History 359
Course Syllabus
Inter-American Relations
Fall 2011

Early Inter-American Relations. Toltec Relief (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City)

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Course Location and Time: 2:00-2:50pm MWF

Office Hours: 3:00-4:00pm MW; or by appointment
Learning Outcomes (Described within the Syllabus as “CO” followed by the appropriate number):

1. Students will gain an understanding of the major historiographical schools of thought in Inter-American relations.

2. Students will gain an in-depth understanding of at least one major figure in Inter-American relations each term the class is taught by way of reading primary sources and writing about the legacy of that individual.

3. Students will be exposed to a variety of thematic approaches to Inter-American relations, including gender, health and the environment, culture, tourism, film, and literature. It is expected that these alternatives to traditional diplomatic relations will inform their selection of a research topic for the course.

4. Students will write a research paper focusing on one of the thematic approaches presented in class and informed by primary sources, as well as secondary literature, in order to arrive at a stronger understanding of Inter-American relations.

5. Students will obtain a stronger cross-cultural understanding of Inter-American relations by debating and discussing issues, informed by our class readings, during our weekly discussions. At times students will be asked to embrace perspectives that they may not entirely agree with or understand.

6. Students will become conversant with the watershed events of the Haitian Revolution, the Latin American Revolutions, the Spanish American War, the Cuban Revolution, and the Washington Consensus, and why they have been critical to the tenor of Inter-American Relations.

Course Description (from the BYU Undergraduate Catalog):

“Decline of Europe’s American empires, legacies bequeathed to the new republics by their European heritage, and how those legacies have affected relations among the various American republics.”

Required texts:

4. Fidel Castro and Ignacio Ramonet, *My Life* (Scribner)
Grading Scale:

A: 94-100; A-: 90-93
B+: 87-89; B: 83-86; B-: 80-82
C+: 77-79; C:73-76; C-: 70-72
D+: 67-69; D:63-66; D-: 60-62
E: 0-59

Expectations for Your Written Work in This Class (A Brief, Qualitative) Rubric):

1. “Excellent” historical writing (generally synonymous with an “A”), whether on essay exams, research papers, or on thought pieces includes a clearly stated thesis statement that is followed by supporting description, detail, and significance (or analysis). Flawless grammar and syntax are a sine qua non.

On a research paper, “excellent” submissions contain a clearly defined, original argument, and the balance of the paper supports and sustains that argument. Evidence is carefully used from numerous primary and secondary sources to support – instead of weaken – the main argument.

On thought pieces this level of work requires rigorous analysis of the text and its relationship to your stated thesis. Passages carefully chosen from the book and cited in the paper add authority to your argument. Cited passages are meticulously referenced, either in-text or in the footnotes.

Grading Breakdown for Course Assignments:

Research Paper: 30%
Mid-term: 20%
Final Examination: 25%
Close Encounters of Empire thought piece 10%
My Life thought piece 10%
Map Quizzes (2 at 2% each) and Pop Quizzes (1%) 5%

Academic Integrity (including Plagiarism): This course will involve written assignments. The chief cause of academic dishonesty tends to be procrastination on carrying out written assignments or lack of test preparation. Do not represent the words or ideas of another scholar or individual without proper attribution or reference. Cite the ideas of others. It actually gives your paper more credibility. On in-class testing situations, teaching assistants will help maintain academic integrity of tests and quizzes by circulating throughout the class during the test or quiz.

Any cases of plagiarism or academic dishonesty in this course will result in a “0” for the assignment and reference to the Honor Code Office. I would much rather read your ideas in less than elegant phrases than someone else’s words dressed up as your own.
Late Work: Late work will be accepted for up to a week after the original assignment date with a one-letter grade reduction (10 points). Generally, no late work will be accepted after one week from the original assignment date has passed. If it is, the penalty will result in at least a 30% reduction of the grade for that assignment.

Honor Code Standards: BYU students are expected to uphold the Student Honor Code, both as it applies to their academic activities, as well as personal behavior. This extends to our classroom.

Privacy Statement: “The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) imposes specific requirements concerning student educational records upon colleges and universities receiving federal financial assistance. This Act is applicable to [BYU] as a recipient of federal funds under the Pell Grant and Federal Family Loan Program. This policy is the official University statement concerning a student's right to access his or her student educational records and the procedures to be followed by University personnel in response to requests for access to a student's educational records.”

Disability Statement: It is the policy of Brigham Young University to afford equal opportunity in education to qualified students. Therefore, a student who has a disability that inhibits the student's ability to meet course requirements and who desires accommodations must contact the Office for Students with Disabilities (1520 WSC) for proper evaluation.

Preventing Sexual Discrimination and Harassment: Sexual discrimination or harassment (including student-to-student harassment) is prohibited both by law and by Brigham Young University policy. Students who believe they have been victims of either sexual harassment should either contact their professors, the Equal Employment Office (D-240C ASB) or the Honor Code Office.

Thought Pieces:

For the books Close Encounters of Empire and My Life, you should submit a 750-word thought piece. They will each be due at the beginning of class on the day that they are due (see lecture and reading guide for due dates). These will be carried out sequentially to best help students understand the acquisition of new methodological lens, as well as their application. I will give you instruction on the completion of this assignment during our weekly discussions.

Research Paper:

Each student will write a 10-12-page research paper on a topic of their choice relating to Inter-American relations. During the first four weeks of class, you should stop by my office and submit a one-page proposal on a narrowly defined topic. The proposal should contain a list of primary and secondary sources that you intend to use in your paper (some of each are required). I will discuss various locations and resources in the library that can be used to identify sources. The paper should be between ten and twelve pages. It should be footnoted with ample citation of primary and secondary sources. We will discuss the assignment in class, where Dr. Ward will provide ideas on available sources.
Default Settings for All Papers:

1. Document must be type-written in Times New Roman font, 12 point and double spaced (adhere to double-spacing strictly).
2. Margins must be set at one inch on each side of the paper. Unless you have altered the default settings, the majority of word processing programs are already set to deliver one inch margins.
3. Papers should be preceded by a cover page (NO COVER FOLDERS, PLEASE), which include your name, the date, and the title of the assignment.
4. Use citations to refer to anything that is not your own idea.
5. Cite your sources liberally – it demonstrates that you have carefully considered the book or work in question.
6. Use short, well-thought quotes to reinforce your main ideas
7. Proofread your paper closely and, if possible, have someone else look over it for mistakes that you may not have caught