

Twentieth-Century Latin America (HIST 4996) Research Seminar

Summer 2025
WWW

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Description

This online synchronous course fulfills the research requirement in the history major through a critical comparative analysis of twentieth-century Latin American history. It culminates with each student writing an article-length research paper based primarily on primary sources and subject to rigorous scholarly and professional standards.

The course is divided into the 3 tasks common to history research projects: reading deeply in the secondary literature, research into primary document sources on a chosen topic, and then writing about what you have learned from your reading and research. The class will culminate with presentations on your research findings.

Readings

There is one assigned text for this class:

Greg Grandin, *America, América: A New History of the New World* (New York: Penguin Press, 2025).

Assignments and grades

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>
Reading responses (1pt each)	8
Annotated bibliography/Zotero	5
Secondary source analysis	5
Primary sources (3pts each)	15
Peer review	10
Final paper	40

Grades are calculated out of a percentage total possible points for the class: 90-100 percent is an A, 80-89 is a B, 70-79 is a C, and 60-69 is a D. Below 60 percent is an F. Successful completion of all assignments is required to receive credit for this class.

Reading responses: For each daily assigned reading, submit a written response comprised of three paragraphs:

1. Summary of the contents of reading.
2. The main argument in the reading.
3. Your assessment of the reading.

Research paper proposal: Draft a research paper proposal, including a paragraph describing your project, the research questions you seek to address with the project, and a hypothesis of what you expect to find (the thesis statement of your research paper). Present the proposal to the class. The proposal is required to continue with the class.

Annotated bibliography/Zotero exercise: Prepare an annotated bibliography for your paper (details and instructions to follow). 5pts.

Secondary source analysis: Write an essay analyzing a scholarly book related to your research project. The paper must be typed, double-spaced, about 3 pages long, and include citations, a bibliography, and page numbers. 5 pts.

Primary source analyses: Select 3 primary sources related to your research topic, write an analysis of each one, and present your findings to the class. The specific sources will vary depending on the nature of your project, but each must be of a different type of source and be approved by the instructor. Each paper must be typed, double-spaced, about 3 pages long, and include citations, a bibliography, and page numbers. Please attach a copy of the source document to the essay. 5pts each, 15pts total.

Outline: Write a first introduction and an outline to your paper. In the tentative introduction, state the paper's topic, the problem that it addresses, its relation to existing work, and its argument. Outline in a manner you find efficient. The outline is required to continue with the class.

Peer Review: Finish and turn in a **final draft** of your paper along with one for each of two peers. This full draft should, with the exception of an occasional flaw in structure and slip in formulation, read and look like a finished paper. Peer review two papers (one for content and the other for grammar). 10pts.

Oral presentations: In your presentation, tell us what questions you addressed in your research project, what you expected to find (your thesis), a summary of your actual findings, and your conclusions.

Final paper: The final paper should be at about 20 pages in length. The paper should rest on primary sources and be framed in terms of the historiography on the topic (typically presented at the beginning of the paper). The essay must include footnotes or endnotes and bibliography and the style must conform to that found in Turabian/Rampolla/Chicago Manual of Style. Papers submitted without page numbers will be docked half a letter grade. 40pts.

Class Schedule

Reading (from Grandin)

Day 1: Part I
Day 2: Part 2
Day 3: Part 3
Day 4: Part 4
Day 5: Part 5
Day 6: Part 6
Day 7: Part 7
Day 8: Part 8

Research

TBD: Research paper proposals

TBD: Zotero

TBD: Annotated bibliography/Zotero exercise

TBD: Secondary source analysis

TBD: Primary source analyses

TBD: Outline

Writing

Individual meetings for research paper (dates to be set)

We will also schedule class meetings to discuss the outlines, peer reviews, and oral presentations.

