Campesinos. Twentieth-Century Rural Latin America

Code: HIS 346V (38590), LAS 366 (39780)  Dr. Matthew Butler
Semester: Spring 2015  Office: Garrison 3.414
Time: MW 4:00-5:30 PM  Office hours: MW 3:00-4:00 PM
Venue: GAR 1.134  Phone: 512-475-7972
Prerequisite: upper division standing  Email: mbutler@mail.utexas.edu

Course description

This intensive writing course focuses on some of the main topics that have affected rural Latin American society in the later nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries, with a view to understanding the causes of some of the tensions and conflicts affecting Latin America today. Using selective national case studies from the Andes and Central and North America, the course will discuss the social and agrarian relationships linking landlords and peasants (campesinos); the role of the state and the impact of official ideologies and constructs embracing (or constraining) indigenous people (indigenismo, agrarismo, the ejido); the role of religion and the Catholic Church; the history of rural institutions, such as the hacienda, and Latin America’s slow transition to rural capitalism; and the success or failure of the land reforms enacted in countries such as Guatemala and Mexico. Our focus throughout will be on understanding the different ways in which Latin American peasants have been active and creative protagonists in, not merely passive witnesses to, the histories of the countries and countrysides in which they live. During the course, we will examine a selection of secondary readings, articles, and films. By the end of the course you will have read five books covering countries as diverse as Ecuador, Bolivia, Guatemala, and Mexico, and half a dozen separate articles.

As this is a small seminar with a Writing Flag, the course will follow an open seminar, as opposed to strict lecture, format: the emphasis throughout will fall on researching and crafting written assignments in consultation with the instructor and in dialogue with the group; there will also be elements of peer review, in which students will engage critically with the work of other members of the group. Students will be expected to participate actively in class through responses to readings or presentations. You are expected to come to class having read the assigned passages beforehand and to contribute actively to the discussion. Extra credit may be given for other participation (e.g. attending Latin American lectures outside class).

The University asks that syllabi for courses with Writing Flags carry the following statement:

“This course carries the Writing Flag. Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor to help you improve your writing. You will also have the opportunity to revise one or more assignments, and to read and discuss your peers’ work. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your written work.”
Writing Flag courses (www.utexas.edu/ugs/core/flags/guidelines/writing for details) have four main criteria, that we will follow here: they must (i) ensure that at least one third of the grade is for writing (ii) they must require students to produce regular and substantial written pieces; (iii) they must be structured around the principle of rewriting, so that at least one assignment is substantially revised and rewritten; and (iv) they must provide an opportunity for peer review, such as feedback on written work delivered in an oral presentation.

Set texts

All set texts have been ordered by the UT Co-Op and are also held in the Benson Latin American Collection. It is essential that you obtain/read copies and bring relevant texts/notes to class. Starred texts (*) are also available through the UT library catalog pages as Electronic Resources, not electronic reserves.

Friedrich, Paul. Agrarian revolt in a Mexican village (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1977)
Lyons, Barry. Remembering the hacienda: religion, authority, and social change in highland Ecuador (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006)*

Theoretical/classic readings on peasants (available on Canvas):

Foster, George. “Peasant society and the image of limited good,” American Anthropologist 67, no. 2 (1965): 293-315

Suggested survey and country-by-country background reading (Benson Collection):

(1) General surveys

86 [Also available in Leslie Bethell (ed.), *Latin American economy and society, 1870-1930* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998)]


(2) Ecuador


Thurner, Mark. “Peasant politics and Andean haciendas in the transition to capitalism: an ethnographic history,” *Latin American Research Review* 28, no. 3 41-82


Williams, Derek. “Popular liberalism and Indian servitude: the making and unmaking of Ecuador’s antilandlord state, 1845-1868,” *HAHR* 83, no. 4 (2003): 697-733


(3) Bolivia


Gotkowitz, Laura. “Revisiting the rural roots of the revolution” in Merilee Grindle and
Pilar Domingo (eds.), Proclaiming revolution: Bolivia in comparative perspective (London: ILAS, 2003), 164-82


Pearse, Andrew. “Peasant and revolution: the case of Bolivia, part I,” and “Peasant and revolution: the case of Bolivia, part II,” in Economy and Society 1, no. 3 (1972): 255-80, and 1, no. 4 (1972), 399-424, respectively


(4) Mexico


Eiss, Paul. In the name of el pueblo: place, community, and the politics of history in Yucatán (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010)


González y González, Luis. San José de Gracia: Mexican village in transition (Austin: University of Texas, 1974)


(5) *Guatemala*


*Novels of possible interest:*


Alegría, Ciro. *Broad and alien is the world* (*El mundo es ancho y ajeno* [Peruvian Andes])

Asturias, Miguel Angel. *Men of maize* (*Hombres de maíz* [Guatemala])

Hamsun, Knut. *The growth of the soil.* World’s greatest (Norwegian!) peasant novel?

