Course Description

Cuba has had an exceptional history and continues to defy political, social, and economic trends to this day. In this course, we will explore and analyze this unique history from precolonial times to the present. We will integrate multiple levels of analysis, from the local to the national to the international. We will also examine how everyday men and women shaped and experienced the most important events in Cuban history.

The questions that will guide our studies throughout the semester include: Why did Cuba remain a colony so much longer than the rest of Spanish America? How did slave society in Cuba compare to the rest of the Americas? Why was Cuba one of the last places in the Americas to abolish slavery? Why did the United States intervene in Cuba’s independence movement and establish a protectorate? Why were Cuban revolutionaries able to seize and maintain power, when so many other Latin American revolutionary movements failed?

We will proceed chronologically, beginning with Cuba’s indigenous roots and the Spanish conquest. Next, we will examine Cuba’s long colonial experience, and the causes and consequences of Cuba’s delayed independence and abolitionary movements. We will analyze Cuba’s War for Independence, U.S. intervention in that war, and the subsequent failed attempts to establish a functional republican government in Cuba. We will then examine Fulgencio Batista’s rise to power and his dictatorship, and how those developments laid the foundations for the Cuban Revolution. Next, we will analyze the Revolution itself, from its early days to its military success to its consolidation. Finally, we will explore how politics and life in Cuba evolved over the course of more than five decades of revolutionary rule.

Prerequisites: None

Course Learning Outcomes

This course satisfies CO6: Cultures, Societies, and Individuals
In courses satisfying CO 6, students will learn how to systematically analyze human social conditions (e.g., individuals, groups, communities, and cultures). In particular, students will learn to observe, theorize, model, experiment, and/or interpret as a means of inquiring into human social relations.

Students in HIST 346 will:
1. Analyze the processes and events of Cuban history and social conditions
2. Evaluate how historians interpret Cuban history by applying historical theories about topics including social processes, economic conditions, gender dynamics, racial inequality and international relations
3. Interpret primary sources about Cuban history and society

This course satisfies CO11: Global Context

In courses satisfying CO11, students will apply and evaluate modes of academic inquiry, creative expression, or results of research to problems in historical and contemporary global contexts. Students will articulate connections among local, national, and international contexts and evaluate the ways that historical and contemporary global influences affect their current situations.

Students in HIST 346 will:
4. Articulate connections between Cuba’s history and its connections with the rest of the world
5. Articulate and evaluate connections among local, national, and international contexts

Required Readings

3. We will discuss Cuban current events at the beginning of class once a week. I recommend that you make a habit of reading The New York Times, The Washington Post, or another reliable news source.

Grading

1. **Mid-Term Exam:** (20%) Take-home, short essay questions. (Assessment for SLO 1, 4, and 5)
2. **Book Review:** (20%) (3 pages) Write a review of Revolution Within the Revolution. Your review should provide an overview of the book and evaluate its strengths and weaknesses. (Assessment for SLO 2)
3. **First Primary Source Analysis:** (5%) (2-3 pages) Choose one of the primary sources from The Cuba Reader and make a claim about some aspect of the primary source. Support that claim using evidence from the primary source
itself and other sources (which can include the lectures and other selections from the reader). We will discuss what makes a strong essay in more detail in class, but the paper should have a clear thesis statement, should analyze the content, purpose, and significance of the source, and situate the source in its historical context. (Assessment for SLO 3)

4. **Second Primary Source Analysis: (15%)** (2-3 pages) Same as above. (Assessment for SLO 3)

5. **Final Exam: (30%)** Take-home, short essay questions. (Assessment for SLO 1, 4, and 5)

6. **Participation: (10%)** Based on attendance and the quality of your involvement in class discussions. You are allowed one absence; after that I will deduct 10% from your participation grade for each unexcused absence. You can improve your participation grade by tweeting news stories about Cuban history or current events using the hashtag #UNRCubaCourse.

The Plus/Minus system of grading applies in this course.

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<th>Score Range</th>
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All assignments should be double-spaced in Times New Roman size 12 font with a one-inch margin on all sides. Number your pages. Use Chicago Style footnote citations (for guidelines on proper citation format, see [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)).

**Late Work and Make-Up Exams:** There will be a penalty of 5% for each day that an assignment is late beyond the start of class on the assigned due date. You will only be allowed to turn in an assignment late or take a make-up exam without penalty if you have an emergency, religious holy day observance, or university approved extracurricular activity. You must provide written notice before religious holy day observances and extracurricular activities and within a week of emergencies. For the UNR policy on absences, see: [https://www.unr.edu/administrative-manual/3000-3999-students/3020-class-absence-policy](https://www.unr.edu/administrative-manual/3000-3999-students/3020-class-absence-policy).

**Expectations:**

1. Participation. I expect you to do the readings and participate in discussions.
2. Attention. I expect you to close your laptops and put them away during lectures and presentations. Take notes by hand.
3. Punctuality: I do not tolerate tardiness. If you are late, you will be counted as absent.
4. Communication: If you have a question, don’t hesitate to raise your hand and ask or contact me privately. If you have a problem or an emergency arises, let me know and I will be very willing to work with you.
Academic Dishonesty

UNR Statement on Academic Dishonesty: “Cheating, plagiarism or otherwise obtaining grades under false pretenses constitute academic dishonesty according to the code of this university. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and penalties can include filing a final grade of "F"; reducing the student's final course grade one or two full grade points; awarding a failing mark on the coursework in question; or requiring the student to retake or resubmit the coursework.”

