History 480: Social Revolution in Latin America  
Spring 2010; California State University, Chico  
Professor Stephen E. Lewis  
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Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9-10:30 AM; Fridays 9-noon.

Course description
This is an upper-division course that will expose you to some of the historical debates concerning Latin America’s major social revolutions. We will grapple with the following issues:

On Mexico:
--was the Mexican revolution “revolutionary”?  
--what has been the legacy of the Mexican revolution since 1920?

On Cuba:
--given the relative prosperity of pre-revolutionary Cuba, and its proximity to the US, how did Castro overthrow Batista and establish a Marxist/Leninist state?  
--who was Che Guevara? What was the nature of his relationship with Castro?  
--is the Cuban revolution communist? Socialist? Capitalist? Or some mix thereof?

On Chile:  
--was Salvador Allende a reformer or a revolutionary?  
--why was Allende’s Popular Unity government overthrown in 1973?

On Nicaragua:  
--what sort of society did the Sandinistas want to build in the 1980s?  
--were they successful? Did they implement a feminist agenda? What has happened since?

On contemporary Latin America:  
--is Hugo Chávez carrying out a successful social revolution in Venezuela? How about Morales of Bolivia and Correa of Ecuador?  
--how are indigenous people and women faring in Venezuela, Bolivia, and Ecuador?  
--are these men revolutionaries? Or simply populist demagogues?

Course requirements
This course is a seminar that meets once a week. Please do the readings ahead of time and come to class prepared to discuss. Each class will normally consist of a lecture that will not exceed one hour in length; the rest of the time will be devoted to student-led discussions, presentations, and video clips.

Your final grade will be determined as follows:  
First paper (five pages—grads should write seven pages)  
Second paper (five pages—grads should write seven pages)  
In-class exam  
Final paper (8-10 pages—grads should write 12 pages)  
Discussion/question/participation grade

Nuts and bolts
--Since this class meets just once a week, your attendance and participation are required. If you skip more than one class, your final grade will be lowered by 1/3 of a grade for each additional class missed.

--Written work will be docked 1/3 of a letter grade each weekday that it is late.

--Those who plagiarize will receive an F for the course and their case will be turned over to Student Judicial Affairs. Please ask me if you have questions about plagiarism.

--I am happy to write letters of recommendation for students who have completed two classes with me and have earned a “B” or better in both classes.
Guidelines for written work

An “A” paper is clearly written and well organized. Most importantly, it contains a central argument supported by a well-chosen variety of specific examples drawn from the assigned readings. Such a paper demonstrates that the student has grappled with the issues raised in the course, synthesized the readings, discussions, and lectures, and formulated a compelling, independent argument. A “B” paper is solid work containing insights that demonstrate that the student has wrestled with some of the issues in the course. Yet a typical “B” paper mainly provides a summary of ideas and information already covered. A typical “C” paper provides a recap of the historical narrative but offers little in terms of analysis and relies on an inadequate number of sources. A paper that receives a grade lower than “C” typically does not respond adequately to the assignment, is marred by frequent errors, unclear writing, poor organization, lack of sources, or some combination of these problems. All grades are final.

Discussions and in-class presentations

Students will lead class discussions and make Powerpoint presentations on assigned readings. The Powerpoint presentations must not exceed six minutes nor consist of more than six slides! After the presentations, the presenter will field questions for a couple of minutes. Material covered by student presenters will appear on our in-class exam.

Required readings

Please purchase the following:


Additional reading for graduates


All supplementary readings are either on the Vista site, can be accessed online, or are on reserve at the library.

Course schedule

Week 1: Jan. 27
Introduction
  *Video: The Mexican Revolution*

The Mexican Revolution

Week 2: Feb. 3


Please e-mail three discussion questions to our discussants by 11:00 AM.


Week 3: Feb. 10


Mary Kay Vaughan, “Nationalizing the Countryside: Schools and Rural Communities in the 1930s,” in The Eagle and the Virgin, pp. 157-175

Grad students:

Please e-mail three discussion questions to our discussants by 11:00 AM.

Video: “The Frescos of Diego Rivera”

Week 4: Feb. 17
Katherine E. Bliss, “For the Health of the Nation: Gender and the Cultural Politics of Social Hygiene in Revolutionary Mexico,” in The Eagle and the Virgin, pp. 196-218.


Joanne Hershfield, “Screening the Nation,” in The Eagle and the Virgin, pp. 259-278.


Please e-mail three discussion questions to our discussants by 11:00 AM.


First paper due in my box in the History Department by Friday, Feb. 19 at 4:00 PM.

The Cuban Revolution

Week 5: Feb. 24

Please e-mail three discussion questions to our discussants by 11:00 AM.

In-class presentation: selections from *The Cuba Reader*:


Week 6: March 3
Castañeda, 160-275.


Please e-mail three discussion questions to our discussants by 11:00 AM.

In-class presentation: more selections from *The Cuba Reader*:

Week 7: March 10
No class — mandatory unpaid furlough day. If you feel you’re being cheated, contact your state legislator or the governor’s office.
Castañeda, 276-410.

Spring break

Chile, 1970-1973

Week 8: March 24

Please e-mail three discussion questions to our discussants by 11:00 AM.

Grads should also read all four of the selections below from Winn’s edited volume, *Victims of the Chilean Miracle*.


In-class grad presentation: Heidi Tinsman, “More Than Victims: Women Agricultural Workers and Social Change in Rural Chile,” in Victims of the Chilean Miracle, 261-297.

In-class presentation: Salvador Allende, Chile’s Road to Socialism (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1973) 78-83,135-166.

**Video:** “In Women’s Hands”

Week 9: March 31 No class. Chávez holiday.
Winn, 139-256.

Second paper due in my box in the History Department by Friday, April 2 at 4:00 PM.

**Nicaragua’s Sandinista revolution, 1979-1992**

Week 10: April 7

Please e-mail three discussion questions to our discussants by 11:00 AM.

**Video:** “Fire in the Mind”

Week 11: April 14
Belli, 121-241.

Please e-mail three discussion questions to our discussants by 11:00 AM.

In-class presentation: Gary Prevost and Harry E. Vanden, eds., The Undermining of the Sandinista Revolution (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), 9-44, and “Nicaragua: Crisis and Rebirth of Sandinismo” (see Lewis for article).

In-class presentation: Richard Feinberg and Daniel Kurtz-Phelan, “Nicaragua between Caudillismo and Modernity: The Sandinistas Redux?” in World Policy Institute (Summer 2006), 76-84.

Week 12: April 21
Belli, 245-369.


In-class exam.

**The leftist turn in contemporary Latin America**

Week 13: April 28

*Neo-zapatismo*

Selections on Zapatismo from The Mexico Reader, pp. 638-669.


Please e-mail three discussion questions to our discussants by 11:00 AM.


Week 14: May 5
Venezuela, Bolivia, and Ecuador

Please e-mail three discussion questions to our discussants by 11:00 AM.


Week 15: May 12
Ali, 91-185, 281-293.

Please e-mail three discussion questions to our discussants by 11:00 AM.