

HIST 499 003: Senior Research Seminar: Latin America in the Cold War

Research Hall 201
W, 1:30-4:15
Fall 2016

Prof. Karush
Robinson B339
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Office hrs: MW, 10:00-11:00
& by appt.

Course Description:

This research seminar is the capstone course for history majors. In the last couple of decades, historians have begun to re-examine the impact of the Cold War superpower rivalry on Latin American governments, cultures, and societies. This scholarship has questioned some of the assumptions of North American diplomatic historians and has broadened the object of study beyond politics and violence. Within this general topic, students will devise their own research projects with my approval. Students may choose to explore some aspect of diplomatic or military history, or they may choose to focus on an aspect of cultural history or a question of U.S. influence. The causes of U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic and the influence of rock music in 1960s Brazil are equally acceptable topics. Once they have chosen a topic, students will familiarize themselves with the relevant scholarly literature, carry out extensive primary-source research, and produce a paper of between 20 and 30 pages. Students will be expected to present their papers in class and to review the work of their peers.

Goals:

1. To provide students the opportunity to practice history, rather than just study it.
2. To enable students to understand that historical research is the process of devising and supporting an argument about the past and situating that argument within an ongoing scholarly conversation; it is not simply an exercise in gathering information.
3. To give students the opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of the skills of research, analysis, and written communication.

Books Required for Purchase:

Thomas Wright, *Latin America in the Era of the Cuban Revolution*

Two Important Hints for Picking a Good Topic:

Success in this course depends heavily on your ability to select a good topic. Toward that end, here are two issues to keep in mind:

1. Specificity. Your topic should be as narrow as possible. (If someone has written an entire book on a subject, that subject is far too broad for a 25-page paper.) For instance, you cannot write a paper on the history of Latinos in Washington DC, but you could do one on Salvadoran activism in DC during the 1980s. You cannot write a paper about the Cuban Revolution, but you could do one on depictions of the conflict in one or two African American newspapers. A narrow topic might seem boring at first, but part of your challenge will be to contextualize your research question, so that you can demonstrate how it speaks to larger questions.

2. Primary Source Availability. It is absolutely essential that you produce an argument that you can support with evidence drawn from primary sources. As you consider possible topics, think about what types of sources they will require, where you might find those sources, and whether you will be able to read them. An ability to read Spanish or Portuguese is NOT required for this course, but if you do not have that ability, you need to think about topics that can be addressed with English-language primary sources. One way to generate a good topic is to work backwards: find a set of interesting primary sources and then consider what questions you might be able to answer with it.

Requirements (for due dates, see class schedule below):

1. Class Participation. You are expected to complete assigned reading before class and come prepared to discuss it. You are also expected to participate in our class discussions about research and writing methods.
2. Statement of Research Question. This is your first attempt to choose a topic. Your statement should be 1-2 pages long and must include the following:
 - a) at least one question you intend your research to answer
 - b) a statement of why this question is important
 - c) a brief description of the existing scholarship on the topic
 - d) a description of the primary sources you intend to use
3. Preliminary Bibliography. This is a list of the sources you intend to use for your paper. Your bibliography should contain two categories: secondary sources and primary sources. You must have at least 15 secondary sources, at least 8 of which are books and at least 10 of which were written in the last 20 years. Your primary source entries should indicate the kind of source (newspaper, memoir, government record, etc), the medium (microfilm, online database, published book, etc) and the location (Fenwick library, the National Archives, etc).
4. Research Log. You will be required to make a total of four entries in an ongoing research log. These are to be submitted to me via email. They should be about one paragraph long and should describe your progress during the past week. What sources did you consult? How have you revised your research problem or thesis? What are your next steps?
5. Oral Presentation. Each student will make a 5-minute presentation of his or her principal hypothesis or argument and evidence. Powerpoint is optional. Practice your presentation; time limits will be enforced. Be prepared to answer questions from the class.
6. Introduction. Each student will submit a 3-5 page draft of their introduction via email attachment. The Introduction should describe your historical subject/topic, establish the historical context, explain why it is historically significant, and discuss the relevant historiography.
7. First draft. You must submit your first draft via email attachment to me and to your peer evaluator. Your first draft must include footnotes as well as a final bibliography that meets the criteria described above. The more complete and polished the draft, the better the

feedback you can expect to receive. Note that students will be assigned arbitrarily to either Group A or Group B and that the due date for the first draft is different for the two groups.

8. Peer Evaluation. You will be assigned one classmate, whose first draft you will read and assess. Write a two-page written critique. Give one copy to me and one copy to the author. For class discussion, prepare a short summary (no more than five minutes) in which you summarize the thesis, discuss the paper's greatest strength; and point out its greatest weakness. You must suggest at least one concrete means of improving the essay. Focus on the argument and the use of evidence, not on writing style.
9. Final paper. A successful paper must be substantially revised after the first draft. You must turn in two hard copies of your paper as well as your first draft (with my comments on it).

