

Government 7
Winter 2014/10A
Dartmouth College
Silsby 013

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Ofc hrs: W 1-3 and by appointment

Politics and Culture of Cuba

Course Description

What does the future hold for Cuba? In order to answer this question, this class plumbs the past for clues. We evaluate the creation and persistence of myths about Cuban history, focusing on the War of 1898, the First and Second Republican periods, and the many phases of the Revolution. As one of the world's few remaining socialist regimes and the only surviving socialist regime in Latin America, Cuba is unique. But Cuba is also subject to many of the forces that have shaped other countries in Latin America and the third world: a heritage of Spanish colonialism and slavery, a geography that contains a limited array of natural resources and a system of government that has evolved under the constant shadow of the United States. To that extent we can learn something about Latin American politics—and politics more generally—by studying Cuba. This seminar focuses specifically on relations between Cuba and the United States and examines a range of data and perspectives from both countries.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to do the following

- Demonstrate an understanding of the main events of Cuban political history and US foreign policy toward Cuba from 1898 to the present day
- Explain what the Cuban revolutionary government set out to do and to what extent it has succeeded
- Explain how the goals of the Cuban revolution have changed over time
- Demonstrate an understanding of the difference between history and historiography
- Identify competing arguments about and interpretations of political events
- Locate, evaluate and properly cite sources for an academic research paper
- Critique scholarly work in terms of argument, methodology, evidence and overall logic
- Make arguments in writing and speaking that present a clear thesis, valid claims and persuasive evidence
- Engage in thoughtful and careful revisions of written work
- Develop expertise in a particular area of research
- Present your research in front of your peers

Required Texts

The following books are on sale at the Dartmouth Bookstore and Wheelock Books, and on reserve in Baker-Berry.

Julia E. Sweig, *Cuba: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford University Press, 2009.
Louis Pérez, *The War of 1898*. University of North Carolina Press.

There are also some online articles, some short and some long. You can access them on the Blackboard site under "Assigned Readings."

Assignments

Short assignments	10%	Various
Sample Annotated bibliography	5%	January 30
Complete Annotated bibliography	15%	February 6
Draft of Research Paper	25%	February 26
Presentation of research	5%	March 5 or 7
Final paper	35%	March 13

1. Participation

There is no formal grade for participation, but I expect you to attend class and to participate fully. This class is a seminar that will include discussion, work during done class time and some lecture. Close reading of the assigned material is only the first step of learning. Much of the work of processing information and generating ideas takes place through talking, listening and debating. I expect you to arrive on time every day. I expect you to do all the assigned reading, think about how the readings address the discussion questions, and come to class prepared to engage. If you miss a class, you miss whatever discussion and learning we do that day. Class is a collective endeavor that cannot be "made up."

2. Blog Posts/Writing Assignments **10%**

You will do several different kinds of writing exercises over the course of the term. I am calling them "blog posts" because you will post most of them in a blog format that everyone will read. They will not be graded but you need to do a good enough job on them to get credit. The posts should demonstrate engagement with the assigned material for that particular class. Use perfect spelling and grammar. Many of these entries are "practice" for graded assignments. The specific instructions for each one are posted on the blackboard site.

3. Sample Annotated Bibliography **5%**

Take one of the sources on your bibliography and read it very closely. Write a paragraph that

- a. Concisely summarizes the central question and main argument of the source,
- b. Describes the methodology by which the research was conducted,
- c. Assess the main strengths and weaknesses of the scholarship, and
- d. Explains the relevance of the research to your paper.

The bibliography is due at the beginning of class on **Thursday, January 30.**

4. Complete Annotated Bibliography 15%

Take five of the sources on your bibliography, including the one you used for the sample, and read them very closely. Write a paragraph that

- a. Concisely summarizes the central question and main argument of the source,
- b. Describes the methodology by which the research was conducted,
- c. Assess the main strengths and weaknesses of the scholarship, and
- d. Explains the relevance of the research to your paper.

Include the revised version of your sample paragraph. The annotated bibliography is due at the beginning of class on **Thursday, February 6.**

5. Draft of Research Paper 25%

Once you have done a critical analysis of some of your sources, you will be ready to write a draft of the paper. Write a complete draft of the paper, with perfect spelling, grammar and punctuation. Include a properly formatted bibliography. I will grade the drafts and return them to you in time for you to make a final set of revisions. You will receive ample suggestions for revising and improving the paper for the final version.

The draft is due **by midnight on Wednesday, February 26.** Upload the paper to blackboard.

