State Terror, Human Rights, and the Politics of Memory in Latin America

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:
This course examines the state terror policies of the Argentine and Chilean military regimes in the 1970s and 1980s, the struggle for human rights in both countries, the transition to civilian government and the legacies of repression, and the ensuing—and ongoing—debates over impunity, justice, and historical memory.

Note: Students who have taken HIST 459D may not take this course for further credit.

PREREQUISITES: HIST 261 or HIST 262, six additional credits of lower-level history, and one upper-level history or LAS course.

SYNONYMOS COURSE(S):
(a) Replaces: History 459D
(b) Cross-listed with:
(c) Cannot take:

TOTAL HOURS PER TERM: 60
STRUCTURE OF HOURS:
Lectures: 5 Hrs
Seminar: 55 Hrs
Laboratory: Hrs
Field experience: Hrs
Student directed learning: Hrs
Other (specify): Hrs

WILL TRANSFER CREDIT BE REQUESTED? (lower-level courses only) ☐ Yes ☐ No
WILL TRANSFER CREDIT BE REQUESTED? (upper-level requested by department) ☐ Yes ☒ No
TRANSFER CREDIT EXISTS IN BCCAT TRANSFER GUIDE: ☐ Yes ☐ No

WILL TRANSFER CREDIT BE REQUESTED? (lower-level courses only) ☐ Yes ☐ No
WILL TRANSFER CREDIT BE REQUESTED? (upper-level requested by department) ☐ Yes ☒ No
TRANSFER CREDIT EXISTS IN BCCAT TRANSFER GUIDE: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Course designer(s): Dr. Geoffrey Spurling
Department Head: Robin Anderson
Date approved: September 8, 2009
Supporting area consultation (Pre-UPAC) Date of meeting: September 25, 2009
Curriculum Committee chair: Date approved: October 16, 2009
Dean/Associate VP: Dr. Jacqueline Nolte
Date approved: October 30, 2009
Undergraduate Program Advisory Committee (UPAC) approval Date of meeting: November 27, 2009
LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

• define and interpret the major factors that led to state terrorism in Latin America and identify the key elements of the military’s ideology
• assess the complex impact and legacies of state terror
• evaluate the historical inter-relationship between state terrorism and the development of international human rights
• analyze the transition from military to civilian rule and the ensuing struggles over impunity and justice
• define and analyze the various forms of historical memory
• clearly communicate their ideas, both in writing and in class discussions.
• critically examine primary and secondary sources

METHODS: (Guest lecturers, presentations, online instruction, field trips, etc.)

The course will run as a seminar, with the occasional short lecture to provide the historical context when necessary. Student presentations and weekly discussions will focus on the analysis of the required readings—a range of primary and secondary sources—and on the issues that they raise. Audio-visual materials, including music and a number of films, will be incorporated into the weekly seminars.

METHODS OF OBTAINING PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT RECOGNITION (PLAR):

☒ Examination(s) ☐ Portfolio assessment ☐ Interview(s)
☐ Other (specify):
☐ PLAR cannot be awarded for this course for the following reason(s): 

TEXTBOOKS, REFERENCES, MATERIALS:

[Textbook selection varies by instructor. An example of texts for this course might be:]


History 460 Coursepack, with selections from the following:


History 460 Coursepack, with selections from the following:

SUPPLIES / MATERIALS:
N/A

STUDENT EVALUATION:

[An example of student evaluation for this course might be:]

Final exam 25%
Short paper—Analysis of *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number* and/or *Confessions of an Argentine Dirty Warrior* 25%
Research paper 35%
Participation in seminar discussions and student presentations 15%

COURSE CONTENT:

[Course content varies by instructor. An example of course content might be:]

Week 1  Introduction to the course
Week 2  International Human Rights / Military Rule, National Security Doctrine, Counterinsurgency, and State Terrorism in Latin America / The Argentine Historical Context
Week 3  The Proceso and the Dirty War / Ideology, Terror, Fear, and Collaboration
Week 4  The Disappeared / The Struggle for Human Rights / The Mothers of Plaza de Mayo
Week 5  Censorship, Corruption, Memory, and History
Week 6  Perpetrators and Victims
Week 7  Impunity, Justice, Human Rights, and the Politics of Memory
Week 8  The Chilean Historical Context / Chile Under Allende and the Unidad Popular / The Military Coup, September 11, 1973 / Historical Perspectives on Memory / “Memory as Salvation”
Week 9  The Pinochet Dictatorship and State Terror / National and International Human Rights Organizations / “Memory as Rupture,” and “Memory as Persecution and Awakening”
Week 10  The Chilean New Song Movement / Confronting the Dictatorship and Exile with Music and Humour / “Memory as a Closed Box”
Week 11  Impunity, Justice, and the Legacies of the Past
Week 12  Justice, The Ending of Impunity, and International Human Rights / “Emblematic Memory,” History, and Politics
Week 13  Repression, Human Rights, and the Politics of Memory in Argentina and Chile / Discussion of Research Papers / Course Overview