Plagiarism is a serious form of academic misconduct and it will not be tolerated in this class. Plagiarism, according to the UNR catalog, is defined as “submitting the language, ideas, thoughts or work of another as one's own.” The “work of another” includes any material used in your essays (e.g. books, articles, internet sites, documents, lecture notes, or handouts from this and other courses, etc.) Acknowledge all such material – even if you paraphrase it or summarize certain sections and don't quote it directly. For the first offense of plagiarism, you will receive a zero for that assignment. For the second offense, you will receive an F for the class.

Class Reminders

- **Cell-phones and Computers:** Please remember to turn off your cell phones and computers during class. Take notes by hand, unless you are unable to do so and obtain permission from me to use your computer. On the cognitive advantages of taking notes by hand, see: https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/.

- **Packing Up:** Please refrain from packing books and other items until I formally end the class.

- **Email Correspondence:** Please make sure that you identify yourself when you send a message to me, as well as use proper salutations (Dear Professor Keller).

- **Students with Disabilities:** The University of Nevada, Reno is committed to equal opportunity in education for all students, including those with documented physical disabilities or documented learning disabilities. If you have a documented disability and will be requiring assistance, please contact me and the Disability Resource Center (Pennington Student Achievement Center Suite 230) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

- **Taping Class:** Surreptitious or covert video-taping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents policy. This class may be videotaped or audio recorded only with my written permission. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may have been given permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class may be recorded.
• **Academic Assistance:** The Tutoring Center (784-6801 or www.unr.edu/tutoring-center) and University Writing Center (784-6030 or http://www.unr.edu/writing-center) are available to assist you.

• **Equal Opportunity and Title IX:** The University of Nevada, Reno is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment for all. If you believe you have experienced discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, or stalking, whether on or off campus, or need information related to immigration concerns, please contact the University's Equal Opportunity & Title IX office at 775-784-1547. Resources and interim measures are available to assist you. For more information, please visit: https://www.unr.edu/equal-opportunity-title-ix.

**Classes, Topics, and Reading Assignments (subject to change with advance notice)**

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: Cuba’s Precolonial History and Spanish Conquest
• Christopher Columbus, “Christopher Columbus ‘Discovers’ Cuba,” CR p9
• Various Spanish officials, “Spanish Officials and Indigenous Resistance,” CR p15
• Juan Perez de la Riva, “A World Destroyed,” CR p20

Week 3: Slavery and Colonial Life
• Juan Francisco Manzano, “Autobiography of a Slave,” CR p49
• Richard Dana, “The Trade in Chinese Laborers,” CR p79
• Father Félix Varela, “Abolition!” CR p94
• Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda y Arteaga, “Sab,” CR p103

Week 4: Early Independence Movements
• Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, “Freedom and Slavery,” CR p115
• Renée Méndez Capote, “Memories of a Cuban Girl,” CR p118

Week 5: Cuba’s War for Independence
• José Martí, "Our America," CR p122
• José Martí, “Guantanamera,” CR p128
• John J. Johnson, “U.S. Cartoonists Portray Cuba,” CR p135
  • First primary source analysis due

Week 6: Failed Republics
• President Theodore Roosevelt, “The Platt Amendment,” CR p147
• Loló de la Torriente, “A Crucial Decade,” CR p189
• Ofelia Domínguez Navarro, “The First Wave of Cuban Feminism,” CR p219
• Nicolás Guillén, “Sugarcane,” CR p264
• Julio Antonio Mella, “Where is Cuba Headed?” CR p265

Week 7: The Batista Dictatorship and the Early Days of the Cuban Revolution
• Start reading Chase, Revolution Within the Revolution
• Fidel Castro, “History Will Absolve Me,” CR p306

Week 8: The Cuban Revolution
• Finish Revolution Within the Revolution
  o Book reviews due

Week 9: Revolutionary Consolidation
• Medea Benjamin, Joseph Collins, and Michael Scott, “How the Poor Got More,” CR p344
• Oscar Lewis, Ruth M. Lewis, and Susan M. Rigdon, “The Literacy Campaign,” CR p389
  o Midterm questions distributed

Week 10: Castro Confronts the United States
• Fidel Castro, “Castro Calls on Cubans to Resist the Counterrevolution,” CR p536
• Edward Lansdale, “Operation Mongoose,” CR p540
• President John F. Kennedy, “Offensive Missiles on That Imprisoned Island,” CR p544
  o Midterm Exams due

Week 11: Revolutionary Subjectivity
• Inconsolable Memories: A Cuban View of the Missile Crisis / Edmundo Desnoes 547
• Film: “Memories of Underdevelopment”

Week 12: Cuba and the Global Cold War
• Ernesto "Che" Guevara, “Man and Socialism,” CR p370
• Sandra Levinson, “The Venceremos Brigades,” CR p517
• Van Gosse, “The Cuban Revolution and the New Left,” CR p526

Week 13: The Cuban Diaspora
• Monsignor Bryan O. Walsh, “Cuban Refugee Children,” CR p557
• Félix Roberto Masud-Piloto, “From Welcomed Exiles to Illegal Immigrants,” CR p561
• Roberto Fernández, “Wrong Channel,” CR p566
• Achy Obejas, “We Came All the Way from Cuba So You Could Dress Like This?” CR p568
Week 14: The Fall of the Soviet Union and Cuba’s Special Period
  • Silvio Rodríguez, “Silvio Rodríguez Sings of the Special Period,” CR p599
  • Susan Eckstein, “From Communist Solidarity to Communist Solitary,” CR 607
    o Second primary source analysis due

Week 15: Cuba Today
  • Julie Feinsilver, “Cuban Medical Diplomacy,” CR p590
  • John Lee Anderson, “The Old Man and the Boy,” CR p644
  • Elizardo Sánchez Santacruz, “A Dissident Speaks Out,” CR p664

Week 16: Conclusions and Review for Final
  • Final exam questions distributed