Presbyterian College/University of Havana
Semester in Cuba Program

*History, Politics, and Society of Cuba*

**Course Description.** The course will focus on Cuba as a particular case of colonial and neocolonial domination and as a particular manifestation of Third World national liberation movements that seek transformation of structures of colonial and neocolonial domination. The course includes an experiential component of 40 hours.

**Course Themes**

- The indigenous culture

- Colonial and neocolonial domination in Cuba, 1511 to 1959
  - Gold and indigenous slavery
  - Sugar and African slavery
  - Tobacco, the role of middle class farmers, and the manufacture of tobacco products
  - Coffee and slavery
  - The possibilities for autonomous economic development established by tobacco and by the city of Havana as a port city
  - The deepening of the peripheral role through the expansion of sugar production during the 19th century
  - U.S. intervention, 1898-1902
  - Structures of economic, political, and cultural domination during the neocolonial republic, 1902-1959

- The struggle for national liberation in Cuba, 1868-1958
  - The emergence of Cuban identity and nationality, 1790-1830
  - The First War of Independence and its contradictions, 1868-78
  - The emergence of a popular revolutionary movement, 1878-95
    - The life and thought of José Martí (1853-1895)
    - The vision of a new Cuban society, unifying diverse ethnic groups and classes
    - The vision of an alternative role in the world economy for Cuba and for Latin America
  - The Second War of Independence, 1895-98
  - The renewal of the revolutionary movement in the 1920s and 1930s
  - The revolutionary wave of the 1950s, culminating in the triumph of the revolution

- The revolutionary reconstruction of Cuban society, 1959 to the present
  - Alternative perspectives and methods in education, health, and sport, and their gains
  - The redefinition of the role of the mass media and of journalism in society
The development of an alternative political process with structures of mass participation
- The Special Period: Challenges and gains
- The Battle of Ideas and the role of Cuba in current global movements

- The Cuban counterrevolution

Syllabus

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: The class will meet eight times (once a week) for three hours each session during March and April. Students will be expected to read assignments, prepare answers to discussion questions, and participate in class discussions. Students also will be expected to participate in 40 hours of planned experiences during the semester, which for the most part will occur on Fridays and weekends in the City of Havana and in other provinces of the country. Fifty per cent of the course grade will be based on class attendance and participation (including the field experiences and weekly reflection papers). Fifty percent of the grade will be based on a final reflective paper.

CLASS MEETINGS: The course will meet on Monday mornings at the Institute from February 15 through April 5, it will meet at 8:30-11:30; from April 12 through April 26, it will meet at 9:30-12:30.

Fidel Castro, *History Will Absolve Me*
Ernesto Che Guevara, *Reminiscences of the Revolutionary War*
José Bell Lara, Ed., *Cuba in the 1990s* (Havana: Editorial José Martí, 1999)
José Bell Lara, *Globalization and the Cuban Revolution* (Havana: Editorial José Martí, 2002)
Carlos Méndez Tovar, *Democracy in Cuba?* (Havana: Editorial José Martí, 1997)

Aurelio Alonso Tejada, *Church and Politics in Revolutionary Cuba* (Havana: Editorial José Martí, 1999)


Ernesto Mario Bravo, *Development within Underdevelopment? New Trends in Cuban Medicine* (Havana: Editorial José Martí, 1998) will be read during the semester in conjunction with visits to Cuban medical research centers.


José Martí, “Truth about the United States”


Thomas G. Paterson, “U.S. Intervention in Cuba, 1898”


*The 26 of July Movement Program*

Herbert L. Matthews, “Cuban Rebel is Visited in Hideout”, *The New York Times*, February 24, 1957, P. 1