Icaza, Jorge. *The villagers* (*Huasipungo* [Ecuador])

Rulfo, Juan. *The burning plain and other stories* (*El llano en llamas* [Mexico])

*Grading policy*

There is *no final exam* for this course. Instead, each student will complete *up to six short reading reviews*, which are spread across the semester; a *mid-term paper*, which is due
shortly before spring break in draft form (there will be no paper assigned in the preceeding week in order to help you) and in final form just after spring break; and a final paper, due towards the end of semester (again, there will be no writing in the preceeding weeks). In the final two weeks, students will deliver short presentations in which they present the findings of their final papers to the group and answer questions.

PROMPTS FOR ALL ASSIGNMENTS, INCLUDING GUIDANCE & DEADLINES, WILL BE POSTED ON CANVAS

1. Responses to reading assignments (6 x 1-2 pp. double-spaced papers @ 5% = 30%)

From week to week, these will usually take the form of single-question short essays, or quick responses to a series of questions, concerning the readings. These papers are to ensure critical reading and also to stimulate classroom discussion. Doing this involves a commitment as much from you (writing) as from me (grading).

NB: you are allowed one freebie reading review: that is, you may elect to omit one of the reviews with no penalty. In this case, I will simply duplicate the grade from the highest other review that you complete across the semester. You must notify me before the relevant deadline that you will be exercising this option.

2. Mid-term paper (6 pp. double-spaced, 20%)

The mid-term paper will focus on a topic related to Lyons, Remembering the hacienda. You will be asked to produce a draft, discuss your writing in conference with me, and revise the paper for final submission.

3. Final paper (10 pp. double-spaced, 35%)

For the final paper, you may choose from a variety of topics: you may, for example, compare aspects of the agrarian reforms in Mexico and Guatemala with another Latin American country not covered on the course (e.g. Chile, Nicaragua, Peru, Venezuela); or, if you prefer, you may research indigenista policy in a Latin American country (e.g. Mexico, Bolivia, Peru); or you carry out a more detailed investigation of a specific problem relating to rural society in Latin America of your choosing, provided this is done in consultation with me. More detailed instructions on finals will be given near the time.

4. Presentation/viva (15%)

The final 15% of the grade will be given for presenting the findings of the final paper and then leading a question and answer session (of some 15 mins. total). Again, more detailed instructions on the format for presentations will be given as the semester develops.

Grading scale

The grading scale used in this course reflects +/- variations and will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-92%</td>
<td>A-</td>
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</table>
87-89%  B+
83-86%  B
80-82%  B-
77-79%  C+
73-76%  C
70-72%  C-
67-69%  D+
63-66%  D
60-62%  D-
< 60%  F

