

SPRING 2005
HONR 394

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GREAT POLITICAL LEADERS IN LATIN AMERICA

Objectives: Since its independence from Spain and Portugal in the early 1800s, Latin America has witnessed the rise and fall of many political leaders who have made a permanent imprint on the history and life of the region. This course is designed to introduce students to a sample of these “great leaders” in Latin American politics. The word “great,” of course, is used here to denote “significance” and “historical distinction,” as opposed to a value judgment on their accomplishments. Students are encouraged through this course to assess the Latin American leaders’ contributions and develop an understanding of their importance to the region’s political development. This course pays close attention to four major political leaders and the countries mostly affected by their leadership: Simón Bolívar (Venezuela, Colombia), Eva Perón (Argentina), Getúlio Vargas (Brazil), and Che Guevara (Cuba). While these specific countries are closely linked to their leadership, their legacy extends beyond borders. Bolívar’s wars of liberation, for instance, continue to inspire Latin American political leaders today. These four political leaders are used to study current political leadership in Latin America: Chavez (Venezuela), Peronismo (Argentina), Lula (Brazil), and Castro (Cuba).

The Latin American leaders’ lives and experiences provide the basis for an in-depth examination of general Latin American politics. For instance, what is the nature of charisma in the leader-follower relationship? How does power shape the behavior of Latin American political leaders today? Students are expected to participate actively in class discussions. Rather than traditional lectures, this course uses a multimedia/“active learning” approach to the study of political leadership, including class discussions, biographies, video presentations, web sites, and news video clips.

Required Reading: The course requires the use of the following books, which may be purchased at the College’s bookstore:

Ernesto Che Guevara, *The Motorcycle Diaries: Notes on a Latin American Journey* (New York: Ocean Press, 2003).

Robert M. Levine, *Father of the Poor? Vargas and His Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Miguel Angel Asturias, *The President*, trans. from the Spanish by Frances Partridge (Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, Inc., 1997).

Nicholas Fraser and Marysa Navarro, *Evita: The Real Life of Eva Perón* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996).

Gabriel García Márquez, *The General in His Labyrinth* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990).

Evaluations: This course has two exams and a comprehensive final. Each exam consists of a combination of essay and identification questions drawn from the books, videos, class discussions and class notes.

Participation Grade Policy: The instructor’s assumption is that, as a college student, you are highly motivated and will strive to achieve academic excellence. Therefore, you are starting the semester with 100 points in your participation grade (10 percent of the course grade). During the semester, you will be frequently asked to contribute with reactions, comments and insights derived from your own experience and the assigned readings. Your effort should be to maintain these participation points during the semester.

There are three ways that you can lose participation points: (1) **absence** (whenever you fail to attend a class, you lose 3 points per class; excluding excused absences – see College catalog); (2) **lack of engagement in the classroom** (reading unrelated material, inattentive); 3 points per class); and (3) **failing a reaction paper** (periodically, the instructor will assign a short reaction paper drawn from the readings listed in the syllabus; it is your responsibility to keep up with the readings; 3 points per reaction paper).

There are three ways that you can gain participation points: (1) **extra credit** (outside classroom opportunities, such as speakers, cultural events, etc.; these opportunities have to be approved by the instructor beforehand and require a typed, one-page reflection; 3 points per opportunity); (2) **current national newspaper article clippings** (1 point per clipping; these clippings have to be approved by the instructor beforehand and require a typed, one-page reflection; a newspaper “article” is defined as a news story/feature with at least five paragraphs; up to five national newspaper article clippings allowed during the semester); and (3) **perfect class attendance** (no absences during the semester, excluding excused absences; 3 points).

Course Grade Distribution:

Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	15%
Analytical Essay	20%
Final Exam	40%
Participation	10%

Academic Dishonesty

Copying another’s ideas or written work in an assignment without proper citation is considered academic dishonesty and will result in immediate sanctions, including but not limited to the award of a failing grade on the affected assignment. You should consult the Student Handbook and the Marietta College Undergraduate Programs 2004-2005 Catalog for other sanctions that may be applicable to a student who engages in academic dishonesty.

Disabilities Statement:

Students who believe that they may need accommodations due to a documented disability should contact the Academic Resource Center (Andrews Hall, Third floor, 376-4700) and the instructor as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. You must meet with the ARC staff to verify your eligibility for any accommodation and for academic assistance.

Analytical Essay Instructions:

What is an Analytical Essay? Unlike a “research paper,” which focuses on primary sources and the test of a hypothesis, an “analytical essay” provides you with an opportunity to explore different facets of a single theme. While the analysis is grounded in solid facts, its main purpose should be to develop an understanding of a “probing question.”

