Spring 2016: Revolution in Latin America  
(Chc/Lat 151B, IS 177C, Hist 166D, Soc Sci 173N)

Dr. Robert Duncan (rhduncan@uci.edu)  
Office hours: MWF 11:00-11:30 & by appt.  
2215 Social Science Plaza B

Course Description:

Across Latin America, the twentieth century has been rightly dubbed an “age of revolution” as Latin Americans have frequently armed themselves in order to enact fundamental political, social, economic, and even cultural transformation. This course will present a comparative analysis of the causes, development, and consequences of selected revolutionary movements—both successful and not so successful. By focusing on individual revolutionary outbreaks in Mexico (1910), Bolivia (1952), Cuba (1959), Chile (1970), Nicaragua (1979), and Grenada (1979), the course will explore such topics as state formation, economic nationalism, social justice, gender, ethnicity, and the role of international affairs. The course will examine these case studies through lectures, discussions, videos, and primary/secondary source readings.

"Revolution is a rapid, fundamental and violent domestic change in the dominant values and myths of a society, in its political institutions, social structures, leadership and government activity and policies."

- Samuel Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (1968)

"Social revolutions are rapid basic transformations of a society's state and class structures, accompanied and in part carried out by class-based revolt from below."

- Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions (1979)

Books:

Thomas Benjamin, La Revolución: Mexico’s Great Revolution (University of Texas Press, 2000)


Selected articles: available on course website
Requirements:

Grading for the course is based on two 2-page papers (10% each / April 25 & May 27), a midterm (25% / April 29), one 5-6 page paper based on a selected reading (25% / May 20, and a final (30% / June 6). Exams will combine short identifications and longer essays based on the assigned readings and material covered in lecture. Students, therefore, must finish all readings by the assigned date. Classes will be a combination of lecture, discussion, and videos.

Course Schedule

Week 1:

March 28) Introduction: Definitions & Parameters
March 30) The “Social Science” of Revolution
April 1) Part 1: Background to the Mexican Revolution

Readings:


Week 2:

April 4) Part 2: Outbreak & Direction of the Mexican Revolution
April 6) Part 3: Consolidating the Revolutionary State
April 8) Part 4: Institutionalizing the Revolutionary State

Readings:

- Benjamin, Thomas. La Revolución: Mexico’s Great Revolution, pp. 68-165.
**Week 3:**

April 11) Bolivia: Prelude to Revolution

April 13) Bolivia: The “Incomplete” Revolution in Power

April 15) Guatemala’s Ten Years of Spring: Revolution or Reform?

**Readings:**


---

**Week 4:**

April 18) Cuba’s Road to Revolution

April 20) Consolidating the Cuban Revolution

April 22) Institutionalizing the Cuban Revolution

**Readings:**


Week 5:
April 25) The U.S. Response to Revolution
April 27) The Latin American Response to Revolution
April 29) Midterm

Readings:

Week 6:
May 2) The Parliamentary Revolution: Allende’s Chile
May 4) Destabilizing the “Chilean Road to Socialism”
May 6) Somoza’s Nicaragua

Readings:

Week 7:
May 9) Nicaragua’s Revolution against Dictatorship
May 11) The Sandinistas in Power & under Attack

May 13) The Price of Reform: Revolution in Salvador

Readings:

- Belli, The Country under My Skin (all)

---

Week 8:

May 16) A Theology of Liberation: The Rise of Guerrilla Priests

May 18) Gender and Revolution

May 20) Art and Revolution

Readings:


---

Week 9:

May 23) The “Aborted” Revolution in Grenada

May 25) Why Grenada?

May 27) Post Cold War Revolution: Sendero Luminoso

Readings:


Week 10:

May 30) Memorial Day
June 1) Revolt in Chiapas: Globalization & the Zapatistas (EZLN)
June 3) Conclusions

Readings:

