World Cultures: Latin America
V55.-0515008
Tuesday and Thursday 3:30-4:45
206 Silver Building
Prof. Greg Grandin
998 3534
grandin@nyu.edu
office hours: w 3:30-4:45, or by appointment
611 53 Washington Square South

Preceptors:

Marcela Echeverri (me391@nyu.edu) will lead the sections on Wednesdays, 8.00-9.15 and 2.00-3.15. Office hours: TBA

Maria Cristina Soriano (mcs267@nyu.edu) will lead the sections on Wednesdays, 3.30-4.40, and Thursdays 8.00-9.15. Office hours: TBA

Drawing on literature, primary sources, documentaries, music, and scholarly interpretations, this course is designed to introduce students to Latin American society, culture, and history. A first lecture will use Gabriel García Márquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude to lay out the themes that will thread through the semester. We will then begin with the colonial "encounter," examining different ways to interpret its historical significance. The first half of the course will examine the cultural, political, and economic dimensions of Spanish colonialism, colonialism's overthrow, the rise of independent states and nationalism, the spread of capitalism, and relations with the United States. The second half will mostly focus on specific countries to explore Latin America's tumultuous twentieth century, examining transformations in political culture, struggles to advance democracy, political terror, and the construction, destruction and evolution of collective identities based on race, politics, gender, and class.

All required books are for sale at NYU's main book store and on reserve in Bobst Library:

1. Gabriel García Márquez, One Hundred Years of Solitude
2. Benjamin Keen, Latin American Civilization: History and Society, 1492 to the Present
3. José Martí, Writings on the Americas
4. Walter LaFeber, Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America
5. Mark Danner, The Massacre at El Mozote: A Parable of the Cold War
6. Ariel Dorfman, Death and the Maiden

All other readings can be found in a packet for sale at the New University Copy Shop, 11 Waverly Place, one and a half blocks east of Washington Square Park, on the left hand side as you are walking away from the park.

All students are required to attend lectures and recitation sections, to arrive on time and to participate in class discussion, both following the lectures and during the recitation sections. Students are expected to complete the weekly readings by the
meeting of their recitation section (unless otherwise instructed) and be prepared to
discuss both the readings and recent lectures.

There will be two in-class midterms (on **February 18** and **April 1**; students will
choose one essay from a choice of two and will answer 5 short questions); one short
paper (details will be discussed in class) due on **April 29**; and a final exam, which will
take place on the officially scheduled date, May 8, 4-5:50 (please make your end of term
travel plans accordingly).

Final grades will be calculated as:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>First mid-term</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second mid-term</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short paper</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final</td>
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**Week 1**

**Introduction: One Hundred Years of Solitude**

Tuesday, 21 January: Introduction
Thursday, 23 January: Five Centuries of Solitude and Solidarity

Required Readings:
First half of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*

**Week 2**

**The Conquest of Mexico**

Tuesday, 28 January: Spain and America
Thursday: 30 January: Encounter, Invasion, Genocide, or Anti-imperialist
Rebellion?

Required Readings:
Second half of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*
Optional Readings:
*Latin American Civilization*, chapters 1, 2, and 3

**Week 3**

**Colonialism, Slavery and Native Americans**

Tuesday, 4 February: The Economic Basis of Colonialism
Thursday, 6 February: Colonial Cultures

Required Readings:
*Latin American Civilization*, pp. 73-128

**Week 4**

**Independence, Liberals, Conservatives, and Popular Culture**

Tuesday, 11 February: The Creation of National Societies
Thursday, 13 February: Mid-term review
Required Readings:

*Latin American Civilization*, pp. 215-246

**Week 5**

**The Second Conquest of Latin America**

Tuesday, 18 February: First Mid-term  
Thursday, 20 February: The Second Conquest of Latin America

Required Readings:  

*Latin American Civilization*, pp. 260-277

**Week 6**

**The United States and Latin America**

Tuesday, 25 February: The Cultural, Political, and Economic Roots of US-Latin American Relations  
Thursday, 27 February: The Exoticization of Latin America: "Bananas is My Business"

Required Readings:  

*Latin American Civilization*, pp. 448-453  
José Martí, *Writings on the Americas*

**Week 7**

**The Mexican Revolution**

Tuesday, 4 March: The Mexican Revolution from Below  
Thursday, 6 March: The Mexican Revolution from Above, and from Below Once More

Required Readings:  

*Latin American Civilization*, pp. 278-353

**Week 8**

**The Cold War**

Tuesday, 11 March: Communists, Nationalists, Populists, and Democrats: Guatemala 1954  
Thursday, 13 March: The Cuban Revolution(s)

Required Readings:  

In course packet:  

1. Nick Cullather “Operation PBsuccess”  
2. Declassified US Documents related to Guatemalan Policy  
3. Truth Commission Report  
4. “The Spies Who Never Came in From the Cold”  

**Spring Break: 17 March to 22 March**
Week 9  

Cuba

Tuesday, 25 March: The Cuban Revolution(s)  
Thursday, 27 March: Mid-term review

Required Readings:

*Latin American Civilization*, pp. 391-425

Plus course packet:

2. John Kennedy, “Preliminary Formulations of the Alliance for Progress”
3. Che Guevara, “Create Two, Three, Many Vietnams;” “To My Children”
4. Human Rights Watch on Cuba

Week 10  

Chile

Tuesday, 1 April: Second mid-term  
Thursday, 3 April: The Chilean Road to Socialism

Required Readings:

*Latin American Civilization*, pp. 426-430

Plus course packet:

1. Pablo Neruda, *Canto General*
2. Testimonies from Pinochet supporters and opponents

Week 11  

Liberation Theology

Tuesday, 8 April: The Preferential Option for the Poor  
Thursday, 10 April: Christ and Marx

Required Readings:

*Latin American Civilization*, p. 431-435

Plus course packet:

1. Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed
2. Pope Paul VI, "On the Development of Peoples"
3. Leonardo Boff and Clodovis Boff, “The Basic Question: How to Be Christians in a World of Destitution”
4. “A Rebel Creed, Stifled by the Pope,” *New York Times*
5. Jeane Kirkpatrick, "Dictatorships and Double Standards"

Week 12  

The Central American Wars
Tuesday, 15 April:  Inevitable Revolutions
Thursday, 17 April:  Inevitable Counterrevolutions: Pictures from a Revolution

Required Readings:
Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions*
Plus course packet:
3. Vidaluz Menese, "As a Women I Think the Revolutionary Process was Worth Living"

**Week 13**

**Terror and Memory**

Tuesday, 22 April:  Counterinsurgency and neoliberalism
Thursday, 24 April:  Obstinate Memory

Required Readings:
Dorfman, *Death and the Maiden*
Plus course packet:
1. Assorted newspaper articles on Chile and Argentina

**Week 14**

**Back to the Future? Drugs, Debt, and Death Squads**

Tuesday, 29 April:  Life and Debt (short paper due)
Thursday, 1 May:  Wrap up

Required Readings:
*Latin American Civilization*, pp. 462-470
Plus course packet:
1. Ariel Dorfman, “Americans Must Now Feel What the Rest of us have Known”
2. Assorted articles on Latin America today

**Final Exam:** May 8th from 4-5:50 pm
*(please make travel plans accordingly)*