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*Course Syllabus*

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**HIST 4359, SEC. 05A**  
**LATIN AMERICAN HISTORY THROUGH FILM**  
T/W/TH 1:00-4:00  
JO 4.614

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**PROFESSOR CONTACT INFORMATION**

Dr. Monica Rankin  
JO 5.204  
(972) 883-2005  
Mobile: (972) 822-5375  
[mraink@utdallas.edu](mailto:mraink@utdallas.edu)  
[www.utdallas.edu/~mraink](http://www.utdallas.edu/~mraink)

Office Hours: T 4:00-5:00 or by appointment

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will examine Latin American history through the lens of film. We will move chronologically and thematically, viewing approximately one film per class period and completing readings that correspond to the film and/or the period/theme in question. We will address the films from two perspectives. First, we will examine the historical context of each film's content and evaluate the film as an expression of the historical context. Second, will examine each film as a primary source and an expression of the time period in which it was produced.

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**STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES**

Students will gain an overall understand of the narrative history of Latin America from the era of conquest (roughly 1400s) to present through the lens of historical films. Students will demonstrate their ability to interpret and analyze historical films alongside historical essays and by incorporating the films into classroom discussions and written assignments as both descriptive narratives, but also as sources that are reflective of their producers and historical context.

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**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS**

**Recommended Textbook:**

John Charles Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire* (W.W. Norton, 2006) ISBN: 0393976130

**Articles/Chapters on Reserve:**

The following readings are available through the McDermott Library E-Reserve system, accessible via the following link:

Course Password: images

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1. Nadie Lie, "Free Trade in Images? *Zorro* as Cultural Signifier in the Contemporary Global/Local System," in *Nepantla: Views from South*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (2001), pp489-508.
2. Susan Socolow, "Introduction," in Louisa Schell Hoberman and Susan Migden Socolow (eds.), *Cities & Society in Colonial Latin America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986) pp3-18.
3. James Schofield Saeger, "The Mission and Historical Missions: Film and the Writing of History," in Donald F. Stevens (ed.), *Based on a True Story: Latin American History at the Movies*, (Wilmington, DE: SR Books, 1997) pp63-84.
4. Michael Dempsey, "Light Shining in Darkness: Roland Joffe on the Mission," in *Film Quarterly*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Summer 1987), pp. 2-11.
5. Donald F. Stevens, "Passion and Patriarchy in Nineteenth-Century Argentina: María Luisa Bemberg's *Camila*," in Donald F. Stevens (ed.), *Based on a True Story: Latin American History at the Movies*, (Wilmington, DE: SR Books, 1997) pp63-84.

6. Nancy Brandt, "Pancho Villa: The Making of a Modern Legend," in *The Americas*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (Oct. 1964), pp146-162.
7. Marta E. Savigliano, "Evita: The Globalization of a National Myth," in *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 24, No. 6 (Nov. 1997) pp 156-172.
8. Ernesto R. Acevedo-Muñoz, "Los Olvidados and the Crisis of National Cinema," in *Buñuel and Mexico: The Crisis of National Cinema*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003) pp57-79.
9. J. Rubia Barcia, "Luis Buñel's 'Los Olvidados,'" in *The Quarterly of Film Radio and Television*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (Summer 1953), pp. 392-401.
10. Joseph L. Klesner, "The End of Mexico's One-Party Regime," in *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (March 2001), pp107-114.
11. Samuel Farber, "The Cuban Communists in the Early Stages of the Cuban Revolution: Revolutionaries or Reformists?" in *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (1983) pp59-83.
12. Louis A. Perez, Jr. "Fear and Loathing of Fidel Castro: Sources of U.S. Policy toward Cuba," in *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (May 2002) pp. 227-254.
13. Jan Rus, "Introduction," in *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 26, No. 6, If Truth Be Told: A Forum on David Stoll's "Rigoberta Menchu and the Story of all Poor Guatemalans." (Nov., 1999) pp5-14.
14. Mark Danner, "La Matanza," in *The Massacre at El Mozote: A Parable of the Cold War*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1993) pp62-84.
15. Antonius C. G. M. Robben, "How Traumatized Societies Remember: The Aftermath of Argentina's Dirty War," in *Cultural Critique*, Vol. 59 (Winter 2005) pp120-164.

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## GRADING POLICY

The grading in this course is based on weekly discussions, weekly notes, book reviews, and a final project. The breakdown of the grading is as follows:

Attendance/Participation	100 points
Daily Journal Reports	100 points
Final Project	200 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>400 points</b>

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## COURSE & INSTRUCTOR POLICIES

No late assignments will be accepted and there is no make-up policy for in-class work. I will NOT accept final versions of any assignments as e-mail attachments.

