

History 303: Montevallo in Cuba  
University of Montevallo  
Instructors: John Bawden & Charlotte Ford  
May Term 2023

**Where:** Cuba and online

**Instructors:** John Bawden, [jbawden@montevallo.edu](mailto:jbawden@montevallo.edu) (205-665-6179)

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**Course Credit:** 3 hours

### Course Overview

This course acquaints students with Cuba, a unique country in the Western Hemisphere. We will walk the streets of Havana, visit historical landmarks, and have personal encounters with the Cuban people. Students will see Cuba first hand and learn things which cannot be understood in the traditional classroom setting. That being said, “Montevallo in Cuba” does have an academic component beyond our travel itinerary.

### Course Assessment

Participation: 40%

Discussions: 30%

Research paper and presentation: 30%

### Participation

Students will discuss assigned readings with Professors Ford and Bawden. Visits to Cuban museums, monuments, and other points of interest constitute one part of your participation. We will discuss readings while in Cuba.

### Research Paper

After returning to Montevallo, students will write a 5-7 page paper (double spaced, 12’ font) about a research topic of their own choosing in consultation with the course instructors. The paper must include at least two primary sources and at least two scholarly sources.

A: 100-90% B: 89-80% C: 79-70% D: 69-60% F: 59-50%

### Travel waiver

You will sign this important document before departure.

### Course Schedule

Week 1

Day One (5/7). Travel from Birmingham to Havana and our Airbnb. Get settled and rest. Tour Old Havana and stroll the Malecón. Discuss readings below.

“Key to the Indies,” in Ada Ferrer, *Cuba: An American History* (Scribner, 2021), Chapters 5 & 6, “Beyond the Wall” and “The Monster,” in Mark Kurlansky, *Havana: A Subtropical Delirium* (Bloomsbury, 2017).

Day Two (5/8). Breakfast. Walk to the University of Havana, the Havana Libre, the US Embassy, and Hotel Nacional. Discussion: What are your impressions of Havana and Cuba thus far? Discuss the reading below.

Chapter 7, “Many Happy Returns? U.S. Occupation and Its Aftermath,” in Dick Cluster and Rafael Hernández, *The History of Havana* (Palgrave, 2006).

Day Three (5/9). Breakfast. Meet with a Cuban sociologist. Visit the Museum of the Revolution and the Cuban capital building. Discussion: What does sovereignty mean for a country like Cuba? Discuss the reading below.

“Insurrectionary Line,” in Ada Ferrer, *Cuba: An American History* (Scribner, 2021).

Day Four (5/10). Day trip to Varadero beach. Discussion: What have you learned about tourism's relationship to the Cuban economy? Discuss the reading below.

"Special Years," in Ada Ferrer, *Cuba: An American History* (Scribner, 2021).

Day Five (5/11). Breakfast. Meet with journalist Conner Gorry at Cuba Libro for a discussion about small businesses, Cuba's health care system, and life on the island. Visit at least one nearby landmark (Necrópolis Cristóbal Colón, Parque John Lennon, Revolution Square). Discuss the reading below.

Conner Gorry, "Laugh, Shrug, Cry, Struggle: Cuba Spring 2022" in *Here is Havana*.

Day Six (5/12). Day trip to Viñales. Discussion: What did you learn about rural Cuba?

Day Seven (5/13). Breakfast. Take the ferry across the Havana harbor to Casablanca and El Morro. Discuss the colonial past and Cuban revolution. Research day. Discussion: What question will guide your research paper?

Day Eight (5/14) Breakfast. Travel from Airbnb to Jose Marti Airport and home to Birmingham, AL. Discussion: How has travel to Cuba changed your perspective on Cuba, US-Cuba relations, or anything at all? Identify at least one place, conversation, or activity that had an impact on you.

## Week 2

- 5/16 Canvas discussion for reading I and II
- 5/17 Research question, bibliography, and outline due
- 5/19 Canvas discussion on contemporary Cuba

## Week 3

- 5/22 Submit 1-2 pages of the research paper to your faculty adviser
- 5/24 Paper draft due
- 5/26 Zoom meeting and final presentation TBA

### Required Reading

"Key to the Indies" in Ada Ferrer, *Cuba: An American History* (Scribner, 2021).

"Beyond the Wall" and "The Monster," in Mark Kurlansky, *Havana: A Subtropical Delirium* (Bloomsbury, 2017).

"Many Happy Returns? U.S. Occupation and Its Aftermath," in Dick Cluster and Rafael Hernández, *The History of Havana* (Palgrave, 2006).

"Insurrectionary Line," "Special Years," in Ada Ferrer, *Cuba: An American History* (Scribner, 2021).

Conner Gorry, "Laugh, Shrug, Cry, Struggle: Cuba Spring 2022" in *Here is Havana*.

### Optional reading

"Cuba," in John R. Bawden, *Latin American Soldiers: Armed Forces in the Region's History* (Routledge, 2019).

### Online perspectives on contemporary Cuba

<https://havanatimes.org/>

<https://translatingcuba.com/>

<https://www.cubabusinessreport.com/>

<https://www.ipsnews.net/topics/cuba/>

<https://jovencuba.com/revolucion-socialismo-y-democracia/>

<https://hereishavana.com/2022/04/13/laugh-shrug-cry-struggle-cuba-spring-2022/>

<https://en.eltoque.com/>

\*The syllabus and our travel itinerary are subject to change.