

**SOCIAL SCIENCE 2460 9.0**  
**CONTEMPORARY LATIN AMERICA**

**RESEARCH ESSAY & PROGRESS REPORT**  
**Winter 2007**

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Due Date: February 8 (progress report); March 15 (research essay)  
Weight: 10% (progress report); 15% (research essay)  
Length: 1,500 words (progress report); 2,500-3,000 words (research essay)

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**TOPIC:**

Course materials examined recent collective efforts to place issues of gender, racial, and ethnic equality on the national agenda of many countries in the region. Pick one group or movement addressing issues of gender, race, and/or ethnicity in a Latin American country of your choice to answer the following question: *to what degree was the movement successful in bringing about positive long-lasting change?*

Your essay should describe the context (country, social conditions affecting the group in question, traditional roles and identities that were challenged, etc.) and should discuss the movement's origins, subsequent development; demands, and the strategies used to accomplish its goals. Please note that you cannot choose movements covered in class readings, (ie. Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, Zapatistas, etc.).

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

This assignment gives you an opportunity to integrate relevant course themes into a research project and is especially designed to help you develop research and writing skills. The assignment is divided up into two steps in order to assist you through the various stages of preparing the project and to help you develop time management skills.

**STEP 1: PROGRESS REPORT (PR)**

The purpose of the PR is to assist students to formulate and organize their ideas, and to develop a tentative argument. Students should devote a significant amount of time and energy in preparing the progress report. In this stage students must conduct research in order to identify (and read!) the main sources that will be used for the essay.

The PR must include the following:

**Subject:** Identify the topic and offer a tentative title

**Bibliography:** List EIGHT scholarly sources that *directly* relate to your topic and that are NOT already included as course readings. Include books, book chapters, and articles from academic journals (do not use newspaper or magazine articles) and indicate the library call numbers for each source. If you are listing internet sources, they must come from academic journals. Please note that in assessing your PR we will take into account the direct relevance of each source for the essay topic. Please note that in addition to the eight required academic sources students will be allowed to consult other journalistic or internet sources provided that the main ideas and data used in the assignment are drawn primarily from academic sources.

**Discussion of the THREE most important academic sources in the bibliography:** Indicate the following for each of these three sources: why is this source useful/relevant for your essay? What is

the main argument? What kind of data and/or ideas will you be using from this source? You should write around 250 words for each source.

**Tentative Thesis Statement:** Based on your research, indicate in a succinct statement the argument that you will develop in the essay. The thesis statement must be clearly written and must indicate why you are making the particular argument. It must also directly address the essay question: *to what degree was the movement successful in bringing about positive long-lasting change?*

**Outline:** Provide a preliminary structure of the essay indicating the various sections that you will require in order to develop your argument. Indicate the main points to be developed within each section, and any supporting ideas/data that you will use. This section should be presented in point form but it must contain enough detail to show that you have actually read all sources in your bibliography.

**Questions/Problems:** Indicate whether you have any additional questions about the topic, issues that you cannot yet resolve, additional materials that you might need, additional help that you might require in order to develop your ideas.

## STEP 2: RESEARCH ESSAY (RE)

The research essay (RE) will bring together the students' work in preparation of the PR, the feedback provided by the Tutorial Leader, and additional research (if recommended in the dieback).

The essay will be expected to:

- ◆ be analytical and to be organized around a clear thesis statement addressing the essay question.
- ◆ provide the necessary background to help the reader situate the case study and use relevant concepts and approaches introduced in class.
- ◆ be clearly organized, containing an introduction, a thesis statement (**in bold**), a main body, and a concluding paragraph. Each paragraph must be clearly structured around a topic sentence (**in bold**). Failure to comply with this requirement will result in a 5 point penalty deduction.
- ◆ be clearly documented and use proper academic references for direct quotations or for sources you paraphrased. Consult the *MLA Handbook* or Kate Turabian *Manual for Writers* for proper referencing. You must include a proper bibliography.
- ◆ attach the **original** copy of your progress report with the comments from the tutorial leader to the essay. ***Essays without the progress report will not be graded.***

Students may be asked to attend an interview with the course director and tutorial leader to discuss their assignments.

## PENALTIES FOR LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

Papers submitted late will receive a penalty deduction of **2 points** per day late. No essays will be accepted after one week (no exceptions). Penalties may be waived under exceptional circumstances by contacting the TA one week before the due date. Late assignments must be brought during office hours to 216 Founders College and must be dated and stamped by the secretary. Essays must be submitted to the TA in person (essays delivered under the office door, through fax machine or email will **NOT** be accepted). Students must keep a copy of the final version of their essay so that in the event that it is misplaced they can provide a copy on short notice.