Provisional course schedule

The course is roughly divided into four. In **Part One (Weeks 1-3)**, we will consider some established and newer approaches to peasantries and make brief historical overviews of specifically Latin American peasantries. In **Part Two (Weeks 4-8)** we will be focusing on the *hacienda*, hegemony, and peasant politics in an Andean setting (Ecuador). In **Part Three (Weeks 9-13)**, we will study peasant agency as seen in the agrarian revolutions and reforms in one Andean (Bolivia) and two Central/North American countries (Mexico, Guatemala).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Provisional Deadlines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Wed. 21 Jan.</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Syllabus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Wed. 28 Jan.</td>
<td>Rural Latin America after Independence</td>
<td><strong>Larson</strong>, <em>Trials of Nation Making</em>, 1-70</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Wed. 4 Feb.</td>
<td>Moral economists or just rationalists?</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Mon. 9 Feb.</td>
<td>Peasants &amp; liberalism (i) 19C. Ecuador</td>
<td><strong>Larson, Trials of Nation Making</strong>, 103-40</td>
<td>REVIEW 3</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Mon. 16 Feb.</td>
<td>The Latin American <em>hacienda</em>: Ecuador</td>
<td><strong>Lyons, Remembering the hacienda</strong>, 1-69</td>
<td>REVIEW 4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Wed. 18 Feb.</td>
<td>The Latin American <em>hacienda</em>: Ecuador</td>
<td><strong>Lyons, Remembering the hacienda</strong>, 71-163</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Mon. 23 Feb.</td>
<td>The Latin American <em>hacienda</em>: Ecuador</td>
<td><strong>Lyons, Remembering the hacienda</strong>, 167-215</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wed. 25 Feb.</td>
<td>The Latin American <em>hacienda</em>: Ecuador</td>
<td><strong>Lyons, Remembering the hacienda</strong>, 259-309</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Mon. 2 Mar.</td>
<td><strong>Film: El violín</strong> (Mexico, 2006)</td>
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<td>DRAFT OF MID-TERM</td>
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<td>Wed. 4 Mar.</td>
<td><em>El violín</em> (conclusion)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Mon. 9 Mar.</td>
<td>Individual student-instructor conferences</td>
<td><strong>Writing review of mid-term</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Wed. 11 Mar.</td>
<td>Individual student-instructor conferences</td>
<td><strong>Writing review of mid-term</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Mon. 16 — Fri. 20 Mar.</strong></td>
<td><strong>SPRING BREAK</strong></td>
<td><strong>NO CLASSES</strong></td>
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<td>Wed. 1 Apr.</td>
<td>Peasant revolution in indigenous Bolivia?</td>
<td><em>Gotkowitz, Revolution for our rights</em>, 233-90</td>
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<td>Review 5</td>
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<td>Wed. 8 Apr.</td>
<td>Agrarian revolution in 1920s-1930s Mexico</td>
<td><em>Friedrich, Agrarian Revolt</em>, 58-78</td>
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<td>Review 6</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Mon. 20 Apr.</td>
<td>Rural revolutionaries in 1940s Guatemala</td>
<td><em>Handy, Revolution in the countryside</em>, 1-110</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Wed. 22 Apr.</td>
<td>Rural revolutionaries in 1940s Guatemala</td>
<td><em>Handy, Revolution in the countryside</em>, 112-67</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Mon. 27 Apr.</td>
<td><strong>Class presentations</strong></td>
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<td>Wed. 29 Apr.</td>
<td><strong>Class presentations</strong></td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Mon. 4 May.</td>
<td><strong>Class presentations</strong></td>
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<td>Wed. 6 May</td>
<td><strong>Class presentations &amp; course close</strong></td>
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**Important note about classroom policies**

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**Attendance policy.** You are allowed up to three unexcused absences. Each additional unexcused absence will carry a 5% penalty applied to the final course grade. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility at the end of class to ensure that you are marked as “present” for that day. For medical absences to be excused, a doctor’s statement/evidence is usually required. If you miss class, consult with me about catch-up procedures/materials for that day.

**Late work.** Please hand in completed assignments on time. “On time” means at the start of class on the due day. “Late” means work that is received, without demonstrably good cause, any time after the first 15 minutes or so of the specified class.

For work handed in late on the same day that it is due, there will be a penalty of one letter grade. This penalty will increase by one letter grade per day up to a maximum of two additional days (including weekends). Work that is three or more days late will be graded zero and not read. Please do not send work by email attachment, except by prior agreement.

My commitment to you is that I will normally undertake to return all written papers, graded, in seven days.

**Extensions** will be granted only by prior agreement: they are exceptional, not guaranteed. Extensions can only be granted before work is due: no *ex post facto* extensions.

**Email.** I will try to answer reasonable email queries within a couple of days. Please check your email and the course page regularly for course announcements.

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**Other syllabus information required by the Provost’s Office:**

**Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty drafted by Student Judicial Services (SJS)**

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information please visit the Student Judicial Services website: [http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs).

**University of Texas Honor Code**

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

**Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students**

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, you are responsible for reading your email for university and course-related information and announcements. You are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to your e-mail address. You should check your e-mail regularly and frequently—at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-
critical. You can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating your e-mail address at http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php.

Documented Disability Statement
If you require special accommodations, you must obtain a letter that documents your disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to me at the beginning of the semester so we can discuss the accommodations you need. No later than five business days before an exam, you should remind me of any testing accommodations you will need. For more information, visit http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/.

Religious Holidays
By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)
If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual’s behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal.

Emergency Evacuation Policy
Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you’re given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.