

21H.802
Spring 2005

ORAL REPORT GUIDELINES

Oral reports are due in class on April 4th and April 11th. You and a classmate must choose a topic by March 14th, the last class meeting before Spring Break. Feel free to propose topics to me before then; I can help you narrow your interest to a manageable size. If you do not have a topic and a co-presenter by then, I will place you in teams and assign topics before you leave for Spring Break. At our class meeting on March 28, we will assign report times for the next two class sessions. I have listed potential topics at the bottom of these guidelines, but you are also free to pursue your own interests. The topic should be an issue of contemporary relevance in one or more Latin American countries, and it should have a readily traceable history that goes back at least to the start of the 1990s. Following are guidelines for the report:

- 1) You must consult at least four sources for your report, and at least two of the sources must be print materials. (i.e., your research should be conducted both online and in the library.)
- 2) The report should be approximately 20 minutes long, leaving us 10 minutes for questions after each report.
- 3) Each group should prepare an outline of the presentation, with a bibliography at the end. Distribute a copy to each class member and to me before the presentation. You may also wish to prepare a powerpoint presentation or a web site to go with your presentation. I will post your outline, and any other digital materials you prepare, on the stellar web site after the presentations for the entire class to consult.
- 4) When you deliver the report, speak loudly and clearly. You may consult your outline, but do not read a text you have prepared ahead of time. All presenters should speak at some point during the presentation, but it is up to you to divide the material between you for presentation.
- 5) The report should be divided into two sections: a summary of the issue's history, and a statement about the current status and future prospects for your topic. (For example, if you choose to report on the Fox presidency in Mexico, you will want to explain the last two elections before that of 2000 that brought the PAN to power, then evaluate Fox's first year in office, and his prospects for the remainder of his presidency. I will provide some initial bibliography and research guidance. Skidmore and Smith will provide updates, but you may also wish to consult two important sites for Latin American research: the Latin American Network Information Center at the University of Texas ([LANIC](#)) and [Internet Resources for Latin America](#). You may also search the sites of newspapers such as the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, and major Latin American newspapers (if you

read Spanish or Portuguese). The [MIT Libraries website](#) also has links to useful resources.

Grading: The grade for the oral report will be based primarily on its content, with some attention paid to the style of the delivery. (i.e., did the presenters speak clearly, was the outline helpful, etc.) I will grade the group presentation jointly, rather than individually, meaning that the members of each group will receive the same grade based on the overall quality of the report, rather than differing grades based on individual efforts.

Possible Topics:

- Liberation Theology in Latin America since 1970
- Protestant Evangelism in Latin America since 1970
- African Syncretist Religious movements (Santeria, Candomble, Umbanda, etc.)
- Any of the countries of Central America in the 1980s and 1990s
- Venezuelan Politics in the era of Hugo Chavez
- Challenges to the Story of Rigoberta Menchú
- The Politics of Soccer in Latin America
- Carnival and Tourism in Brazil
- The Woes of Haiti
- The Shining Path Guerilla Movement in Peru
- The *pepinadores* of Mexico City
- Drug production and trafficking in a single Latin American country
- *Maquiladoras* and the Global Economy
- Ecology and State Policy in any Latin American Country
- Mexican politics since 1968