For your bibliography, first draft, and final draft, be sure to use the Chicago Manual of Style citation form (also called Turabian). Be consistent.

All written assignments must be turned in on time. Late papers will be penalized one half-grade per day.

Grades will be determined as follows:

Class Participation	10%
Statement of Research Question	5%
Annotated Bibliography	5%
Research Log	5%
Oral Presentation	5%
Introduction	5 %
First draft	10%
Peer Evaluation	5%
Final paper	50%

Class Schedule:

8/31 Introduction to the Course: Topics, Arguments, and Sources

9/7 Latin America's Cold War, the Early Years

Reading: Greg Grandin, "Off the Beach: The United States, Latin American, and the Cold War" (available on Blackboard); Wright, xi-72

9/14 Latin America's Cold War, 1960s-1980s

Reading: Wright, 73-206

Due: Research Log #1 (via email)

9/21 Recent Scholarship: 3 Examples

Reading: William Michael Schmidli, "Institutionalizing Human Rights in U.S. Foreign Policy: U.S.-Argentine Relations, 1976-1980," *Diplomatic History* 35:2 (2011): 351-377.

Kim Christiaens, "Between Diplomacy and Solidarity: Western European Support Networks for Sandinista Nicaragua," *European Review of History* 21:4 (2014): 617-634

Matthew B. Karush, "Reinventing the Latin in Latin Jazz: The Music and Career of Gato Barbieri," *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* (2016).

<http://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/BgxwT7my9xB4si6Hs2Me/full>

Due: Research Log #2 (via email)

9/28 Research Methods: Finding and Analyzing Sources

Due: Statement of Research Question

10/5, 10/12 No Class Meetings

Required: Set up an individual meeting with me to take place before 10/14.

Due: Research Log #3 on 10/5 and #4 on 10/12 (via email)

10/19 Oral Presentations

Due: Introduction (via email attachment before class)

10/26 No Class Meeting

Due: Group A first drafts via email attachment to me and to your peer evaluator

11/2 Discussion: Group A Papers (only group A must attend)

Due: Group A peer evaluations

Group B first drafts via email attachment to me and to your peer evaluator

11/9 Discussion: Group B Papers (only group B must attend)

Due: group B peer evaluations

11/16 - 11/30 No Class Meetings

12/7 Final Papers Due in class

Criteria for Oral Presentations:

*Demonstrates ability to present one's work in a clear and organized manner

*Completes the essential elements within the allotted time

*Engages and maintains the audience's attention

*Demonstrates ability to handle questions from the audience

*Demonstrates ability to synthesize elements from different discipline

Criteria for Research Papers:

*States an original thesis or historical interpretation

*Uses primary sources effectively

*Relates work to existing secondary literature in the field

*Synthesizes and analyzes diverse sources

*Links the subject to broader historical questions and historiography

- *Integrates skills and knowledge acquired in other disciplinary contexts
- *Writing is clear and grammatical; essay is well-organized and coherent

Statement on Plagiarism:

Plagiarism includes a wide spectrum of violations. Put most simply, it is appropriating another person's words or ideas as if they were your own. It includes, but is not limited to, the use of another person's words without attribution or proper citation; submission of work that is not one's own, whether the work is stolen, purchased, or used with the author's permission; the too-close paraphrasing of another person's words or ideas. If you don't know if something is plagiarism, ask. Violations are against the GMU Honor Code. Suspected violations will be turned over to the Honor Committee for resolution.

This class is designated as a **Research and Scholarship Intensive Course**, which means that students are given the opportunity to actively participate in the process of scholarship and will make a significant contribution to the creation of a disciplinary-appropriate product. In this RS course, students will:

- Create an original scholarly or creative project.
- Communicate knowledge from an original scholarly or creative project.

This class is also a **Writing Intensive Course** and a **Synthesis Course**.

ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class.

Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes. (Deadlines each semester are published in the Schedule of Classes available from the Registrar's Website, registrar.gmu.edu.)

Last day to add a class: 9/6

Last day to drop a class with no tuition penalty: 9/6

Last day to drop a class: 9/30

After the last day to drop a class, withdrawing from this class requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons.

Undergraduate students may choose to exercise a selective withdrawal. See the Schedule of Classes for selective withdrawal procedures.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. For the purposes of this course, make sure that you understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. You may not present anyone else's words or ideas as if they were yours. If I suspect that you have, I will immediately turn your case over to the Honor Committee.

MASON EMAIL ACCOUNTS

Students must use their MasonLIVE email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.

OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. <http://ods.gmu.edu>

WRITING CENTER

For help with your writing, please use the services of the Writing Center: A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200; <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>; wcenter@gmu.edu

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS)

(703) 993-2380;

<http://caps.gmu.edu>

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.