

David Rock, Department of History, UC Santa Barbara
History 151C: Twentieth Century Latin America till the Present Day.

The course surveys the development of the Latin American republics in the twentieth century. At times, I shall refer to leading trends during earlier periods that provide a background for later developments and to any particularly important issues since 2000. The class divides into two parts. The first looks at leading issues in the region as a whole and the second at the leading nations of Latin America.

The following lists the general topics of the class. (It may not be possible to include them all!):

1. Introduction: discussion of the syllabus.
2. The evolution of Latin America in the long run. The discussion will include an evaluation of the effects of Hispanic conquest; European dominance; early economic development; the role of slavery. I shall trace their effects into the twentieth century.
3. Formation of nation states: the main causes, the course and the consequences of the wars or independence; the delays in nation formation; the chief sources of national consolidation in the later nineteenth century.
4. The era of the “primary export economies” up till the Great Depression of the 1930s. The integration of Latin American nations into a world market initially dominated by Western Europe.
5. The rise of “import substitution.” The shift into attempted industrial development dominated the period 1930-1980. What kind of industrialization occurred? How did it affect the political and social structures? Why did import substitution fail?
6. “Neo-liberalism:” the dismantling of state-dominated economies starting in the 1980s. Why? What are its chief features? How successful has it proved?
7. External influences on Latin America: Europeans replaced by Americans as the dominant external players. How, why, and with what consequences?
8. Argentina: the power of nationalism.
9. Mexico: the impact of the Revolution of 1910.
10. Brazil: a multi-racial developing democracy.
11. Cuba: the Revolution of Fidel Castro.
12. Chile: the destruction of Salvador Allende in 1973 and the apparent later successes of free market capitalism.

I suggest the following textbooks as an introductory guide:

1. Thomas E. Skidmore and Peter H. Smith. Modern Latin America
2. John Charles Chasteen. Born in Blood and Fire. A Concise History of Latin America
3. Edwin Williamson. The Penguin History of Latin America.

As background on earlier periods see: David Bushnell and Neill MacCaulay: The Emergence of Latin America in the Nineteenth Century; Stuart F. Voss. Latin America in the Middle Period, 1750-1929; Mark A. Burkholder and Lyman L. Johnson. Colonial Latin America.

The books listed above contain lengthy bibliographies. I also recommend a search for bibliography via PEGASUS and MELVYL.

On countries see:

David Rock. Argentina 1516-1987. From Spanish Colonization to Alfonsín

Michael C. Meyer and William L. Sherman. The Course of Mexican History.

E. Bradford Burns. A History of Brazil.

Brian Loveman. Chile. The Legacy of Hispanic Capitalism.

Hugh Thomas. Cuba. The Pursuit of Freedom

Requirements: I shall require two written papers on two separate topics, or one longer essay. Both are to be delivered at the end of the class at a date to be announced. Please make time to discuss your choice of topics with me; I shall leave time available for discussion of topics at the end of the class.

For short queries, please email me at rock@history.ucsb.edu