

History of Latin America Since Independence

HIST 272

Dr. Jessica Mack
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Spring 2022

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:00 – 1:15pm (on [Zoom](#))



Course Description:

This course explores the history of Latin America from the Independence movements of the 1810s and 20s to the present day. We will examine historical questions related to land, labor, sovereignty, revolution, and economic development to gain a better understanding of the historical roots of global and regional inequalities. The course will trace Latin America's place in the global economy through commodities such as coffee and cocaine and analyze the region's complex relationship to the United States. With particular emphasis on gender, race, and the experiences of everyday people, we will explore the perspectives of a broad range of historical actors and challenge the perceptions and exclusions that have shaped the history and memory of Latin America. Lectures and readings will cover a range of Latin American countries with an emphasis on Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, and Cuba. Students will analyze primary sources, improve close reading and critical writing abilities, and build interpretive skills through engagement with documents, maps, film, photography, oral history, and digital materials.

Virtual Office Hours:

Plan to visit office hours at least once this semester. You can sign up here:

<https://calendly.com/drjmack>

2:00 – 3:30pm Tuesdays and Thursdays

8:30 – 10:00am Fridays or contact me to set up an appointment at another time.

Communication:

This course will use [Slack](#) for most communication, including the required discussion posts about the readings. We will set up Slack in the first week of class. Any communication with me should take place in Slack, either in the #general channel or in a private message (not via email). I generally respond to messages on weekdays until 6pm, and I am available to answer questions on Zoom after class and during office hours. For questions about assignments or resources, first use the Slack #help channel to discuss the problem with your classmates.

If you wish, please share your name and pronouns with me and how best to address you in class and on Slack. I use she/her/hers pronouns and you may address me as Dr. Mack.

Assignments:

Readings and Discussion Posts:

This course has one required book for purchase: *Blood and Fire: A Concise History of Latin America* by John Charles Chasteen (Norton, 4th Edition). This book will be referred to as ‘Chasteen’ on the syllabus. It is available to purchase at the campus bookstore and online. Other required readings will be provided as PDFs. The readings will be essential for class discussions and activities. Complete the reading assignment before each class session. The readings are listed on the day they will be discussed.

By 10:00am on the day of class (Tuesdays and Thursdays), post a quote, a brief comment and a question about the reading on the Slack channel for that week and respond to at least one of your classmate’s posts. Twenty (20) posts are required over the course of the semester (and you’re welcome to submit more!).

Map Quiz: Use the map provided to study for this map quiz on Latin American countries.

Primary Source Analysis: Students will write one primary source analysis paper (1200-1500 words) and give a brief presentation of the source during our virtual class session (5-10 minutes). Guidelines and source options will be provided. Students will receive extra credit if they do a consultation at The Writing Center to work on a draft of the assignment (online or in person). Submit assignments to me as attachments in a direct Slack message.

Midterm Exam: The take-home midterm will include short answers and a short essay.

Final Project: Students will have the option to write a final paper or create a digital timeline. Both options will make use of primary sources. Guidelines will be provided. Please make use of the wonderful resources available at Mason, including our knowledgeable librarians and writing tutors. Students will receive extra credit if they do a consultation at The Writing Center to work on a draft of the assignment (online or in person).

Life Happens Policy: The pandemic is still a serious concern, and many members of our community are dealing with challenging personal circumstances. Under any circumstances, many students experience anxiety, depression, and other emotional and psychological challenges

during college. My Life Happens Policy is as follows: all students may take one 48-hour extension for any one assignment (excluding the final project), no questions asked. Just send me a quick message letting me know you will be taking the extension. Please reach out to me at any time during the semester if you are experiencing difficulties or need help finding resources at Mason.

Assessment:

25% - Participation and Discussion Posts: This includes attendance on Zoom, completing the readings, submitting discussion posts, and active participation in class discussions on Zoom, in the Zoom chat, or on Slack. I encourage you to share video during class sessions if possible, but this is not required for a full participation grade.

5% - Map Quiz

20% - Primary Source Analysis Paper and Presentation

25% - Midterm Exam

25% - Final Project

Week 1 – Introduction

Tuesday, January 25

Introductions

Review of Syllabus

Thursday, January 27

****No class meeting****

Read Chasteen: 1. Welcome to Latin America (1-15);

And A Tour of Latin America (M2-M12)

Read the syllabus carefully and contact me with any questions.

Study the map on p.13 of Chasteen (also posted in Slack) for map quiz next week.

Week 2 – Colonial Heritage

Tuesday, February 1

**** MAP QUIZ ****

Choose a source from your own personal archive to discuss during class.

Read Chasteen: 2. Encounter (16-53)

Thursday, February 3

Read Chasteen: 3. Colonial Crucible (54-93)

Week 3 – Independence

Tuesday, February 8

Read Chasteen: 4. Independence (94-125)

Thursday, February 10

Read: Jeremy Adelman, “Independence in Latin America” in *The Oxford Handbook of Latin American History* (2011), 153-180.

Week 4 – Slavery and Abolition

Tuesday, February 15

Read: Peter Blanchard, “The Language of Liberation: Slave Voices in the Wars of Independence,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 82:3 (2002), 499-523.

