

History 272- Spring 2026  
INTRODUCTION TO MODERN LATIN AMERICAN HISTORY (1810 TO THE PRESENT)

Course Description and learning outcomes:

This course is an introduction to the history of Latin America from the Independence (1810) to the present. The readings and lectures will explore the main social, economic, political and cultural developments in the three largest countries (by area and GDPs) in the region, which combined hold 2/3 of the Latin American population: Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina. The selection of countries will allow to examine the centrality of pre-Columbian, African, and European heritages in the shaping of modern national identities, which represent well the ethnic and cultural diversity of a large and varied continent. We will also cover significant processes, events, and figures in the region. The course studies relevant historical phenomena and famous figures in the history of these countries such as state- and nation formation, the Mexican Revolution, urban poverty, culture, and soccer in Brazil, the government of Juan Perón and the role of his wife Evita in Argentina, etc. At the same time, the work in the classroom will expose students to forms of historical reflection, including the role of critical thinking in the creation of historical knowledge and the research challenges that the latter entails. To achieve these goals we will read secondary and first hand accounts and combine lectures and discussions with essay exams and quizzes.

**Learning outcomes:** 1) Students will learn about the complexity of the Latin American realities during the independent period of the region. 2) They will be prepared to reflect comparatively about history. 3) Students will recognize different forms of historical reflection and will understand the role of critical thinking in the creation of historical knowledge as well as the research challenges that the latter entails. To achieve these goals we will read primary and secondary sources and combine lectures, discussions, essay exams, quizzes, and written assignments.

**Books:**

Textbook: Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America* (Oxford University Press)

- Samuel Brunk, *Emiliano Zapata! Revolution and Betrayal in Mexico* (U. of New Mexico Press)
- Alma Guillermoprieto, *Samba*, (Vintage)
- N. Fraser and M. Navarro, *Evita: The Real Lives of Eva Perón* (Norton)

**Course Outline and Class Schedule:**

Week 1

Introduction

Geography of Latin America

The Colonial Legacy

The Latin American Independence and Periodization

Reading: Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America*, chap.2,  
“The Colonial Foundations”.

Week 2

### **MEXICO (1810-present)**

Reading: Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America*, chap.3, “Mexico: the Taming of a Revolution”.

From Independence to the end of the Porfiriato (1810-1911)

Week 3

The Mexican Revolution (1910-1940)

Week 4

Mexico under the PRI and Democratization (1940-2010s)

Week 5

**Peasants, Politics, and Revolution. Special reading assignment:** Samuel Brunk, *Emiliano Zapata! Quiz and Discussion.*

Week 6

### **Review and First exam**

Week 7

### **BRAZIL (1822-present)**

Reading: Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America*, chap.11, “Brazil: The Awakening Giant”.

Empire and Republic (1822-1930)

Week 8

Varguismo, Military Rule, and Democracy (1930-2010s)

Week 9

**Urban poverty, Afro-Brazilian Heritage, and popular culture. Special reading assignment:**  
Alma Guillermoprieto, *Samba. Quiz and Discussion*

## **March 16-21, Spring Break**

Week 11

### **Review and Second Exam: Brazil**

Week 12

### **ARGENTINA (1810-present)**

Reading: Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America*, chap.9, “Progress and Stalemate”.

From Independence (1810) to 1880

The Modernization of Argentina: Agro-Export Economy and Immigration (1880-1930)

Week 13

The “Infamous Decade”, the Working Class, and Populism: the case of Peronism (1930-1955)  
Military Rule and Democracy (1955-2010s)

Week 14

**Women and Politics in Argentina. Special Reading Assignment:** N. Fraser and M. Navarro, *Evita*. **Quiz and discussion.**

Week 15

**Argentina in Literature: Jorge Luis Borges** (reading assignments available on Brightspace)  
**Quiz and Discussion**

Week 16

### **Review**

May 4-9, **Third Exam**

Grades will be determined as follows: three exams on individual countries= 75% (25% each); four Quizzes= 20% (5% each); attendance (5%).

**Students must take all quizzes and exams to pass the course.**

Quizzes: Students will have 20 min. to write the answers. The question will be based on the readings assigned for that week. The purpose of these questions is to work as reading control.

Quizzes and exams will be taken during class time, in the classroom. The days when quizzes and exams are given students should make sure to sign the attendance sheet; otherwise tests will not be counted and students will receive an F.

