

**U.S.-Cuba Relations**  
**HIST 315/515 • Fall 2018**  
**University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point**  
**Mondays, 4:00 to 6:30 pm, 224 CCC**

Instructor:	Dr. Anju Reejhsinghani	Office Hours:	Mondays, 11:00-12:30 p.m.
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**Course Description**

This course is designed to introduce students to the long and complicated (some would say tortured) relationship between Cuba and the United States. No previous training in U.S., Cuban, or Latin American history is required.

We begin with 19th-century filibustering expeditions and the rise of a Cuban expatriate community, then move to debates over U.S. annexation of Cuba before and after the Spanish-Cuban-American War. Subsequently, we explore various facets of the highly unequal U.S.-Cuba relationship over the first six decades of the 20th century. With the rise of a revolutionary Cuban government in 1959, our focus shifts to interrogating the problematic if at times collaborative relationship between the U.S. and Cuba. We end by considering the process of “normalization” ushered in by Presidents Obama and Raúl Castro in December 2014 and asking where U.S.-Cuba relations stand today.

**Goals and Objectives**

This course has several aims, including but not limited to the following:

- (1) To obtain a general understanding of U.S.-Cuba relations from the 19th century onwards using a variety of perspectives, from political to economic to cultural;
- (2) To evaluate U.S. reactions to domestic changes in Cuba, especially the rise of a revolutionary government, and to explore the fractious relationship between the countries ever since; and
- (3) To interpret primary and secondary sources in order to gain a deeper awareness of the trajectory of U.S.-Cuba relations and to fashion coherent, well-supported arguments about the historical significance of various events and historical trends.

**Grading**

Grading in this course is based on the following:

Attendance/Participation	20%
Map Quiz of Cuba	5%
Pre-1959 Analysis	15%
Pop Culture Project	15%
Final Paper Prospectus and Bibliography	15%
Final Paper Consultation	5%
Final Paper	25%

There are no grade curves in this class. Course grades are determined based on the above criteria and are determined according to the following point system:

92.5 points and above	A	72.5 to 76.4 points	C
89.5 to 92.4 points	A-	69.5 to 72.4 points	C-
86.5 to 89.4 points	B+	66.5 to 69.4 points	D+
82.5 to 86.4 points	B	59.5 to 66.4 points	D
79.5 to 82.4 points	B-	59.4 points and below	F
76.5 to 79.4 points	C+		

### **Required Texts**

Texts for purchase (available at the UWSP University Store)

- Gustavo Pérez Firmat. *The Havana Habit*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010.
- T.J. English. *Havana Nocturne: How the Mob Owned Cuba... and Then Lost It to the Revolution*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007.
- William M. LeoGrande and Peter Kornbluh. *Back Channel to Cuba: The Hidden History of Negotiations between Washington and Havana*. Updated paperback edition with a new epilogue. 2015.

Articles/Documents/Book Chapters (on D2L)

- Rodrigo Lazo. *Writing to Cuba: Filibustering and Cuban Exiles in the United States*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005. Chapter 2: “Annexation and Independence: Newspaper Wars and Transnational Cuba,” pp. 63-98.
- Lars Schoultz. *Beneath the United States: A History of U.S. Policy toward Latin America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998. Chapter 8: “Establishing an Empire: Cuba and the War with Spain,” pp. 125-151.
- Kristin L. Hoganson. *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998. Chapter 2: “Cuba and the Restoration of American Chivalry,” pp. 43-67.
- Aviva Chomsky, Barry Carr, and Pamela María Smorkaloff, eds. *A Cuba Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003. Excerpts.
- Stephen G. Rabe. *The Killing Zone: The U.S. Wages Cold War in Latin America*. Second edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. Chapter 2: “The Kennan Corollary,” pp. 21-35.
- Additional journalistic readings on the current state of U.S.-Cuba relations will be posted to D2L one week prior to our December 10 class.

## Required Films

- *Week-End in Havana*. Directed by Walter Lang. 1941. 80 min.
- *Bay of Pigs Declassified*. A&E Television Networks. 2000. 44 min.
- *Elián: An Update on the Story of Elián González*. Directed by Tim Golden and Ross McDonnell. 2017. 111 min.

(Additional film screenings may be scheduled as circumstances permit.)

## Course Requirements (Attendance, Map Quiz, Pre-1959 Analysis, Pop Culture Project)

**Attendance/Participation.** Active class discussion is an integral part of this course, as well as an important factor in your final course grade. Should you need to arrive late or leave early, please inform me ahead of time. Classes usually feature a brief break period. Attendance/participation comprises 20% of your course grade.

**Map Quiz.** The map quiz, held at the start of class on September 24, tests students' knowledge of Cuba's provinces and bodies of water. Two study maps and a list of topics are on D2L. Students have 10 minutes to match 10 given geographical names to letters on a blank map. The map quiz is worth 5% of your course grade.