Paper due: August 1

Credit hours: This is a four-credit course with weekly meetings over zoom with your professor. You will earn the fourth credit because this course incorporates increased content and collateral readings, including primary sources, as well as increased research and paper writing. It also includes higher-level critical thinking exercises that specifically develop analysis, synthesis, and evaluation rather than simple knowledge and comprehension.

Requirements – Our goal is to challenge existing assumptions, engage alternative viewpoints, and encourage critical thinking. Through the study of history, we seek to empower ourselves to be better citizens, and to provide ourselves with the skills necessary to play a positive and educated role in society. We need to be active constituents rather than mere recipients of our education. To accomplish those tasks, we should strive to create an open and supportive learning environment. Complete reading assignments before class so that you are prepared to carry on an intelligent discussion of the material in class. Lectures and discussions will complement the readings and assume the base level of knowledge that they present, so it is critically important that you keep up with the readings. Please drop me a note if you have any concerns or suggestions for improving the class.

Writing-enhanced – This class has been designed to help satisfy the “writing-enhanced” requirement of Truman’s LSP. As such, the various written projects will assist the quest to improve your writing and critical thinking skills as well as help you understand how interconnected are cognition, the writing process, and the final written product.

Learning Objectives – The major outcomes of this class include:

1. Students will explain the breadth, complexity, and interconnectedness of gendered relations in Latin America.
2. Students will explore and analyze how culture impacts the behavior and attitudes of individual actors and vice versa.
3. Students will demonstrate improved critical-thinking and argumentation skills by the end of the class.

4. Students will demonstrate an appreciation of historiography and the range of fields and methods that historians deploy.
5. Students will demonstrate a strong familiarity with the range of research protocols practiced by historians including the location, examination, and use of primary and secondary sources.
6. Students will demonstrate a strong familiarity with professional standards to which historians adhere.
7. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply those protocols and standards in both directed and independent research.

Expectations – My expectations of you as students in this class are fairly straightforward and not unlike those of any other college-level class:

1. I expect you to complete the assigned readings before class.
2. I expect you to come to class prepared to think about and discuss these readings.
3. I expect you to be fully present and engaged in class lectures and discussions. This means no inappropriate use of personal technology devices. You should have your camera turned on during all meetings. If there is a reason you cannot or do not want to have your camera turned on, we must discuss this before the course commences.
4. I expect you to complete all assignments, and to turn all of them in on time.
5. I expect all written essays to be your own original work.

If you run into any problems that hinder you from meeting any of these expectations, please let me know. I think you will find that, as with most of your professors, I can be completely reasonable, but I cannot help you if you do not communicate with me or disappear from class without explanation. Remaining in touch is important. I do want you to excel in this class and will bend over backwards to do what I can to ensure that you do. But please keep in mind that your instructors are people as well, and we have our breaking points. If I am bent over backwards and you keep pushing, I *will* break and you will not be happy with the consequences because you will fail the class.

Regular and Substantive Interaction Policy– Federal regulations related to financial aid require that students demonstrate that they are actively engaged in the courses they take. For the purposes of this class, establishing academic engagement requires, at a minimum, attendance at a class session or completion of one of the assignments during the first week of the 10-week summer session. If you are unable to attend class or complete an assignment you must contact me. Failure to engage without an explanation by DATEXXX, will result in your removal from the course the following week. Under certain circumstances, removal could impact your scholarship eligibility or financial aid.

Minimum Technology Requirements

In order to participate fully and effectively in an online course, students should have a reliable broadband connection (Cable Modem, DSL, or Satellite). You should be confident that your connection is sufficiently stable that your access will not be interrupted when taking examinations, participating in video chats, or viewing streaming video or audio. Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) will typically slow your Internet connection and you should be certain the connection is fast enough if you will be relying on such a network. If you are uncertain about a

reliable connection, you are advised to not take this course.

Students should have a relatively new operating system (Windows 11 or newer; Mac OSX, etc.) and employ a compatible browser such as Chrome or Safari. Courses use Brightspace. For a list of compatible systems and browser types, visit Brightspace.

This course includes online face-to-face discussions and tutorials. To participate in these sessions you will need a computer equipped with speakers, camera, and microphone.

In order to complete your assignments in this course you will need a word processor, such as Microsoft Word. If you compose your documents in software other than Microsoft Word (such as Mac's Pages, or Google Docs), you need to be able to export the document to a format compatible with Brightspace for submission

Minimum Technical Skills

To be successful in this class you will need to be able to:

- Access the Internet and be able to comfortably navigate websites using a web browser
- Use common word processing software to complete writing assignments
- Know how to use your computer microphone, video camera, and speakers
- Send and receive email
- Access and use online library resources, including databases of scholarly articles curated by the library

Attendance policy – Students are expected to attend all their classes and participate actively in discussions. Poor or irregular attendance will adversely affect the quality of work and the course grade. A student who has to miss class must contact the course instructor and give a clear, valid explanation. Extended absences (for example, medical) should be documented (for example, by a note from the doctor). The student has the responsibility to make up any work missed, with deadlines at the discretion of the instructor. For university guidelines on attendance: http://catalog.truman.edu/content.php?catoid=15&navoid=801&hl=attendance+policy&returnto=search#Attendance_Policy

Addendum

Also see syllabus resources for students: <https://wp-internal.truman.edu/provost/syllabus-resources-for-students/>.

Writing Center – The Writing Center (<https://writingcenter.truman.edu/>), in Pickler Memorial Library 107, is open from 8 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday, and is a good resource for improving your writing. They can help you to brainstorm, adjust style(s), fix grammar, references, citations, and the like. Never be too embarrassed or ashamed to seek out help.

Academic integrity – Personal and scholarly integrity are expected of everyone in the class. Failure to live up to those responsibilities, risks earning a failing grade on the assignment/examination, a failing grade for the course, and/or in serious cases expulsion for the academic program or University. The University policy on academic dishonesty as published in the Student Conduct Code and General/Graduate Catalog applies (http://catalog.truman.edu/content.php?catoid=20&navoid=1192#Academic_Dishonesty).

The Truman State University Student Conduct Code (8.020.01) defines the term “academic misconduct” to include: 1) cheating, defined as using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information aids in any academic exercise; 2) fabrication, defined as falsification or invention of any information or citation in an exercise; 3) facilitating academic misconduct, defined as helping or attempting to help another in an act of academic dishonesty; and /or 4) plagiarism, defined as representing the words or ideas of another as one’s own in an academic exercise. Students who are caught committing acts of academic misconduct in this course will be subject to the full range of penalties, including failing the assignment and the course. In every case, the Dean of Student Affairs Office and the Vice President for Academic Affairs will be notified; these officials have the power to suspend or expel students for academic misconduct. For more information see these two websites:

http://catalog.truman.edu/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=491#Academic_Dishonesty and
<http://www.truman.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/2014-Student-Conduct-Code.pdf>.

ADA accommodations for students with disabilities – The university is committed to making every possible effort to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the Disability Services Office (x4478) as soon as possible. Also see <http://disabilityservices.truman.edu/>.

To obtain disability-related academic accommodations students with documented disabilities must contact the course instructor and the Office of Student Access and Disability Services (OSA) as soon as possible. Truman complies with ADA requirements. For additional information, refer to the Office of Student Access and Disability Services website at <http://disabilityservices.truman.edu/>

You may also contact OSA by phone at (660) 785-4478 or email studentaccess@truman.edu

Notice of Compliance – In compliance with federal law and applicable Missouri statutes, the University does not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, age, race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in admission to or employment in its education programs or activities. The University complies with the regulations implementing Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; and other state and federal laws and regulations.”

