

CSI 274 Cuba: Revolution and Its Discontents

Fall 2015

Cerullo/ Risech

Tu & Th 2:00-3:20pm

This course proposes an interdisciplinary approach that critically engages a range of frameworks (geopolitical, historical, cultural) for a study of the complex and contested reality of Cuba. Displacing images of Cuba circulating in US popular and official culture, we examine the constructions of race, gender, and sexuality that have defined the Cuban nation. We propose to locate Cuba as part of the Caribbean (with its history of plantation economies and slavery), as part of Latin America (linked by a shared history of Spanish conquest, problematic republicanism and revolutionary movements), and as part of the African diaspora. We will explore how Cuba can be understood in relation to the U.S., and to its own diasporas in Miami and elsewhere. The course will engage with primary texts, historiography, literature, film, and music to examine Cuba within these multiple frameworks. Students will complete frequent short response essays and a research project. This course is required for students wishing to study in the Hampshire in Cuba semester program (open to all Five College students), and will provide support for framing independent projects and applications for the Cuba Semester. Though conducted in English, many readings will be available in Spanish and English and papers may be submitted in either language. Concurrent enrollment in a Spanish language class is strongly recommended.