GOV 291 Cuba in the Post Cold War Era

The United States and Cuba recently “normalized” relations, ending the last vestige of the Cold War. The course will offer an examination of the social, economic, and political roots of the Cuban revolution of 1959 and the changes brought about in Cuban politics and society as a result of the revolution. This course is a unique opportunity to study Cuban history and the political and economic system of one of the world’s few remaining socialist countries. Students do reading on the historic background of the area under study and then focus on contemporary political, social, and economic issues through meeting with resource people: professors, political activists, and grass roots organizers. The course will be conducted in English but knowledge of Spanish will definitely enhance appreciation of our stay in Cuba and study of Cuban history, politics, and society.

Tentative Itinerary:
Activities will include:
- Meet with Cuban University students
- Attend Cuban cultural events, including a jazz club and baseball game
- Meet with Cuban academics on a range of topics from economic reforms on the island to US-Cuban relations
- Visit an urban agricultural farm
- Travel to Santa Clara to visit the Che Guevara Memorial
- Meet representatives of Cuban political organizations, including the Federation of Cuban women and a member of parliament
- Tour the city of Havana including its colonial sector
- Visits to a school and medical clinic

There will be three meetings held prior to departure. Each will last two hours (6 hours)
There will be four meetings held after the return from Cuba (8 hours)
The dates for these meetings shall be determined.
We will spend a minimum of 40 hours in organized activities in Cuba

TOTAL COURSE MEETING HOURS 54 hours

PRE-TRAVEL READINGS:
Philip Brenner; Marguerite Rose Jiménez, A Contemporary Cuba Reader: The Revolution under Raúl Castro
Samuel Farber, The Origins of the Cuban Revolution Reconsidered
Marc Frank, Cuban Revelations: Behind the Scenes in Havana
Lillian Guerra, Visions of Power in Cuba
Louis A. Pérez Jr., Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
By the completion of this course, students should be able to:
• Understand Cuban modern and colonial history and its connection to contemporary Cuba.
• Understand the process of Cuban revolutionary history in the twentieth century.
• Understand the contemporary Cuban political process including the interaction between party and state.
• Understand the contemporary Cuban economy with particular emphasis on the post-Soviet reforms.
• Understand contemporary Cuban social issues including health care, religion, education, and race relations.
• Understand the history and contemporary aspects of United States-Cuban relations.
• Appreciate cultural aspects of Cuba, including its music, film, art, and sport.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
A summary and reflection of three of the pre-travel readings 20%
A daily journal that will be maintained during the visit 30%
Final paper of at least 10 pages in length 40%
Class presentation 10%

SUGGESTED BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR REQUIRED PAPER


PROPOSED BUDGET (Projections Based on 6 students/2 faculty/staff)

- Round trip airfare, hotels with private baths, on-tour transportation, sightseeing, and entrance fees are covered (double occupancy) $34,360
- Visa Fee 800
- Wagner program fee ($100/student) 600
- Contingency 3,600

TOTAL BUDGET $39,360
COST/STUDENT $5,700

STAFF MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS

- Fluent in Spanish
- Previous experience in EYH logistics