Latin America encompasses a vast region of diverse cultures, economies, and political actors. This course is designed to introduce students to the complexities of the region—its commonalities as well as its distinctiveness. We will examine Latin American history thematically with an emphasis on how history helps to understand and explain contemporary issues. Specifically, we will start with the colonial roots of Latin America and then proceed to investigate topics such as the environment, urbanization, social upheaval, economic development, and human rights. We will discuss these issues in terms of class, gender, and race. The course will reveal how choices made in the past continue to have repercussions today—a situation especially relevant in an age of increased globalization. Students are expected to attend lectures, attend discussion sections, and read all assigned materials. The lectures and assigned readings will be supplemented with videos.

**Required books** (listed under IS 179)


Carolina Maria de Jesus, *Child Of The Dark: The Diary Of Carolina Maria De Jesus* (Signet: 2003)

Jacobo Timerman, *Prisoner without a Name, Cell without a Number* (University of Wisconsin: 2002)

**Articles on library course reserves** (listed under IS 179)


Skidmore, Thomas. “Why Latin America,” in Modern Latin America (Oxford University, 2010), pp. 3-11.


**Requirements:**

Each class will be a combination of lecture, discussion, and videos. Grading is based on a midterm (25% / November 2), two short current news summaries (5% / TBA), one 5-6 page paper based on the readings (25% / November 21), a final (30% / December 10, 1:30-3:30) and attendance as well as participation in discussion sections (15%). Exams will combine short identifications and longer essays based on the assigned readings and material covered in lecture. Students, therefore, must attend lectures, finish all readings by the assigned date, and be prepared for discussion.

**Course Schedule**

**Week 1:**

September 28  Introduction: Why Latin America?
October 1     Iberian Roots of Latin America
October 3    Indigenous Roots of Latin America
October 5    African Roots of Latin America

**Readings:**

- Black, pp. 41-58, 78-100.
- Green, pp. 5-11.
Week 2:

October 8  Social Ecology, Deforestation, & Environmental Destruction
October 10 The Urban Landscape: the Rise of Mega Cities
October 12 The Rural Landscape: The “Haves and Have-Nots”

Readings:
- Cleary, “Towards an Environmental History,” pp. 64-96.
- Green, pp. 89-132.

Week 3:

October 15 Continent on the Move
October 17 Constructing Race in Latin America: Creating the “Indio”
October 19 Constructing Race in Latin America: Afro-Latin Americans

Readings:
- Child of the Dark, (entire)
- Green, pp. 135-148.

Week 4:

October 22 Latin American Gender in Historical Perspective
October 24 The Changing Role of Women in Latin America
October 26 Religious Identity in Latin America

Readings:
- Stark, “Pluralism and the Churching of Latin America,” pp. 35-50.
**Week 5:**

October 29  Commodity Links, Trade, & the World Economy

October 31  Growth vs. Development: the Case for Dependency

November 2  Midterm Exam

**Readings:**

- Green, pp. 12-27.

**Week 6:**

November 5  Social Upheaval: The Mexican Revolution

November 7  Social Upheaval (revisited): The Cuban Revolution

November 9  Authoritarianism: the Populists

**Readings:**

- Knight, “Populism and Neo-populism in Latin America,” pp. 223-248.
- Green, pp. 71-79.

**Week 7:**

November 12  Veterans Day

November 14  Authoritarianism: the Generals

November 16  Human Rights & Reconciliation

**Readings:**

- *Prisoner without a Name* (entire)
- Green, pp. 51-71, 166-176.

**Week 8:**

November 19  Across the Divide: U.S. & Latin America, Part 1
November 21  How a Cold War became “Hot”: U.S. & Latin America, Part 2

November 23  Thanksgiving

**Readings:**
- Green, pp. 179-200.

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**Week 9:**

November 26  Transnational Culture

November 28  The (Re) Democratization of Latin America in the 1990s

November 30  Neo-liberalism & the Consequences of Globalization

**Readings:**
- Esquivel, “The Dynamics of Income Inequality in Mexico,” pp. 155-188.
- Green, pp. 28-48.

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**Week 10:**

December 3  Neo-Populism & the New Left

December 5  Hugo's Bolivarian Revolution

December 7  Conclusions

**Readings:**
- Alvarez Herrera, “Revolutionary Road?” pp. 158-162.
- Green, pp. 80-86.