

**Bergen Community College
Department of History and Geography**

**HISTORY 132: THE SPANISH SPEAKING CARIBBEAN
& CENTRAL AMERICA SINCE 1898**

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Credits/Hours: 3 credits / 3 hours

General Education Course: Pending

Prerequisites: None

Meeting Times: Monday, Wednesday, 3:15-4:30pm

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 12-1 p.m. and Tuesday, 5-6pm in A-332



The Spanish speaking Caribbean and Central American countries have served since 1898 as a United States “backyard,” incubator of revolutionary movements, Cold War playground and more recently, a way station for drug traffickers. Many of these nations continue to struggle with the legacy of United States backed military governments and their northern neighbor’s insatiable appetite for drugs. This unique set of countries provides a lens by which to appreciate themes of local and global importance.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify major periods and figures in the Spanish speaking Caribbean and Central America since 1898.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the narrative framework and factual basis of Caribbean and Central American history since 1898.
3. Identify and analyze the important political, economic, social, intellectual and religious forces that shaped the above period.
4. Summarize and interpret the continuity and change that occurs in the Spanish speaking Caribbean and Central America from 1898 until the present.
5. Demonstrate the ability to develop a thesis and support it with historical evidence both in writing and orally.
6. Demonstrate basic research skills by locating and using source materials.
7. Summarize, paraphrase and quote historical information in properly cited written analyses.
8. Demonstrate the ability to state and support an interpretation of historical issues concisely, coherently and logically.

Policy Statement

As a general education course, writing and critical thinking will feature prominently. Essays and/or research papers will be based on analysis of primary source materials. These may include personal accounts, official testimonies, newspaper and magazine articles or other useful documents.

Evaluation:

Grades will be based on the following rubric:

First essay: 33%
Second essay: 33%
Take home final exam: 34%

All essays will be assigned at least two weeks in advance. Late work will not be accepted for any reason nor shall extensions be granted. In addition, either of the first two essays may be rewritten for a higher grade. Last but not least, class participation is roundly encouraged. Those who participate on a regular basis and do so in constructive fashion will gain up to five points on their final mark.

Electronic Devices:

As a matter of etiquette and basic respect, cell phone use is prohibited once class begins. Under no circumstances is texting permissible and those who do so may be asked to leave.

Academic Dishonesty

In accordance with school policy, academic dishonesty of any sort shall not be tolerated. Students must submit their own work and properly credit all outside sources. Essays

bearing the marks of plagiarism shall receive a grade of 0 and will greatly damage any chance for success in the class.

Students With Disabilities

Students who require accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) can request these services from the Office of Specialized Services. To learn more about how to apply for services, please visit: <http://www.bergen.edu/oss>.

Required Reading List:

Children of Cain: Violence and the Violent in Latin America by Tina Rosenberg

I, Rigoberta Menchú by Rigoberta Menchú

Banana: The Fate of the Fruit That Changed the World by Dan Koeppel

Class Schedule:

Part I: Military Intervention and Occupation by the United States: 1898-1945

January 23: The Monroe Doctrine

January 28: The Roosevelt Corollary

January 30: The Dominican Republic: The Perpetual Colony

February 4: United States Marines Occupy the Dominican Republic, 1916-1924

February 6: The Cuban War of Independence becomes The Spanish American War

February 11: United States Intervention in Cuba: 1902-1934

February 13: United States Intervention in Nicaragua and the Reaction of Augusto Sandino

February 18: The United Fruit Company's Latin American Empire

February 20: Banana Republics

Part II: The Cold War Years: 1945-1989

February 25: Jacobo Arbenz Attempts to Reform Guatemala

First Essay Due

February 27: The CIA Backed Guatemalan Coup of 1954

March 4: *I, Rigoberta Menchú*

March 6: The Cuban Revolution

March 11: Communism in Cuba

March 13: Che Guevara: The Harsh Angel

March 25: The Somoza Family Regime in Nicaragua, 1936-1979

March 27: The Sandinista Revolution of 1979

April 1: The Governments of José Napoleón Duarte in El Salvador, 1979-1989

April 3: The Experiment

April 8: Rafael Trujillo's Military Dictatorship in the Dominican Republic, 1930-1961

April 10: The Costa Rican Counterpoint

Part III. Current Trends: 1990-Present

April 15: Cuba's Special Period

Second Essay Due

April 17: Pope John Paul II Visits Cuba

April 22: Managua, 1990

April 24: Panama, 1992

April 29: Central America: the Tormented Isthmus

May 1: Reaching the Untouchables: The Difficulty of Uprooting Drug Gangs

May 6: The Central American Free Trade Agreement

May 8: Poverty and Migration

May 13: **Take Home Final Exam Due**