

US & Latin Amer-20th Century - 4095 - HIST 610G – 01
Twentieth-Century Latin America - 4096 - HIST 618G - 01

Summer 2026

WWW online

Class Meetings: Tues, June 30 and following Mondays, 6:00 P.M.–9:00 P.M. on zoom

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Description

This course covers major events and trends in twentieth-century Latin American history with emphasis on the development of oral and written reporting techniques including the writing of an historiographic paper.

Readings (see class schedule below)

We will start with three historiographic essays (pdfs on discussion board on Brightspace) to bring you up to speed on the field of Latin American history and to give you a model for the type of essay I would like you to write in this seminar. We will then continue with reading the following books in this order. Because the reading is intense and the class compact, you will want to start reading these books in advance:

Ada Ferrer, *Cuba: An American History* (New York: Scribner, 2021)

Carollee Bengelsdorf and Susan Meiselas, *Clandestinas: women in the Cuban revolutionary underground, 1955-1959* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2025).

Jacob Blanc, *The Prestes column: an interior history of modern Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2024).

Erika Pani, *Torn asunder: Republican crises and civil wars in the United States and Mexico, 1848-1867* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2025).

Aaron Coy Moulton, *Caribbean blood pacts: Guatemala and the Cold War struggle for freedom* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2025).

Alan L. McPherson, *The breach: Iran-Contra and the assault on American democracy* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2025).

Katherine M. Marino, *Feminism for the Americas: the making of an international human rights movement* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019).

Lisa G. Materson, *Radical solidarity: Ruth Reynolds, political allyship, and the battle for Puerto Rico's independence* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2024).

Stephanie Mitchell, ed. *Women's Suffrage in the Americas* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2024).

Assignments and grades

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 the introductory historiographic essays and each book, post a summary of the reading and your assessment of the author's use of sources and argument to the discussion board on Brightspace (due by midnight the day before we discuss the book). Address the following questions in your essay:

- ♦ What argument is the author advancing?
- ♦ What reasons does the author give for advancing this argument?
- ♦ What evidence is provided to support these reasons?
- ♦ How does the work fit into the general historiography of Latin America?

Identify elements of/passages from the reading that substantiate your conclusions. 1 pt. each.

Reflection: After each class period post to the discussion board on Brightspace an analysis of classroom discussions for each reading, including an explanation of how you might fit this reading into the historiographic essay due at the end of the class (by midnight the day after we discuss the book). 1 pt. each.

Class discussion leader: Lead the discussion on one of the books plus one of the chapters in Mitchell's edited volume, including organizing the reading responses from the discussion posts in Brightspace into a logical flow. Post your discussion questions to the shared google drive before class. 5 pts each (10 pts total).

Historiographic essay: Write a paper reviewing all of the texts assigned for this course. The paper should address at a minimum the following questions for each of the assigned texts:

- ♦ What argument is being advanced by the author?
- ♦ What reasons does the author give for advancing this argument?
- ♦ What evidence is provided to support these reasons?
- ♦ How does the work fit into general Latin American historiography?

You should identify elements of/passages from the reading that substantiate your conclusions. Bring these texts into discussion with each other, and present your own assessment and evaluation of their claims (your thesis or central argument). The essay should be double spaced and about 20-pages long, and 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. The papers are due on July 31, 5p.m. 100 pts.

Class Schedule

Week 1 (Tues, June 30): Introductions/historiography

Alan Knight, "Introduction Part Two: Forty Years of Latin American—Especially Mexican—History," *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Research* 27, no. 1 (2021): 10-20.

Tanya Harmer and Alberto Martín Álvarez, "Introduction: Globalizing Latin America's Revolutionary Left; Historiography, Approaches, and Context," in *Toward a global history of Latin America's revolutionary left*, ed. Tanya Harmer and Alberto Martín Álvarez (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2021), 1-26.

Michelle Chase, "Beyond the 'Historiographical Monroe Doctrine': The Latin American Left and the World," *Latin American Research Review* 59, no. 3 (September 2024): 770-82.

Week 2 (Mon, July 6): Revolutions

Ada Ferrer, *Cuba: An American History* (New York: Scribner, 2021).

Carollee Bengelsdorf and Susan Meiselas, *Clandestinas: women in the Cuban revolutionary underground, 1955-1959* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2025).

Jacob Blanc, *The Prestes column: an interior history of modern Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2024).

Week 3 (Mon, July 13): US-Latin America relations

Erika Pani, *Torn asunder: Republican crises and civil wars in the United States and Mexico, 1848-1867* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2025).

Aaron Coy Moulton, *Caribbean blood pacts: Guatemala and the Cold War struggle for freedom* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2025).

Alan L. McPherson, *The breach: Iran-Contra and the assault on American democracy* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2025).

Week 4 (Mon, July 20): Gender

Katherine M. Marino, *Feminism for the Americas: the making of an international human rights movement* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019).

Lisa G. Materson, *Radical solidarity: Ruth Reynolds, political allyship, and the battle for Puerto Rico's independence* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2024).

Stephanie Mitchell, ed. *Women's Suffrage in the Americas* (Albuquerque: University of New

Mexico Press, 2024).

Week 5 (Mon, July 27): Review

Essay due: Fri, July 31, 5p.m.

Addendum

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

Credit generation – This is a four-credit course with three weekly face-to-face meetings with three weekly 50-minute face-to-face meetings with your professor, plus 6 “hours” [300 minutes] of outside-class time per week). 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 Dialogues Curriculum. 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.

There are 3 “pillars” or objectives for writing assignments for a Writing Enhanced class: Cognition, Process, and Product:

- **Cognition:** writing that is focused on helping the student generate and organize thought about the subject. This includes self-reflection. It is sometimes called “writing-to-think” or “writing-to-learn.” You will achieve this with reflection essays on the readings.
- **Process:** both a set of habits that helps writers overcome process-related issues (anxiety, writer’s block, developing routines, etc.) and the best procedural practices for successful writing. You will achieve this through the proposal and draft stages of the final paper.
- **Product:** writing that is focused on communicating ideas to others. This type of writing targets an audience and adjusts style, content, and form accordingly. You will achieve this with your final paper.

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. Plagiarism (presenting other's work as your own) or inappropriate use of artificial intelligence (AI) to generate your work is intellectual dishonesty and the basis for failing an assignment and possibly the entire class.

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 do not take advantage of my generosity and 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 for the first week of the semester. If you are unable to attend class or complete an assignment you must contact me. Failure to engage without an explanation by Saturday, January 17, 2026 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

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, the federal government 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.

Other random things I’m supposed to tell you:

The best way to contact me outside of class is via email and typically I am able respond fairly quickly. If you don’t receive a response from me (like, in more than a day) please try again because the email probably was lost, but first check your spam filter because thanks to Elon Musk my emails *will* go to spam.

Assigned work is due at the time specified; if you anticipate you may struggle to meet those deadlines, you should discuss an extension with me in advance.

I plan to provide prompt feedback on assignments, typically before the next class period.
This class has no prerequisite or enrollment requirements.
It has no expectations for prior knowledge/skills.
It has no special equipment or technology requirements.