**Grade Scale:**

90-100=A

80-89=B

70-79=C

60-69=D

0-59=F

***Attendance is mandatory:*** Students are allowed to have three absences (excused or not) without penalty. With the fourth absence one percentage point will be deducted from the final grade and the fifth and sixth absences with a loss of 2% each. Students are allowed a total of six absences. Incurring in a seventh absence (including excused ones) automatically translates into failing the course. The attendance sheet will be available until three minutes past the beginning of class; after the three minute grace time students will not be able to sign in and a late arrival will be counted as an absence.

**Freedom of Expression:**

In this class, students are encouraged to exercise their right to free inquiry and expression. You are welcome to express any view on the subject matter introduced by the instructor or other class members within the structure of the course. While you are responsible for learning the content of this course, you remain free to take a reasoned exception to the views presented and to reserve judgment about matters of conscience, controversy, or opinion. When you encounter ideas that you find offensive, unwise, immoral, or wrong-headed, you are encouraged to engage them with reasons, evidence, and arguments. Your course grade will be based on your academic performance, not on the opinions you express. Our commitment to freedom of expression means that no relevant ideas or positions are out of bounds, but disruptive or disorderly behavior, threats, or harassment are strictly prohibited and will be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students.

See the University's "Commitment to Freedom of Expression" and "Bill of Student Rights" in the University Policies and Statements module on Brightspace.

**Conduct and ethics:** Students are expected to follow the code of honor and academic ethics as set forth in University regulations. Violations of these codes will be penalized according to university regulations.

Academic integrity is one of the highest values that Purdue University holds. Individuals are encouraged to alert university officials to potential breaches of this value by either emailing [integrity@purdue.edu](mailto:integrity@purdue.edu) or by calling 765-494-8778. While information may be submitted

anonymously, the more information is submitted the greater the opportunity for the university to investigate the concern. More details are available on our course Brightspace table of contents, under University Policies.

Incidents of academic misconduct in this course will be addressed by the course instructor and referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR) for review at the university level. Any violation of course policies as it relates to academic integrity will result minimally in a failing or zero grade for that particular assignment, and at the instructor's discretion may result in a failing grade for the course. In addition, all incidents of academic misconduct will be forwarded to OSRR, where university penalties, including removal from the university, may be considered.

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor's control. Relevant changes to this course will be posted onto the course website or can be obtained by contacting the instructors or TAs via email or phone. You are expected to read your @purdue.edu email on a frequent basis.

Purdue University is committed to welcomes individuals of all ages, religions, sex, sexual orientations, races, nationalities, languages, military experience, disabilities, family statuses, gender identities and expressions, political views, and socioeconomic statuses. Please respect the different experiences, beliefs and values expressed by everyone in this course. Behaviors that threaten, harass, discriminate or that are disrespectful of others will not be tolerated. Inappropriate behaviors will be addressed with disciplinary action, which may include being referred to the Office of the Dean of Students.

For unanticipated or emergency conflict, when advance notification to an instructor is not possible, the student should contact the instructor as soon as possible by email, through Brightspace, or by phone. When the student is unable to make direct contact with the instructor and is unable to leave word with the instructor's department because of circumstances beyond the student's control, and in cases of bereavement, quarantine, or isolation, the student or the student's representative should contact the Office of the Dean of Students via email or phone at 765-494-1747. Our course Brightspace includes a link on Attendance and Grief Absence policies under the University Policies menu.

If you find yourself beginning to feel some stress, anxiety and/or feeling slightly overwhelmed, try WellTrack. Sign in and find information and tools at your fingertips, available to you at any time.

If you need support and information about options and resources, please contact or see the Office of the Dean of Students. Call 765-494-1747. Hours of operation are M-F, 8 am- 5 pm.

If you find yourself struggling to find a healthy balance between academics, social life, stress, etc. sign up for free one-on-one virtual or in-person sessions with a Purdue Wellness Coach at RecWell. Student coaches can help you navigate through barriers and challenges toward your goals throughout the semester. Sign up is completely free and can be done on BoilerConnect. If

you have any questions, please contact Purdue Wellness at [evans240@purdue.edu](mailto:evans240@purdue.edu).

If you're struggling and need mental health services: Purdue University is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of mental health support, services are available. For help, such individuals should contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 765-494-6995 during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or by going to the CAPS office of the second floor of the Purdue University Student Health Center (PUSH) during business hours.

Any student with special needs or a health issue that may affect her/his performance in this course should speak in private with the instructor after class to make the necessary arrangements.