The Cold War in Latin America

Note: This syllabus is from 2013

History 407
Spring 2013. T 2-4:50pm, 473 McKenzie, CRN 33509

Professor Reuben Zahler
rczahler@uoregon.edu, 346-5907
Office: McKenzie 307
Office Hours: Mon 11am-1pm / W 10am-12pm
and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
The Cold War affected virtually every part of the globe. This conflict directly influenced some parts of the world, such as Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa, far more than either of the World Wars. This period was very likely the most violent in all of Latin America’s history, and the death toll was horrendous. This was also the apex of US intervention throughout the hemisphere as there were virtually no conflicts in which the US was not involved, to one degree or another. In addition, it was a period in which Latin Americans engaged in very fertile ideological discourse and experimentation in political/economic/social systems. The violence stemmed in part from the global struggle between the US and the USSR, but also derived from very local conditions. Economic inequality, uneven development, tenuous relations between civilian governments and the military, competition between conservatives and progressives, racial/ethnic prejudice, ideological struggles, fights over land and wealth, and desires for greater political-economic sovereignty inspired Latin Americans to fight each other and to seek assistance from the superpowers. This course will consider the Cold War in Latin America from many perspectives: as one theater within a larger global conflict; as numerous local struggles with very local concerns; as a front in which Latin American, US, and Soviet policy makers cooperated with, manipulated, and exploited each other. In addition, the course will consider the very individual and human face of the conflict, as we examine the lives and deaths of guerrillas, soldiers, clergy, bureaucrats, torturers, businessmen, journalists, writers, artists, street protestors, diplomats, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, and friends, etc. Through secondary and primary source readings, we will consider why and how the region’s most repressive governments and brutal civil wars unfolded as they did, the many solutions that Latin Americans sought to resolve their problems, and how local and foreign forces interacted with each other.

READINGS
Purchase the following books at the campus bookstore:

In addition, readings to be downloaded from Blackboard (Course Documents >> Reading
EVALUATIONS

Map quiz (April 9) 2%
Attendance and participation 10%
Weekly paragraphs 10%
Paper components 38%
  
  Topic Statement (April 16) 1%
Annotated Bibliography and Timeline (April 23) 5%
Presentation (April 23) 1%
Primary source analysis (April 29) 5%
Partner assessment of primary source (April 30) 3%
Presentation (May 7) 2%
Prospectus (May 21) 19%
Presentation (May 21) 2%
Research paper (June 6) 40%

1) Map Quiz: Identify the names and capitols of all mainland Latin American countries (not the Guyanas) and three island countries: Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic

2) Reading Paragraphs:
   a) For weeks 2-8, each week write a paragraph about the reading, posted to Blackboard before class on Tuesday. The paragraph can be on all or any part of the reading.
   b) To submit: In Blackboard, in the green box on the left side of the webpage (it has “Home Page”, “Announcements,” “Course Information,” etc.) click on Reading Paragraphs. Click on the appropriate week, click “Create Thread,” and make a posting. This is in the form of a discussion board so you can see each other’s postings. You may respond to somebody else’s posting or not, as you wish.
   c) Grading: You will get either a 1 or 0 for each assignment, for a total of 7 points. Criteria:
      i) Written in decent paragraph form
      ii) Contains analysis and/or comparison, not just summarization
      iii) Uses some concrete examples from the reading to support the analysis

Grading: Numbered scores correspond to letter grades as follows: Numbers in the 90s are As, the 80s are Bs, the 70s are Cs, the 60s are Ds, and below 60 is an F. Plusses and minuses work as follows: 80-82 = B-; 83-86 = B; 87-89 = B+. Any decimal below .5 gets rounded down, any decimal of .5 or above gets rounded up. So 86.4 becomes 86, which is a B; 86.5 becomes 87, which is a B+.

Late Assignments: Each assignment is worth a maximum of 100 points, and should be handed in at the beginning of class on the due date. Late assignments without a valid excuse (e.g., arrest, illness w/ doctor’s note, family emergency) will be accepted, though they will immediately begin to lose points at an average of 10 points per day.
COURSE POLICIES
1. Attendance: You are expected to attend each class, to have finished the reading assignment before class, and to participate in discussion. More than one unexcused absence will notably affect your final grade.

2. Respect: Mutual respect and courtesy are necessary for the course to be a success. No eating, talking, listening to music, or reading the newspaper in class.
   a. Cell phones: Turn off your cell phones before class starts; Professor Zahler and the GTFs have the right to answer any in-class calls or texts that you receive.
   b. Computers: You may use a computer during class time for taking notes but not for extraneous activities.

3. Late assignments: You will lose points on late assignments at a rate of 10pts/day. You can get an extension if you have a legitimate reason (e.g. health problems, a death in the family, imprisonment, alien abduction, etc.). Legitimate reasons require supporting evidence. Snowboarding on Mt. Bachelor is not a legitimate reason.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:
Any work you submit must be your own and must be produced exclusively for this class – plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. All ideas from other sources must be properly cited. For the consequences of academic dishonesty, refer to the Schedule of Classes published quarterly. For further information on this subject, as well as guidelines for proper citation, see the web sites Student Judicial Affairs (click About Cheating) and Plagiarism Guide for Students. Be aware that consequences for plagiarism or cheating can include an F in the course, suspension, or expulsion.
SCHEDULE
A brief note on the reading assignments:
a) Source markings
   • Sources marked with a dark circle are books you have purchased
     ❖ Sources marked with a cluster of diamonds can be downloaded from Blackboard

b) Readings are to be completed before the class for which they are assigned.
c) Complete each day’s readings in the order they are listed.

Week 1: Latin America in the early 20th Century, Lead up the Cold War
No reading

Week 2: Latin America, 1900-90
   ❖ Born in Blood and Fire: pp233-316
   • Rabe: Introduction, Chapters 1-2
   • Joseph: Chapter 6 (“Producing the Cold War in Mexico”)

Week 3: Turning points: Guatemala & Cuba
   • Rabe: Chapters 3-4
   • Wright: Introduction, Chapters 1-2
     ❖ Born in Blood and Fire, LAV: Chapter 8
     ❖ Cuba Reader: 341-43, 363-69

Week 4: Responses to the Cuban Revolution
   • Rabe: Ch 5
   • Wright: Chapters 3 and 4
   • Joseph: Chapter 3 and 4 (“The Caribbean Crisis” and “The View from Havana”)
   • Che Guevara: Guerrilla Warfare

Week 5: Left and Right Governments
   • Wright: Ch 7-9
   • Rabe Ch 6
   • Joseph, Ch 8 (“Miracle on Ice”)
     ❖ BBF, LAV Ch 9
     ❖ The Argentina Reader, pp440-47, 450-56

Week 6: Central America
• Wright: Ch 10
• Rabe: Ch 7
• Joseph: Ch 5 (“Transnationalizing the Dirty War”)
  ❖ *I, Rigoberta Menchú*. Ch 19, 24

**Week 7: Cold War and Gender**
• Joseph, Ch 10 (“Birth Control Pills and Molotov Cocktails”)  
• Joseph, Ch 11 (“Rural Markets, Revolutionary Souls”)  
  ❖ *Argentina Reader*, 429-39 (“The Madwomen at the Plaza de Mayo”)

**Week 8: Winding Down: the 1990s**
• Wright: Chapter 11
• Rabe: Aftermath
• Joseph: Ch 12 (“Standing Conventional Cold War History”)
  ❖ Reading TBA

**Week 9: Meeting with Professor**
No Reading

**Week 10: Lessons Learned and Not Learned: The Cold War and the War on Terror**