How Do I Choose a Topic? The first general rule about choosing an “analytical essay” topic is to stay close to the general themes investigated in the course – great political leaders in Latin America. You need to identify first the country in which you have an interest. This interest will motivate you to make connections between prior experiences (e.g., another course you have taken at MC) and the subject at hand. The final step in choosing a topic is to ask a probing question related to a current political leader from a country not directly investigated in this course. For example, why has the Mexican president’s popularity declined in recent months?

What Next? Once you have chosen a topic related to a current political leader in Latin America and the instructor has approved it, your next step should be to conduct “basic research” on the topic (country and political leader). The library is an excellent resource, and the library staff are ready to assist you. You can make an appointment with one of the library staff members, and he/she will help you find basic sources. After you have identified helpful sources, your next step should be to gain an understanding of the topic (e.g., Mexican politics in recent years). The final step is to develop an answer (or possible answers) to your probing question. This last step will require analytical skills. You are not asked simply to report the data that you collected. You are asked to interpret the meaning of the data.

Writing the Essay: The most challenging aspect of the analytical essay should be the actual writing of it. While the data collected may suggest different answers to your probing question, your essay should not be simply a recount of the opinions of other experts. In addition, you should not spend too many pages giving the background and leaving little room for your interpretive section. Balance between the two (background and analysis) is critical for a successful analytical essay. As a general rule, you should devote 40 percent for background and 60 percent for the interpretive section (answering the probing question). Aside from the essay, you should include a one-page “executive summary” page (single space, single paragraph) in the beginning (after the cover page) and a bibliography page with at least two sources for each page written.

Requirements: The essay should be typed, double-spaced and 8-10 pages long (not including the “executive summary” page and the bibliography). The essay should be well organized and use the following order: (1) Cover Page (title, author name, course number, date); (2) Executive Summary (title, one page, single space, single paragraph); (3) Analytical essay text (title, 8-10 pages, double space); (4) Bibliography (consistent bibliographical format throughout). Staple (top, left) the four items above together. **Do not use a binder. No online submissions will be accepted.**

HONR 394
COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

1. THE STUDY OF GREAT LEADERS IN LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS

- a. Introduction (Jan. 11)
No Reading Assignment.
- b. The Study of “Great Leaders” (Jan. 13)
Reading Assignment: Perruci, Essay.
- c. Introduction to Latin America: Geography, Culture and Politics (Jan. 18-20)
Reading Assignment: Asturias, ALL.

2. BOLIVAR: IN SEARCH OF UNITY

- a. “New Granada” (Jan. 25-27)
Reading Assignment: García Márquez, pp. 3-37.
 - b. Bolívar: Video Presentation (Feb. 1)
No Reading Assignment.
 - c. Bolívar: Rise and Fall (Feb. 3)
Reading Assignment: García Márquez, pp. 39-268.
- * *Topic for Analytical Essay Due (Feb. 3)*
- d. Chavez: A New Bolívar? (Feb. 8)
Reading Assignment: websites/handouts

Exam #1 (Feb. 10)

15 PERCENT

3. EVITA: CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP

- a. Politics in Argentina (Feb. 15)
Reading Assignment: Fraser and Navarro, Chs. 1-2.
- b. Evita: Video Presentation (Feb. 17-22)
Reading Assignment: Fraser and Navarro, Chs. 3-4.
- c. The “Real Life” of Evita (Feb. 24)
Reading Assignment: Fraser and Navarro, Chs. 5-11.

- d. The New Populist Face of Political Leadership (March 1)
Reading Assignment: websites/handouts

Exam #2 (March 3)

15 PERCENT

Spring Break (March 5-13)

4. VARGAS: NATION-BUILDING

- a. Brazil: Video Presentation (March 15-17)
Reading Assignment: Levine, pp. 139-45 and 162-79.
- b. Vargas: Estado Novo and Populism (March 22)
Reading Assignment: Levine, Chs. 2-6; pp. 146-61.
- c. Lula: The New Labor Movement (March 24)
Reading Assignment: websites/handouts.

5. CHE: THE REVOLUTIONARY SPIRIT OF LATIN AMERICA

- a. The Revolutionary Tradition of Latin America (March 29-31)
Reading Assignment: Guevara, pp. 1-28.
- b. Che: Video Presentation I (April 5-7)
Reading Assignment: Guevara, pp. 31-175.

*** *Analytical Essay Due* (April 7)**

20 PERCENT

- c. Che: Video Presentation II (April 12)
No Reading Assignment.
- d. Che: Myth and Reality (April 14)
Reading Assignment: websites/handouts.
- e. Fidel Castro: The Cuban Revolutionary Experience (April 19)
Reading Assignment: websites/handouts.
- f. Review for Final Exam (April 21)
No Reading Assignment.

Final Exam (Wednesday, April 27, Noon-2:30 p.m.)

40 PERCENT