edu)

Class meetings: Mondays-Thursdays, 3:30pm - 5:25pm, Car Barn 172.

Office Hours: Thursdays 5:30pm-7pm, Graduate Student Lounge (Car Barn 100).

Course Description: History 1504 examines the trajectory of Latin America between the revolutionary era and the present (1804-2024). The main goal is to analyze the political, economic, and social processes that have shaped the region in the last two centuries. The classes will follow a double methodology: During the first two-thirds of each class, we will explore a classic itinerary, generally marked by a political periodization roughly transversal to the territories studied here. In the last third of each meeting, the “History in Focus” sections will introduce students to specific fields and topics of historical research, adding complexity to the general analysis. Although this is a class centered on the political history of Latin America, its aim is also to teach historiographical methods and provide introductory tools to understand and apply different approaches, including areas of specialization such as social, economic, and environmental history, among others, and themes like demographics, migration, age, and so on. Therefore, the questions that will structure this class will not only be what territory of Latin America or period of its history we are analyzing, but also how historians examine them from diverse fields and through different objects of study.
**Computer policy:** Computers and tablets are allowed, but their use must only be related to class activity (namely, taking notes). The instructor reserves the right to ask students to turn their computers off or leave the class if inappropriate use is identified (for example, texting, browsing social media, shopping). Cell phones are strictly prohibited.

**Honor System:** Students must know and respect Georgetown University's Honor System. For more details, please visit: [http://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system](http://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system).

**Accommodations:** Students with special needs must inform the instructor and provide the pertinent documentation related to their accommodations within the first week of classes. More information is available at the Academic Resource Center website: [https://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/disability/documentation-guidelines/](https://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/disability/documentation-guidelines/)

**Sexual Misconduct:** Georgetown University and its faculty and staff are committed to supporting survivors and those impacted by sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, and stalking. Georgetown requires faculty members, unless otherwise designated as confidential, to report all disclosures of sexual misconduct to the University Title IX Coordinator or a Deputy Title IX Coordinator. If you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a professor or staff member in or outside of the classroom (with the exception of disclosures in papers), that faculty or staff member must report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator, or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. The coordinator will, in turn, reach out to the student to provide support, resources, and the option to meet. Please note that the student is not required to meet with the Title IX coordinator and no action will be taken without the student’s awareness. More information about reporting options and resources can be found on the Sexual Misconduct Website: [https://sexualassault.georgetown.edu/resourcecenter](https://sexualassault.georgetown.edu/resourcecenter).

If you would prefer to speak to someone confidentially, Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources that can provide support and assistance. These resources include:

- Health Education Services: Sexual Assault Response and Prevention: sarp@georgetown.edu
• Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS): 202.687.6985

Additional resources are included below:

• Georgetown Self-Care Resource Guide: https://studenthealth.georgetown.edu/health-promotion/self-care/
• Georgetown Wellness Wheel: https://studenthealth.georgetown.edu/hoya-wellness-wheel/
• Georgetown Guide to Recognizing Students in Distress: https://studentaffairs.georgetown.edu/studentoutreach/facultystaffresources/

Pregnancy Modifications and Adjustments: Georgetown University is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for pregnant students. At any point throughout their pregnancy students may request adjustments/modifications based on general pregnancy needs or accommodations based on a pregnancy-related complication or medical need. Students may also request accommodations following labor and delivery based on a complication or medical need.

To request pregnancy modifications, please complete the SCS Pregnancy Modification Request Form: https://forms.gle/ZBfASxui7u13A8TU6

More information about pregnancy modifications can be found on the Title IX Georgetown University Website: https://titleix.georgetown.edu/title-ix-pregnancy/student-pregnancy/

Evaluations

1. Attendance and Participation (20%). 
   
   1.a. Students are expected to attend all the classes but are allowed up to one unexempted absence. 
   
   1.b. Participation is crucial to passing this course. That is, attending all the classes without participating will not be translated into a 100% of the “Attendance and Participation” grade. 
   
   1.c. Leading a “History in Focus” discussion (see “Readings” below) is a requirement and a crucial part of the Attendance and Participation grade.
2. **Quizzes (40%).** There will be three quizzes. 2.a. The first one is a “Map Quiz.” (10%) Students should be able to identify all countries of Latin America, name and locate their capitals, and point out some important regions, rivers, and landmarks either from the past or the present (e.g., “Amazon River,” “Yucatán Peninsula,” or “New Spain”). The map quiz consists of twenty questions at the beginning of class six. The instructor will provide a comprehensive list of forty locations in the first class. All the questions will come from that list. 2.b. A short quiz (15%) (ten questions, multiple choice, or true/false) about the 19th century will take place at the beginning of class twelve. 3.c. In class nineteen, students will take another short quiz (15%) about the 20th century, following the same format. Questions will emerge from readings and lectures.