Thursday, February 17

Read: Sandra Lauderdale Graham, *Caetana Says No: Women’s Stories from a Brazilian Slave Society* (selections)

Read and review maps on SlaveVoyages digital project: <https://www.slavevoyages.org/>

Week 5 – Early Republics

Tuesday, February 22

Read Chasteen: 5. Postcolonial Blues (126-159)

Thursday, February 24

Read: Sarah Chambers, “Republican Friendship: Manuela Sáenz Writes Women into the Nation, 1835-1856,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 81:2 (2001), 225-257.

Week 6 – Building Nations and States

Tuesday, March 1

Read: Tristan Platt, “Simon Bolivar, the Sun of Justice and the Amerindian Virgin: Andean Conceptions of the Patria in Nineteenth-Century Potosi,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 25:1 (1993), 159-185.

Thursday, March 3

Read Chasteen: 6. Progress (160-191)

Week 7 – Export Boom

Tuesday, March 8

Read Chasteen: 7. Neocolonialism (195-231)

Thursday, March 10

Read Mauricio Tenorio, “1910 Mexico City: Space and Nation in the City of the Centenario,” *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 28:1 (1996), 75-104.

****SPRING BREAK****

Week 8 – The Brazilian Path

Tuesday, March 22

Read: Barbara Weinstein, “Postcolonial Brazil” in *The Oxford Handbook of Latin American History* (2011), 212-256.

Thursday, March 24

Listen: Barbara Weinstein, “The Color of Modernity: Sao Paulo and the Making of Race and Nation in Brazil” Podcast Interview (New Books in Latin American Studies)

Week 9 – Global Entanglements and Interventionism

Tuesday, March 29

Read: Ada Ferrer, “Cuba, 1898: Rethinking Race, Nation, and Empire,” *Radical History Review* 1999 (73): 22-46

Thursday, March 31

Listen: Choose a podcast interview from the New Books Network in Latin American Studies. Post a link in slack with a brief review of the podcast.

Week 10 – The Mexican Revolution

Tuesday, April 5

John Womack, *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution* (Selections)

Documentary Film: *The Storm That Swept Mexico* – 2 hours (2011):

<https://bit.ly/2tsCXqy>

Thursday, April 7

Read Chasteen: 8. Nationalism (232-265)

Week 11 – The Cold War and the Cuban Revolution

Tuesday, April 12

Read: Nick Cullather, *Secret History: The CIA's Classified Account of its Operations in Guatemala* (selections)

Thursday, April 14

Read Chasteen: 9. Revolution (266-295)

Week 12 – Dictatorship

Tuesday, April 19

Read: Chasteen 10. Reaction (296-327)

Thursday, April 21

Read: Horacio Verbitsky, *Confessions of an Argentine Dirty Warrior* (selections)

Listen: Mexico '68: A Movement, a Massacre, and Mexico's 50 Year Search for the Truth (23 min.): <https://bit.ly/31VHiDO>

Week 13 – Illicit Trade, Neoliberalism, and Informality

Tuesday, April 26

Read: Paul Gootenberg, “The Drug Boom (1965-1975) and Beyond” in *Andean Cocaine: The Making of a Global Drug* (291-324)

Thursday, April 28

Read Chasteen, 11. Neoliberalism and Beyond (328-356)

Listen: Part 1, [After Ayotzinapa](#) Podcast (by Reveal and the National Security Archive)

Week 14 – Latin America in the 21st Century

Tuesday, May 3

Listen: Parts 2 and 3 of [After Ayotzinapa](#) Podcast (by Reveal and the National Security Archive)

Find a news article about Latin America today and post it in Slack with a short summary.

Thursday, May 5 (Cinco de Mayo!)

Conclusion

Thursday, May 12, 2022: Final Projects due via email by 11:59pm

Academic Integrity and Honor Code:

At George Mason University, Academic Integrity is demonstrated in our work, community, the classroom and research. We maintain this commitment to high academic standards through Mason's Honor Code. It is an agreement made by all members of our community to not "cheat, steal, plagiarize, or lie in matters related to your academic work." Students sign an agreement to adhere to the Honor Code on their application for admission to Mason and are responsible for being aware of the most current version of the code.

The Honor Code Pledge reads as follows:

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University Community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set for this Honor Code: Student Members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.

The Honor Committee is selected to promote academic integrity as a core value for our university community. Members of the committee serve on hearing panels established to investigate and resolve alleged violations of the Honor Code. Undergraduate and graduate students at Mason are subject to the university Honor Code. Mason's law school, the Scalia School of Law, has an Honor Committee that is independent from the rest of the University's Honor Committee. Questions about cases brought by the Scalia School of Law should be referred to that committee.

In addition, Mason has an office that deals with issues around research misconduct. Those incidents are investigated through the Office of Research Integrity and Assurance. As it states in policy 4007, "Allegations of academic misconduct against graduate students are governed solely by the university's honor code, except for 1) research activities as defined above regardless of sponsorship; and 2) master's theses and doctoral dissertations, both of which are governed by this policy. Allegations of academic misconduct against undergraduate students are governed solely by the university honor code, except for sponsored research activities which are governed by this policy." For more information, visit the Office of Research Integrity and Assurance website at <https://rdia.gmu.edu/topics-of-interest/research-misconduct/>.

Disability Accommodations

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to upholding the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. Under the administration of University Life, Disability Services implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities. Students can begin the registration process with Disability Services at any time during their enrollment at George Mason University. If you are seeking accommodations, please visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474