**Pre-1959 Analysis.** This written assignment of 1,000 to 1,250 words (approximately 4 to 5 double-spaced pages) requires you to analyze U.S.-Cuba relations before the rise of a Cuban revolutionary government in 1959. The prompt will be distributed one week before the October 29 deadline. This assignment comprises 15% of the overall course grade.

**Pop Culture Project.** This project involves analyzing a work of cultural production (film scene, TV episode, song, poster, advertisement, etc.) that illuminates popular conceptions about Cuba in the United States. Each student is asked to give an oral presentation on their topic (no more than 5 minutes in length) that includes a PowerPoint slideshow with related visuals. Pop Culture Projects take up the entirety of class on November 5 and will comprise 15% of the course grade.

## Course Requirements (Final Paper)

The culmination of the course is an original final research paper that you will write in consultation with the professor. There are several steps in the process:

**Topic.** Your final paper is on a topic of your choice related to U.S.-Cuba relations. You may choose from a list of suggested topics provided to the class or decide on your own. Either way, submit it to me in paragraph form by November 5 for detailed feedback (no grades are given).

**Prospectus and Bibliography.** The final paper prospectus (1-2 pages of narrative) plus accompanying bibliography is due November 19 and is worth 15% of your course grade.

**Consultations.** You will have one 10-minute in-person consultation with Prof. Reejhsinghani on your progress toward completing your final paper. These are held during our December 3 class period in lieu of class. Your participation in this consultation is worth 5% of your course grade.

**Paper.** Your final paper should be between 2,250-2,500 words (approximately 9 to 10 double-spaced pages), not including title, bibliography, and citations. The final paper is due during our scheduled final exam meeting time on December 18 and makes up 25% of your course grade.

### **Reading, Make-Ups and Extensions, Extra Credit, and Accommodations**

**Reading.** You are expected to finish all reading assignments by the start of the class for which they have been assigned, unless otherwise indicated.

**Make-Ups and Extensions.** Should there be significant reasons outside of your control (e.g., family or personal health crisis, bereavement, deployment) that prevent you from coming to class or completing an assignment, contact me immediately so we can document and address your situation. Oversleeping, forgetting a deadline or daylight savings, vacation plans, or loss of a pet other than a documented service animal do not qualify as legitimate reasons for excused absences or extensions. Excused absences are restricted to one per student barring the involvement of the Office of the Dean of Students and/or the completion of additional coursework.

**Extra Credit.** A student may complete up to two extra-credit opportunities per semester, each of which will replace one-half of one unexcused class absence. Those with perfect or near-perfect attendance may use extra credit to earn attendance grades above 100 (maxing out at 105 points). Extra credit does not replace any other missed work and must be completed by December 14.

**Accommodations.** UWSP is committed to providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities and temporary impairments. If you have a disability or acquire a condition during the semester where you need assistance, please contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center on the sixth floor of Albertson Hall (the library) as soon as possible. DATC can be reached at 715-346-3365 or [DATC@uwsp.edu](mailto:DATC@uwsp.edu).

### **Policy on Electronic Devices and Copyright Notice**

You are not permitted to use laptops, tablet computers, smart phones or other cellular phones, MP3 players, smart watches, video and/or audio recorders, cameras, headphones, or any other electronic devices and accessories during our class meetings, whether for personal reasons or as an aid to your note taking. (Such devices may be brought to the classroom but must be stored among your personal items for the duration of the class period. You may use electronic devices during our break periods, which are usually scheduled for the halfway point of each class except on abbreviated class days, but you must store them once class resumes.)

As an enrolled student in this class, you may download and/or utilize the instructor's course materials for your own personal academic purposes outside of class time, although doing so does not in any way infringe upon the instructor's copyright protections. You are not permitted to video record, audio record, photograph, digitize, upload to another web site, or otherwise reproduce or distribute any images, data, and other course materials – including syllabus, lecture outlines, reading lists, timelines, short paper prompts, quiz prompts, and handouts – produced by the instructor.

This electronic device and copyright policy will be strictly enforced. Students who violate this policy will be asked to leave class. Violators may also be subject to Academic Misconduct charges (see below). Exceptions may be made for students with prior written documentation of a disability from UWSP Disability Services and with the instructor's written consent.

### **Student Academic Misconduct**

Plagiarism, cheating, collaborating with others or submitting others' work as your own, submitting previously graded work as original work, and other forms of student academic misconduct will not be tolerated in this class. They are a mark of disrespect to one's peers, instructor, university, and oneself. Students who violate University policy on this matter will be subject to disciplinary penalties, including (but not limited to) the possibility of failing this course.

Chapter 14 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code, "Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures" (<http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Documents/CommunityRights.pdf#page=11>), provides more information on what types of activities are considered "academic misconduct" and what the disciplinary sanctions are for students who engage in them.

### **Course Drops and Withdrawals**

Students wishing to "clear drop" this course may do so until the end of the business day on Thursday, September 13. After that, students withdrawing from this course no later than Friday, November 9, will receive a "W" on their transcripts. Drops after that deadline are generally not permitted. See <http://www.uwsp.edu/regrec/Pages/AddDropSchedule.aspx> for information.