3. **Note on Movie (10%).** Write an analysis (max. 2 pages) about the movie *Argentina 1985* (Submit by class 20).

4. **Final paper (30%).** The final paper will consist of seven to twelve pages of analytical research. No more than two-thirds of the sources cited in the paper should come from syllabus material. The topic of the final paper must be approved by the instructor. The instructor should receive all the proposals (one paragraph) by the beginning of class eighteen. Papers must be submitted no later than August 12th.

**Readings:** This is a reading-intensive course. Students are expected to read for every class. Readings are divided into two categories: “General Readings” and “History in Focus.” The former refers to a series of texts that present a broad contextualization. The latter, “History in Focus,” includes pieces that deal with specific historiographical approaches, which will inform the debate of the last minutes of each class. At the first meeting, students will be assigned one
“History in Focus” discussion to lead, based on the text selected for that day. It is also important to note that this syllabus is subject to change during the term.

**Week 1**

**Class 1 (July 8th): Introduction and class mechanics.** A brief overview of the historical itinerary of this class (chronology, regions, topics, approaches). Circulation of questions for the map quiz. “History in Focus” discussion assignments. **The Napoleonic Atlantic.** The colonial rule in Latin America: economy, institutions, and societies. Slavery in the early 1800s. The crisis of the Spanish Monarchy. History in Focus (Atlantic History): Sugar, slavery, and revolution in Haiti:


**Class 2 (July 9th): Revolution (I).** Spanish America between 1810-1824. History in Focus (Political History): A historians’ debate. Revolution of independence or revolution and independence?

History in Focus: Selection of letters from Río de la Plata diplomats (1814/1815), Declaration of Independence of Venezuela.

Class 3: Two Independent Empires (July 10th). Mexico and Brazil after independence. Gold, sugar, coffee, and slavery: the economy of the Brazilian Empire. History in Focus (History of Ideas): Liberalism in Brazil.


General Reading: Alan Knight, Bandits and Liberals, Rebels and Saints: Latin America since Independence, (Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 2022), Chapter 2, “Toward an Explanation of Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century Latin America.”

Week 2


Class 6 (July 16th): International Wars. The War of the Pacific, the War of the Triple Alliance, and the Second Mexican Empire. History in Focus (Demographics): Post-war Paraguay.


**Week 3**


**History in Focus:** Jean Meyer, “The Conflict Between State and Church in Mexico (1925–1938) and La Cristiada (1926–1929),” in Vyacheslav Karpov and Manfred Svensson (Eds.), *Secularization, Desecularization, and Toleration: Cross-Disciplinary Challenges to a Modern Myth* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020).


History in Focus: Natalia Milanesio, *Workers Go Shopping in Argentina. The Rise of Popular Consumer Culture*, Chapter 4, “How can a garbage collector be on the same level as we are? Upper- and middle-class anxieties over working-class consumers.”

Class 12: Revolution (III) (July 25th): The end of the “classic populisms” in Argentina and Brazil. History in Focus (Rural History): Land Reform in the Revolutions of Bolivia and Guatemala.


**Week 4**

**Class 13 (July 29th): Revolution (IV): Cuba.** Batista’s Regime. The guerrilla model. Fidel and El Che. History in Focus (Connected History): The Perspective of a Cuban-American Historian writing about Cuba from the U.S.


**Class 15 (July 31st): Violence.** Shining Path and Montoneros, Peron’s return and the Military Dictatorship. The Malvinas/Falklands War. Allende’s presidency and the 1973 coup. Theology of
liberation. Archbishop Óscar Romero’s assassination. History in Focus (Gender): Women in the dictatorships of Argentina and Chile.


**Class 17 (August 5th): Democracy and its divergent paths (Part II).** SECOND QUIZ. Continue Watching “Argentina, 1985,” Part II. History in Focus (Public History): History, Memory, and Movies. How to analyze a film – and how to narrate a complex history for broad (and foreign) audiences?


**History in Focus:** Rasmus Falbe-Hansen, “The Filmmaker as Historian,” *P.O.V.* No.16 – Film & Politics.
**Week 5**


**General Reading:** María José Vargas-Machuca Salido, “The external debt crisis and the ‘lost decade’ in Latin America (1980–1990),” in Juan Manuel Matés-Barco and María Vázquez-Fariñas (Eds.), *The Age of Global Economic Crises (1929-2022).*

**History in Focus:** Ana Patricia Rodríguez, “Becoming ‘Wachintonians’: Salvadorans in the Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Area,” *Washington History,* Vol. 28, No. 2 (Fall 2016), pp. 3-12.


Poverty and Politics in Urban Latin America.