**All assignments for this class are mandatory. Materials used in this course have been carefully selected for their scholarly value, but some audiences may take offense at topics of a sensitive nature. There will be NO substitutions of readings, films, documents, presentations, and/or other course requirements to suit personal preferences. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this rule.**

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## ASSIGNMENTS

**Class Participation:** This is a discussion-heavy course and all students are expected to participate in class discussions. Generally we will conduct class discussions for the first hour of class. Those discussions will focus on the film viewed in

the previous class meeting, plus relevant readings and lecture material. Please arrive to class ready to participate in class discussions. You may refer to your daily journal reports during these discussions.

**Daily Journal Reports:** You will prepare a daily journal report for each non-textbook reading assignment in this course (all readings except the Chasteen text). Each response should provide a brief summary followed by your historical/cultural analysis of the film and outside readings assigned. No late assignments will be accepted and no make-ups will be allowed for the daily journal reports. Instead, I will drop your two lowest journal scores at the end of the semester. General suggestions for analyzing films are listed below. Journals will be due at the end of daily discussions.

**Some suggestions for analyzing films:**

- What type of film is it? Documentary, feature film, etc. What is the purpose of the film? How well does it serve that purpose? Who is the intended audience? Why is this important?
- What is the title of the film? How does it translate (where appropriate)? Is there any significance in the title chosen?
- Who produced/directed the film? What do you know about him/her? What do you know about the production company?
- Where was the film produced? U.S., Latin America, etc. How is the place of production an important part of the cultural message?
- How was the film received? Did the reception vary by country/audience/cultural group? What impact did it have at the time of release? Has the interpretation or perception of the film changed over time?
- How would you summarize the plot (or main narrative if a documentary)? How well does the film reflect the historical events it aims to represent? If there are discrepancies, how important are they to the overall message?
- How does the film compare to the outside readings assigned? Do they send a similar message or is there a contradiction? How does the film compare to the general narrative in the Chasteen textbook?
- How does the producer use staging, symbolism, casting, and/or other creative expressions to represent cultural messages in the film? How effective is the creative expression in communicating a broader message?
- Why do think the film was selected for this class? What does the film communicate as a historical narrative? What does it communicate as a primary document?
- What other films may communicate the same message? How does this film compare to others produced in other Latin American countries? To films produced in the United States? How does it compare to others that reflect a similar topic? How does it compare to others made at roughly the same time?
- What are the overall strengths and weaknesses of the film? How might this film influence the way you approach your final project in this class?
- What kind of information do the assigned readings provide about the film and/or historical context? How can the readings help you better understand the film and the issues it represents?

**Some Useful Resources for Analyzing Films:**

**Internet Movie Database (IMDb):** Provides reviews, production information, plot summaries, cast lists, etc. for foreign and domestic films.

<http://www.imdb.com/>

**Latin American Video Archive:** Internet database of over 9,000 films produced by and about Latin Americans and Latinos.

<http://www.latinamericanvideo.org/>

**H-Film:** Web-based scholarly discussion group organized by H-Net and dedicated to encouraging scholarly discussion of cinema history and uses of the media.

<http://www.h-net.org/~film/>

NOTE: I do NOT accept late work of any kind except in the most extreme emergencies. I will NOT accept e-mail attachments for final versions of journal entries or exams. Students MUST turn in a paper copy of all assignments to me.

**Final Project:** For the final project in this course, you will be divided into groups of 3 or 4 and as a group you will script a brief historically-based film or documentary on any topic of your choice that relates to the history of Latin America. All film topics for the final project must be approved in advance. You should plan to produce a film that will be 10 – 20 minutes in length. On exam day, we will meet at our usual time and each group will either provide a live performance of their film or they will show a pre-filmed version to the class. The script production description (description of how each scene was staged to communicate the desired message), and analysis must be turned in at that time. We will discuss the final projects in more detail as the semester progresses.

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#### **ACADEMIC CALENDAR:**

The following schedule outlines the topics and reading assignments for each class. This schedule is subject to change. Any changes made to the schedule and/or any other course requirements will be announced in class and will be posted on the course website: [www.utdallas.edu/~mrankin](http://www.utdallas.edu/~mrankin).

<b>May 25</b>	Introduction to Latin America Latin America in the Age of Conquest <b>Film: <i>The Mask of Zorro</i></b>
<b>May 26</b>	Class Discussion/Journal 1 (May 25 Film + the following readings)
<b>Readings:</b>	Reserve Reading #1
<b>Textbook:</b>	Chasteen, Introduction, Chapter 1  Colonial Latin America <b>Film: <i>The Bridge of San Luis Rey</i></b>
<b>May 27</b>	Class Discussion/Journal 2 (May 26 Film + the following readings)
<b>Readings:</b>	Reserve Reading #2
<b>Textbook:</b>	Chasteen, Introduction, Chapter 2  Latin America in Transition: The Independence Era <b>Film: <i>The Mission</i></b>
<b>June 1</b>	Class Discussion/Journal 3 (May 27 Film + the following readings)
<b>Readings:</b>	Reserve Readings #3, 4
<b>Textbook:</b>	Chasteen, Chapters 3-4  The Era of Caudillos in 19 <sup>th</sup> Century Latin America <b>Film: <i>Camila</i></b>
<b>June 2</b>	Class Discussion/Journal 4 (June 1 Film + the following readings)
<b>Readings</b>	Reserve Reading #5
<b>Textbook</b>	Chasteen, Chapters 5-6  The Mexican Revolution on Film <b>Film: <i>And Starring Pancho Villa as Himself</i></b>
<b>June 3</b>	Class Discussion/Journal 5 (June 2 Films + the following readings)
<b>Readings:</b>	Reserve Readings #6
<b>Textbook</b>	Chasteen, Chapter 7  Peron, Evita, and Populism <b>Films: <i>Evita: The Woman Behind the Myth</i> <i>Eva Peron</i></b>

<b>June 8</b>	Class Discussion/Journal 6 (June 3 Films + the following readings)
<b>Readings:</b>	Reserve Reading #7
<b>Textbook</b>	Chasteen, Chapter 8
	Poverty and Corruption in 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Latin America, Pt. 1
	<b>Film:</b> <i>Los Olvidados (The Forgotten Ones)</i>
<b>June 9</b>	Class Discussion/Journal 7 (June 8 Films + the following readings)
<b>Readings:</b>	Reserve Reading #8, 9
<b>Textbook</b>	Chasteen, Chapter 8
	Poverty and Corruption in 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Latin America, Pt. 2
	<b>Film:</b> <i>La Ley de Herodes (Herod's Law)</i>
<b>June 10</b>	Class Discussion/Journal 8 (June 9 Film + the following readings)
<b>Readings:</b>	Reserve Readings #10
<b>Textbook:</b>	Chasteen, Chapter 8
	The Cuban Revolution and Latin America, Pt. 1
	<b>Film:</b> <i>Cuban Story</i>
<b>June 15</b>	Class Discussion/Journal 9 (June 10 Film + the following readings)
<b>Readings:</b>	Reserve Reading #11
<b>Textbook:</b>	Chasteen, Chapter 8
	The Cuban Revolution and Latin America, Pt. 2
	<b>Films:</b> <i>Fidel</i>
<b>June 16</b>	Class Discussion/Journal 10 (June 15 Film + the following readings)
<b>Readings:</b>	Reserve Reading #12
<b>Textbook:</b>	Chasteen, Chapter 8
	The Cold War and the Fallout of the Cuban Revolution, Pt. 1
	<b>Film:</b> <i>When Mountains Tremble</i>
<b>June 17</b>	Class Discussion/Journal 11 (June 16 Film + the following readings)
<b>Readings:</b>	Reserve Reading #13
<b>Textbook:</b>	Chasteen, Chapter 8
	The Cold War and the Fallout of the Cuban Revolution, Pt. 2
	<b>Film:</b> <i>Salvador</i>

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**June 22** Class Discussion/Journal 12 (June 17 Film + the following readings)

**Readings:** Reserve Readings #14

**Textbook:** Chasteen, Chapter 9

The Rise of Military Dictatorships

**Films:** *The Official Story*

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**June 23** Class Discussion/No Journal Due (June 22 Film + the following readings)

**Readings:** Reserve Reading #15

**Textbook:** Chasteen, Chapters 9-10

Drugs and Immigration in Contemporary Latin America

**Film:** *Maria Full of Grace*

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**June 24** Final Projects Due

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#### **Student Conduct & Discipline**

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

#### **Academic Integrity**

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

#### **Email Use**

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

#### **Withdrawal from Class**

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

### **Student Grievance Procedures**

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

### **Incomplete Grade Policy**

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

### **Disability Services**

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:

The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22

PO Box 830688

Richardson, Texas 75083-0688

(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

### **Religious Holy Days**

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

### **Off-Campus Instruction and Course Activities**

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address given below. Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. ([http://www.utdallas.edu/Business Affairs/Travel\\_Risk\\_Activities.htm](http://www.utdallas.edu/Business%20Affairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm))

*These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.*