### **Emergency Response**

To familiarize yourself with UWSP response scenarios in the case of an emergency, consult the university's Emergency Procedures at <http://www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Pages/em/procedures>.

### **Use of Email for Official Correspondence to Students**

Email is an official mode of university correspondence; you are therefore responsible for reading your email for university- and course-related information and announcements. You are responsible for keeping the university informed about changes to your email address. Please check your email regularly to stay current with course-related communications, some of which may be time-critical.

### **Syllabus**

This syllabus is subject to change (though major change is unlikely). Should there be a modification of topic, film or reading assignment, deadline, or other item, I shall strive to give you adequate notice.

## Course Schedule

There is no class meeting during Week 1 of the semester due to the Labor Day holiday.

### Week 2 (September 10): Introduction

Topic: "Ties of Singular Intimacy": Cuba and the United States

Reading: None

### Week 3 (September 17): Spanish Colonialism

Topic: Annexationism, Nationalism, and Exile in the 19th Century

Reading: Pérez Firmat, *The Havana Habit*, Introduction and Chapter 1 to p. 34  
Lazo, *Writing to Cuba*, Chapter 2 (on D2L)

### Week 4 (September 24): Independence, Yes – Freedom, No?

Topic: Causes of the Spanish-Cuban-American War

Reading: Schoultz, *Beneath the United States*, Chapter 8 (on D2L)  
Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*, Chapter 2 (on D2L)

Assignment: Cuba Map Quiz (at the start of class today)

### Week 5 (October 1): Cuba in the U.S. Imagination

**No in-person class today.** Instead, you are expected to complete the reading and screen the film below. We will be discussing them in class next week.

Reading: Pérez Firmat, *The Havana Habit*, Chapter 1, pp. 34-52, and Chapters 2-3  
Chomsky, et. al., *A Cuba Reader*, excerpts (on D2L)

Screen (your device): *Week-End in Havana*

### Week 6 (October 8): From Occupier to Good Neighbor

Topic: The U.S. in Cuba, 1898-1952

Reading: Pérez Firmat, *The Havana Habit*, Chapters 4-6

### Week 7 (October 15): Good Neighbor No More

Topic: Understanding the Cold War Context

Reading: Pérez Firmat, *The Havana Habit*, Chapters 7-8 and Epilogue  
Rabe, *The Killing Zone*, Chapter 2 (on D2L)

### **Week 8 (October 22): Did the Mob Really Own Cuba?**

Topic: Organized Crime in the U.S. and Cuba  
Reading: English, *Havana Nocturne*, Introduction and Part I (Chapters 1-7)

### **Week 9 (October 29): The Cuban Revolution**

Topic: The Rise and Fall of Batista, 1952-1958  
Reading: English, *Havana Nocturne*, Part II (Chapters 8-14) and Epilogue  
Assignment: Pre-1959 Analysis due by the start of class today

### **Week 10 (November 5): Pop Culture Projects**

Since the entire period is devoted to the Pop Culture Projects, you will not be asked to discuss today's reading until next week's class.

Reading: LeoGrande/Kornbluh, *Back Channel to Cuba*, Introduction and Chapters 1-2  
Assignments: Pop Culture Projects presented in class today  
Final paper topics due by the end of the day today

### **Week 11 (November 12): Cuba, the Soviet Union, and World Revolution**

Topic: U.S. Cuba Policy from Eisenhower to Carter, 1959-1981  
Reading: LeoGrande/Kornbluh, *Back Channel to Cuba*, Chapters 3-5  
Screen (in class): *Bay of Pigs Declassified*

### **Week 12 (November 19): Doubling Down on Regime Change**

Topic: Cuba in the Crosshairs: From Reagan to Clinton, 1981-2001  
Reading: LeoGrande/Kornbluh, *Back Channel to Cuba*, Chapters 6-7  
Assignment: Final paper prospectus and bibliography due by the start of class today

### **Week 13 (November 26): Cuban Americans and the Election of George W. Bush**

Topic: The Saga of Elián González  
Reading: LeoGrande/Kornbluh, *Back Channel to Cuba*, Chapter 8  
Screen (in class): *Elián: An Update on the Story of Elián González*

### Week 14 (December 3): Final Paper Consultations

We will have final paper consultations in lieu of class today in my office, 457 CCC, during your assigned 10-minute period. There are no reading assignments other than the outside research you are expected to do for your final paper.

### Week 15 (December 10): Are We in a New Cold War?

Topic: From Obama to Trump, Raúl to Díaz-Canel: U.S.-Cuba Relations Today

Reading: LeoGrande/Kornbluh, *Back Channel to Cuba*, Chapters 9-10 and Epilogue  
Additional journalistic readings to be posted to D2L

Assignment: Extra-credit opportunities must be completed by the end of the day today

**FINAL PAPERS** are due by the end of our regularly scheduled final exam meeting time (Tuesday, December 18, 2018, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.) To avoid late penalties, you will need to upload your final paper to the relevant D2L drop box by 7:00 p.m. CST on Tuesday, December 18, 2018.