Discrimination and Title IX – Truman State University, in compliance with applicable laws and recognizing its deeper commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion which enhances accessibility and promotes excellence in all aspects of the Truman Experience, does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion, retaliation, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, or protected veteran status in its programs and activities, including employment, admissions, and educational programs and activities. Apparently political ideology is not included, so we can discriminate based on that. Faculty and staff are considered “mandated reporters” and therefore are required to report potential violations of the University’s Anti-Discrimination Policies to the Institutional Compliance Officer.

Title IX prohibits sex harassment, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, stalking and retaliation. Truman State University encourages individuals who believe they may have been impacted by sexual or gender-based discrimination to consult with the Title IX Coordinator who is available to speak in depth about the resources and options. Faculty and staff are considered “mandated reporters” and therefore are required to report potential incidents of sexual misconduct that they become aware of to the Title IX Coordinator.

For more information on discrimination or Title IX, or to file a complaint contact the Institutional Compliance Officer (<https://titleix.truman.edu/>), Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator

Office of Institutional Compliance

Violette Hall, Room 1308

100 E. Normal Ave

Kirksville, MO 63501

Phone: (660) 785-4354

titleix@truman.edu

The institution’s complaint procedure can be viewed at <http://titleix.truman.edu/files/2015/08/University-Complaint-Reporting-Resolution-Procedure.pdf> and the complaint form is accessible at <http://titleix.truman.edu/make-a-report/>.

FERPA – Education records are protected by the Family Education Right to Privacy Act (FERPA). As a result, course grades, assignments, advising records, etc. cannot be released to third parties without your permission. There are, however, several exceptions about which you should be aware. For example, education records can be disclosed to employees or offices at Truman who have an “educational need to know”. These employees and offices may include your academic advisor, the Institutional Compliance Officer, the Registrar’s Office, or Student Affairs depending on the type of information. For more information about FERPA, see <http://www.truman.edu/registrar/ferpa/>.

Recording – No recording in the classroom is permitted without the explicit and written permission of the instructor.

Statement on disruptive behavior:

“Behavior that persistently or flagrantly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students’ ability to learn and an instructor’s ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be asked to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.” (*From Washington State University, suggested by Lou Ann Gilchrist*).

The minimum investment of time necessary by the average student to achieve the learning goals of the course, both in the class sessions and in autonomous learning activities. Apparently either the Missouri state Higher Learning Commission (HLC) or the Truman State University administration has mandated that all syllabi should contain information that documents the activities that warrant the credit hours awarded. For each hour in class, students should expect to devote approximately three additional hours per week to completing the course work. This is true

for all classes.

You can access the University's standard attendance policy at <http://policies.truman.edu/policylibrary/attendance-policy/>.



Emergency Procedures – In each classroom on campus, there is a poster of emergency procedures explaining best practices in the event of an active shooter/hostile intruder, fire, severe weather, bomb threat, power outage, and medical emergency. This poster is also available as a PDF at this link: <http://police.truman.edu/files/2015/12/Emergency-Procedures.pdf>.

Students should be aware of the classroom environment and note the exits for the room and building. For more detailed information about emergency procedures, please consult the Emergency Guide for Academic Buildings, available at the QR code shown or at the following link: <http://police.truman.edu/emergency-procedures/academic-buildings/>

This six-minute video provides some basic information on how to react in the event there is an active shooter in your location: <http://police.truman.edu/emergency-procedures/active-shooter/active-shooter-preparedness-video/>.

Truman students, faculty, and staff can sign up for the TruAlert emergency text messaging service via TruView. TruAlert sends a text message to all enrolled cell phones in the event of an emergency at the University. To register, sign in to TruView and click on the “Truman” tab. Click on the registration link in the lower right of the page under the “Update and View My Personal Information” channel on the “Update Emergency Text Messaging Information” link. During a campus emergency, information will also be posted on the TruAlert website <http://trualert.truman.edu/>.

Appropriate use of technology – Appropriate use of technology is encouraged and inappropriate use is—well, inappropriate and detrimental to our common learning environment.