

History 508 (3 cr.) – LATIN AMERICA: SELECTED TOPICS
Latin America and the United States
Fall 2003--TR 4:00-5:15--McIver 322; Dr. M. B. Floyd

Office Hours: 3:30-4:00 p.m. and by appointment (McIver 206)
Communication: Phone: 334-5208; Fax: 334-5910; E-mail: mbfloyd@uncg.edu

Course Description: Students will explore significant issues in the twentieth-century relations between Latin America and the United States, focusing on /Central America, Cuba, Mexico, and Venezuela. We will examine traditional interpretations, contemporary arguments, and the Latin American context and perspective. Graduate and undergraduates will have some assignments in common and some assignments specifically designed for each.

A 500-level course is not a lecture course. Rather, it calls upon students to read, engage in discussion, and practice writing. As a consequence, we will treat this course as a proseminar. The class is divided into two parts. In the first part, each week I will introduce the text with a mini lecture on the Latin American context. We will then attempt to decipher the author's arguments through conversation with one another.

Course Requirements: In the first part of the course, undergraduates will write a book report on each of the five texts; graduate students will write a chapter-by-chapter summary of each. In addition to in-class discussion, on Thursdays all students will write a brief essay on a topic from the reading. In the second part, all students will learn how historians go about their craft by engaging in some preliminary research and interpretation of materials. All students will prepare an annotated bibliography and will write a research proposal as the final project. Individuals and groups will also report to the class. See evaluation methods and guidelines for assignments and grading.

Academic Honor Code: Each student is required to sign the Academic Integrity Policy on all major work submitted for the course. Please refer to the UNCG *Undergraduate Bulletin*.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend all classes. Each student will be allowed three unexcused absences. Thereafter, the student will lose one (1) point from his total grade for each absence.

Electronic Communication: We will use the [Blackboard](#) course management system to communicate with each other. Individuals who have not activated their UNCG accounts will not appear in Blackboard since they have not been assigned a UNCG user name. Accounts can be activated at [UNCG Computer Accounts Request Page](#) by selecting Unix Communications, Netware & Campus Pipeline Account Creation. See separate handout [Blackboard Information](#). You are required to check your e-mail if not daily, then at least on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. I check my e-mail several times a day and will respond promptly to your questions.

Evaluation Methods and Guidelines for Assignments: All students will be evaluated on in-class discussion, in-class essays, book reviews, chapter summaries, the annotated bibliography, and research proposal. Guidelines for the annotated bibliography and the research proposal will be distributed in separate handouts. Students will make reference to Rampolla and will have access to [The Writing Guide](#), a web site with information on writing basics that I have developed for students in my classes.

Grading: Undergraduates: In-class discussion (10 points); in-class essays (20 points); book reports (20 points); annotated bibliography (20 points); and research proposal (30 points). **Graduates:** In-class discussion (10 points); in-class essays (20 points); chapter summaries (20 points); annotated bibliography (20 points); and research proposal (30 points).

Grading Scale: A (100-90); B (89-80); C (79-70); D (69-60); F (59-0). See the explanation of the UNCG grading system in the *Undergraduate Bulletin* to understand the distinction between grades.

Required Texts:

- Ewell, Judith. Venezuela and the United States: From Monroe's Hemisphere to Petroleum's Empire. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1996.
- Leonard, Thomas M. Central America and the United States: The Search for Stability. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1991.
- Pérez, Louis A. Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1997.
- Raat, W. Dirk. Mexico and the United States: Ambivalent Vistas. 2nd ed. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1996.
- Rampolla, Mary Lynn. A Pocket Guide to Writing in History. 3rd. ed. Boston: MA: Bedford/St.Martin's, 2003.
- Smith, Peter H. Talons of the Eagle: Dynamics of U.S.-Latin American Relations. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Schedule: A more detailed schedule is a separate handout.

- 01-02 August 19-21 Purpose and organization; Background notes on Latin America
- 03-04 August 26-28 Background notes on Latin America (con't); Rampolla, review of
- 05-14 Sept. 02-Oct. 02 Discussion of reading and in-class writing: Smith, Raat, Leonard, Ewell, Pérez
- 15-30 Oct. 07-Dec. 04 Individual and group research, individual and group conferences, group discussions, class reports.

Student Learning Outcomes: On completion of this course, students will be able to identify major areas of discussion between Latin America and the United States, to identify primary sources, to compile an annotated bibliography of primary and secondary sources in the proper format, to write a research proposal, and to recognize proper English usage.

Teaching Strategies: As indicated above, this class will include some lecture, but mostly class discussion, group and individual conferences, individual and group reports to the class, and individual writing exercises. We will spend the first seven weeks reading and discussing the primary texts and the last eight weeks engaged in research, conferences, writing, and reporting.