6. Presentation of Research 5%

The objective of this assignment is to share your research with your peers, what academics sometimes call “public dissemination of research.” We will determine the assessment rubric as a class. The presentations will take place during the last two days of class.

7. Final paper 35%

Upload the paper to Blackboard by **Wednesday, March 13 at noon.**

Class Outline

- T Jan 7 **Introductions**
- Th Jan 9 **What is the difference between bias and argument?**
Readings: Various articles online
- T Jan 14 **Is it the Spanish-American War or the War of 1898?**
What is the difference between history and historiography?
Read: Louis Pérez, *The War of 1898*, pp. 1-80.
- Wed Jan 15 **X-Hour will be held today**
Does our telling of history change history?
Read: Louis Pérez, *The War of 1898*, pp. 81-133.
- Th Jan 16 **Finding Sources Workshop**
Visit from Fran Oscadal, Reference Bibliographer
**Please bring your laptop to class*
- Center for Professional Development**
Kate Yee will attend second half of class to discuss career resources
- T Jan 21 **Why didn't Cuba become a democracy after independence?**
Read: Julia E. Sweig, *Cuba: What Everyone Needs to Know*, pp. 1-35
- Th Jan 23 **Making Arguments with Photography**
Class meets in the Bernstein Study Center today. We will have a workshop on the Dartmouth Collection of Max Baltermans' photographs of the Cuban Revolution.
- T Jan 28 **What is/was the revolution?**
Read: Julia E. Sweig, *Cuba: What Everyone Needs to Know*, pp. 36-103
- Th Jan 30 **Writing Workshop**
**Sample Annotated Bibliography entry due by the beginning of class today.*
- T Feb 4 **How revolutionary was the revolution?**
Watch "Portrait of Teresa" before class (digitized version online)
Read: TBA
- Th Feb 6 **US Foreign Policy Toward Cuba**
We will watch 40 Years War during class today (52 minutes)
Read: Torricelli and Helms-Burton Acts (online)
**Annotated bibliography due today*

- T Feb 11 **Why didn't the Castro government collapse after 1989?**
Read: Julia E. Sweig, pp. 126-206
- Th Feb 13 **Embargo/Blockade**
Read: NYT debate on the embargo
<http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2013/11/19/sanctions-successes-and-failures>
- T Feb 18 **The Economics of the Revolution**
Read: Articles online
- Th Feb 20 **What does freedom mean to Cubans?**
Read: Articles online
- T Feb 25 **What's happening now? What does the future hold?**
Read: Julia E. Sweig, *Cuba: What Everyone Needs to Know*, pp. 207-256.
- Th Feb 27 **Writing Workshop**
We will work on the drafts of your research papers in class today.
- T Mar 4 **Team teaching: Groups 1 and 2**
- Th Mar 6 **Team teaching: Groups 3 and 4**
- Th Mar 13 **Upload final paper to blackboard by noon 8am**

Class Policies

1. **The Honor Principle.** All Dartmouth students have agreed to conduct themselves in accordance with the Standards of Conduct in general and with the Academic Honor Principle in particular. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. If you plagiarize, you risk failing the class and having your case brought before the Committee on Standards. Read the code again, here: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~uja/honor/> We will discuss the ways in which the Honor Principle is relevant to the work you will do in class and I am more than happy to answer any questions you have about it.
2. **X-Hours.** I will use x-hours on an "as needed" basis, to catch up if we get behind in our coverage of course material, to schedule meetings with visitors on campus, or to make up class if I am out sick. If I schedule them, I will try to let you know a week in advance. I am generally available to meet with you during the x hour.
3. **Late assignments** (even an hour late) will be penalized one-third grade per day. This includes weekends. If you think you might have a problem getting an assignment in on time, contact me *before* the assignment is due.

4. **Using laptops and other electronic devices in class.** You may use your laptop to take notes during lectures, but not during discussions. You may not access email or the Internet during class.
5. **Blackboard web site.** This syllabus provides an overview of our schedule for the term, but the real structure of the course is the Blackboard web site. I use blackboard to post lecture outlines (*outlines*, i.e., not the full text), links that are relevant to material in class, announcements, copies of all handouts, regular feedback, and any changes to the schedule
6. **Learning Disabilities.** Students with disabilities enrolled in this course and who may need disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me before the end of the second week of the term. All discussions will remain confidential, although the Student Accessibility Services office may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation of any accommodation requested.
7. **Religious Observance.** Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term. If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with me before the end of the second week of the term to discuss appropriate accommodations.