Social revolutions constitute exceptional and dramatic events in human history. They bring about radical and sweeping transformations of the existing political, social, economic, and cultural orders. The three most conspicuous Latin American revolutions of the 20th century (Mexico 1910, Cuba 1959, and Nicaragua 1979) have had a tremendous impact not just within those countries and the Latin American region, but on hemispheric relations and world politics as well. Using a comparative perspective, this course will discuss the causes, course, and outcome of Latin American revolutions, seeking to highlight the peculiarities of Latin American revolutions, and paying close attention to the political, economic, social, and cultural dimensions of revolutionary transformation. In addition, we will also study the case of the "Shining Path" of Peru, trying to understand the reasons behind its emergence and ultimate failure. Finally, we will address the role and legacy of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary violence in twentieth-century Latin America.

Requirements

Undergraduate students:

1. Three book reviews (10% each). Students will write a 2-3 page review of the books by Rosendahl, Zimmermann, and Degregori. More details will be offered in class.
2. Midterm exam: 30%
3. Final exam: 40%

Graduate students:

1. Three book reviews (as described above) (10% each).
2. A 15-page paper on a topic related to the course (50%). Details will be offered in class. Topics must be chosen by the beginning of the second week of classes.
3. Oral presentation (20%).
Course policies

1. Students are expected to attend lectures consistently. A passing grade will be hard to achieve without regular attendance. Students must also consistently read the assigned materials and actively participate in class discussions.

2. Late book reviews will be penalized with one letter grade per day.

3. A common form of academic dishonesty, plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Students must become familiar with the University of Oregon rules about this issue. More information will be offered at the appropriate time.

4. An atmosphere of mutual respect, tolerance, and fairness will be enforced by the instructor. Students must behave in ways proper to an academic environment--i.e. no talking, eating, or newspaper reading during lecture. Cell phones, i-pods, and other electronic devices can not be used during class. Laptops and tablets are allowed ONLY for note-taking, and students using them must seat on the front row. If a student uses his/her laptop for other purposes during class time (web browsing, chatting, e-mail checking), he/she will be banned from bringing a laptop computer to the classroom.

5. “Incomplete” grades will be granted only in cases of extreme need and only to those students that have an acceptable record of class attendance and have at least a C average in their evaluations. Students that need an "incomplete" grade must make arrangements with the instructor on or before the last week of classes.

Required Readings

The following books will be available for purchase at the U of O Bookstore and are also on reserve at Knight Library.


In addition, a number of articles will be available through Blackboard. (The list below includes the abbreviated titles as listed on Blackboard. Full citations are included at the end of the syllabus.)
Outline of lectures

Week 1

01/07 Introduction
01/09 Theorizing Revolutions. Latin American revolutions in comparative perspective

Readings:
Goldstone, The Comparative and Historical Study of Revolution.
Wickham-Crowley, Structural Theories of Revolution.

Week 2

01/14 Prelude from Revolution in Mexico
01/16 The Revolutionary Decade (1910-1920)

Readings
Gilly, Capitalism Development.
Knight, Revolutionary Project.
Katz, Peasants in the Mexican Revolution.

Week 3

01/21 No class. Martin Luther King holiday observed
01/23 Forging the myth of the Mexican Revolution

Readings
Benjamin, La Revolución.
Brunk, Forging a National Zapata.
Coffey, Muralism and the People.

Week 4

01/28 Pre-revolutionary Cuba
01/30 The making of a revolution: ideology, actors, and armed struggle

Readings
Perez, The Eclipse of Old Cuba.
Perez, Between the Old and the New.
Sweig, Inside the Cuban Revolution.
Week 5

02/04 Socialism or Death: The Revolution in Power (1960s)
02/06 Video and Discussion: Popular Democracy or Totalitarian Regime? A balance of the Cuban Revolution. Book review # 1 due.

Reading
Rosendahl, *Inside the Revolution*, all.

Week 6

02/11 Midterm exam
02/13 Somoza’s Nicaragua and the Origins of the FSLN

Reading

Week 7

02/18 The FSLN, popular mobilization and the Sandinista victory
02/20 The US, the contras, and the demise of the Sandinista revolution.

Readings
Selbin, *Making the Revolution Reality*.

Week 8

02/25 Peru: From Military to Maoist Revolution / Book review # 2 due.
02/27 The Origins and Development of the “People’s War”

Reading
Degregori, *How Difficult it is to be God*, all.

Week 9

03/04 Video and discussion
03/06 Revolutionary and Counterrevolutionary Violence in Twentieth-Century Latin America: Balance and Discussion / Book review # 3 due.

Readings
Chase, *Violence and Justice*
Gould, *Revolutionary and Counterrevolutionary Violence*
Grandin, *Living in Revolutionary Time*
Week 10

03/11 Graduate students’ presentations
03/13 Review for Final Exam

Final exam: Tuesday, March 19, 15:15 pm

Full citations for articles and chapters assigned as required readings:


Louis Perez, “The Eclipse of Old Cuba” and “Between the Old and the New”, from *Cuba Between Reform and Revolution* (Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 210-236 and 237-256
