**THE LATIN AMERICAN WORLD**

**SPAN 337/POLS 318/LNAM 302**

SPRING 2010 – Class meetings: Monday, 7:00 – 10:00 p.m. – Carnegie 108

**Instructors**: David George

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Office hours: Monday 12:00 – 12:30; Wed. 11 a.m. -12 noon; Fri. 11 a.m.-12 noon

Drawing on the instructors’ backgrounds in the humanities (Prof. George) and the social sciences (Prof. Smith), this course approaches Latin America through the study of culture and politics. By “culture” we mean not only artistic expression, but also social patterns and practices. By ”politics” we mean not only formal institutions but also the variety of phenomena that affect how institutions function, including political parties, organized interests (business, labor, and agriculture, among others), mass attitudes, and even the global economy. By design, our approach is interdisciplinary, as we hold that culture and politics, although analytically distinct, cannot be isolated from each other and must be examined together. Our approach is also historical, as we believe that contemporary Latin America continues to be strongly influenced by its past, notably the survival of indigenous and colonial influences. Finally, our approach seeks to combine both the general and the specific: the understanding of broad trans-regional traits and patterns as well as the particularities of individual nations, notably Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile.

A note on our general approach to learning and teaching: We are both interested in experimentation and innovation in the learning process. This requires a certain flexibility, creativity, and spontaneity on the part of both students and instructors. As students, you should feel free to suggest new topics, assignments, and classroom experiences – we encourage you to do so. For our part, while we have set out a topics/reading schedule (see below) that provides a general structure, we also remain open to modifications (new readings, viewings, other assignments) as we deem it desirable for our mutual exploration of the Latin America World.

**Texts**

Diamond, Larry, et al., eds. LATIN AMERICA’S STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP. ISBN-10: 0801890594 (paper).

Goodwin, Paul B. GLOBAL STUDIES: LATIN AMERICA. NY: McGraw-Hill/Dushkin, 2009, 13th ed. ISBN-10: 0073379824 (paper).

Hellman, Judith Adler. THE WORLD OF MEXICAN MIGRANTS: THE ROCK AND THE HARD PLACE. NY: The New Press, 2009. ISBN-10: 159558448X (paper).

Reid, Michael. FORGOTTEN CONTINENT: THE BATTLE FOR LATIN AMERICA’S SOUL. New Haven, CT: Yale UP. ISBN-10: 0300151209 (paper).

Copies of other texts will be distributed on-line or as handouts; films (videos) will be placed on reserve in the library, or can be rented through NetFlix, VideoAdventure (Highland Park and Evanston), Blockbuster, or other providers. You will be responsible for doing all film/video assignments on your own.

**Course requirements:**

First paper 5%

Role play or debate 15

Midterm exam 15

Research paper 20

Participation 20

Final exam 25

100%

**First paper.** DUE in class, Mon., Feb. 1. This will be a short essay on the movie “The Mission” (1986). The essay should address two central questions:

1. What do you consider the “climax” (crucial moment/event/turning point) of the movie,

and why?

2. Does this climax work – i.e., is it effective -- from an artistic and/or emotional viewpoint?

Length/format requirements: 900-1000 words (3-4 pages), double-spaced, 12 pt. Times Roman font, 1” margins all around. NOTE: This essay is not a summary of the film, although you may have to provide a bit of the story context for your essay to make sense. The main thing is address the above questions in the required word limit. The movie will be discussed in class on the day the paper is due. No late papers will be accepted.

**Role play or debate.** Everyone will participate in one of the following role plays or debates. Further details forthcoming.

Role-play: Feb. 15. Interview the characters in “The Crime of Pedro Amaro”

Role-play: Feb. 22. Re-stage a scene from “The City of God.”

Debate: Mar. 22. On balance, Pinochet's legacy in Chile has been positive.

Debate: April 5. Although maligned by Chávez, Morales, and others, the policy approach of the “Washington Consensus” – i.e., deregulation, free trade, privatization, etc. – has been, on the whole, positive for Latin America and should be continued.

