This course is intended to offer a survey of the history of a complex and vast region through two centuries. In order to balance the specificity of particular histories and larger processes common to the region, each unit will start with a general presentation of the main questions and will be followed by lectures devoted to single countries, regions, or themes.

Readings, lectures and discussions will center on politics, society and culture. We will look closely at the formation of class, ethnic and gender identities, the struggle around state formation and the increasing links between Latin America and other regions of the world. We will stress the local dimension of these processes: the specific actors, institutions and experiences that shaped the diversity and commonalities of Latin American societies. The assignments, discussion sections and lectures are intended to introduce students to the key conceptual problems and the most innovative historical research on the region and to encourage their own critical reading of Latin American history.

The course’s web page will expand and correct this hand out. For announcements, updates to this syllabus, assignments instructions, expanded bibliography and instructions to find the readings, meeting dates, on-line discussions and additional information you must log in to https://courseworks.columbia.edu. Consult it periodically.

**Grading:**

The course will be graded through two reviews on books and films (40%), one mid-term and one final exam (40%), and participation in class and in the discussion sections (20%).

Reviews are due in dates shown below. They should be of five pages in length and engage critically with the main ideas in the books and the movies. Extensions cannot be granted. You must deliver your papers in person to your teaching assistant at the end of class or during his or her office hours. They will not accept papers sent as email messages or attachments.

The exams will be based on the lectures and the required readings. You must register in a section when you register in the class. Attendance is required in both sections and lectures.

**Bibliography**

You are responsible for obtaining the readings. The books and articles listed below are in reserve or available online. Some of them can be purchased in Book Culture (536 West 112th Street).

The general readings are intended to reinforce knowledge on topics covered by lectures and to help in preparation for the exams.

**Required readings:**
Papers:

First paper, due February 19:

Second paper, due April 14:
Guevara, *Guerrilla warfare*; Guevara, *The Motorcycle Diaries*. Use these books to comment critically on Steven Soderbergh, “Che.”

Required readings:

Unit I, January 20-February 3: Colonial burden, the movements of independence and the diversification of polities.
Chasteen, chapter 3; *Keen’s*, chapter 11.

Unit II, February 5-February 12: The post-independence anarchy and the problems of nation-building
Chasteen, chapter 4; *Keen’s*, chapter 12.

Unit III, February 17-February 26: New colonial conditions. Authoritarian stabilization and popular resistance
Chasteen, chapter 5; *Keen’s*, chapter 13.

Midterm: March 3

Unit IV, March 5-March 12: Modern cities, cultures, and identities
Chasteen, chapter 6; *Keen’s*, chapter 14.

Unit V, March 24-March 31: Mass politics and populism
Chasteen, chapter 7; *Keen’s*, chapter 15.

Unit VI, April-April 14: Revolution and utopias
Chasteen, chapter 8; *Keen’s*, chapter 16; chapter 17, text 8

Unit VII, April 16-April 23: Repression and neoliberalism
Chasteen, chapter 9; *Keen’s*, chapter 16, texts 3, 4, 5; chapter 17, text 6, 7

Unit VIII, April 28-May 3: Contemporary transitions, new problems of law and order
Chasteen, chapter 10; *Keen’s*, chapter 16, texts 6, 7; chapter 17, text 9.
General readings and required books:


