

Central American Revolutions (LCS 01:595:391 / History 01:508:366)

Instructor: Aldo Lauria

Full Syllabus:

<http://www.sas.rutgers.edu/virtual/lhcs/lauria/centralamrevols/centralamrevols.htm>

This course has three goals. First, we will briefly examine the history of Central America since the eighteenth century and basic concepts in the study of revolt and revolution. Second, we will study the principal themes that have shaped the history of Central America since the early twentieth century, especially those associated with the roots of the repressive states that took shape between the 1930s and 1960s and entered into crisis in the 1970s. Finally, we will study the history of the revolutionary processes of Guatemala, Nicaragua, and El Salvador between the late 1970s and the early 1990s.

The revolutionary movements and civil wars that shook Central America in the 1980s defined the decade and led the U.S. to return to massive direct military and covert intervention in the region. Framed by some as a final battleground of the so-called cold war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, Central America scholars prefer to emphasize the complexity of internal social and political forces and the U.S.'s traditional desire to control anticapitalist and antiauthoritarian movements in its "back yard." This course will allow students to examine the historical formation of three distinct militarized and antidemocratic states, the complex class, regional, and racial tensions that constituted Central American societies, and the movements that challenged state, class, and other hierarchies.

Course Learning Goals

A complete description of Department Learning Goals and Major/Minor requirements can be found on the LCS website: <http://latcar.rutgers.edu/>

Required Reading*

J. Gould and A. Lauria Santiago. *To Rise in Darkness*.
T. Percy. *The History of Central America*.
G. Grandin. *The Last Colonial Massacre*.

Consult Rutgers Barnes & Noble for current books for the course. Additional articles and resources are available through the course Sakai site.

Evaluation*

Class Participation and Presentation	= 20%
Weekly Discussion Papers	= 15%
Three Short Papers (5-6 pages)	= 45%
Final Exam	= 20%

*This synopsis is intended for informative purposes only; it is provisional and subject to change before the beginning of the semester.