**Midterm exam.** Exam will in class on Mar. 1. The midterm will be largely objective in nature, designed to assess your understanding of the readings (including those of Mar. 1).

**Research paper.** This will be a research paper of 3600-4000 words (about 12-14 pp.) on a topic of your choice. Paper is due by 5 p.m., Tues. April 27. Please deliver **two copies** (hard copy only – no electronic submissions) to Politics Dept. Faculty Office, 1st floor, Young Hall. Further details forthcoming.

**Participation.** Regular attendance and active, informed participation are expected. It is expected that all students attend every class unless you have a valid reason (sickness, personal emergency, etc.) If you are unable to attend class for these reasons, you should notify the instructors BEFORE class if possible.

**Final exam**. The final exam will be a take home exam, which will be handed out the last class of the semester, April 26. Exam will be due no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, May 4.

**SCHEDULE [readings/films may be adjusted as appropriate]**

**\* = required reading or viewing**

**WEEK**

1 Jan. 18 Introduction

Reading: \*Reid, chap. 1

\*Goodwin, pp. 3-6

\*Gabriel García Márquez, “Balthazar’s Marvelous Afternoon” In class video (if time available): “The Aztecs”

**II. HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

2 Jan. 25 Pre-Columbian America and the Conquest

Reading: \*Log of Columbus; access at http://[www.columbusnavigation.com/log.shtml](http://www.columbusnavigation.com/log.shtml) (John Thacher’s

translation. These dates only: Oct 11-Nov 6, 1492)

\*Charles C. Mann, “1491” (essay); access at http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200203/mann

\*J. Cortázar, “The Night Face Up” (on Moodle)

3 Feb. 1 Colonialism and Independence

Reading: \*Reid, chaps. 2-3

Film/video: \*“The Mission” (Closed Reserve)

First paper due on “The Mission”

**III. CULTURE AND POLITICS**

4 Feb. 8 Culture and Politics: An Overview

Reading: \*Gabriel García Márquez, “Montiel’s Widow” (Moodle)

\*Reid, chaps. 5-6, 9-10

\*Diamond, chaps. 1, 3

5 Feb. 15 Country Studies: Mexico

Reading: \*Goodwin, pp. 7-15; Rdg. #10 (pp. 203-04)

\*Diamond, chaps. 15, 16, 17

\*Reid, pp. 198-211

Film/Video: \*“The Crime of Padre Amaro” (Closed Reserve)

Role Play: Interview with main characters in “The Crime of Padre Amaro”

6 Feb. 22 Country Studies: Brazil (1)

Reading: \*Reid, pp. 185-198

\*Goodwin, pp. 70-77, Rdg. # 18 (pp. 231-35)

Film/video: \* “City of God”

Role Play: Re-stage a scene from “City of God”

7 Mar. 1 Country Studies: Brazil (2)

Reading: \*Brazilian short story (to be assigned/distributed)

\*Diamond, chap. 9

MID-TERM EXAM IN CLASS

8 Mar. 8 No class – spring break

**NOTE: READINGS AFTER MID-TERM TO BE ASSIGNED**

9 Mar. 15 National Cases: Argentina

10 Mar. 22 Country Studies: Chile

Debate: Pinochet’s Legacy

11 March 29 Cuba and Central America (focus: Costa Rica and Guatemala)

12 April 5 Challenging the Washingon Consensus: Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador

Debate: Washington Consensus

13 April 12 The Latin American World in the U.S.: Mexican and Other Migrations

Sat., April 17 The Latin American World in Chicago. REQUIRED field trip to

Pilsen neighborhood in Chicago. Details forthcoming.

14 April 19 Discussion of field trip

Student presentations of research papers

15 April 26 Student presentations of research papers (cont.)

Take-home final given out in class. Exam will be due no later than

5 p.m. on Tuesday, May 4.

NOTE: Research paper is due by 5 p.m., Tuesday, April 27.