This course offers a survey of recent and classic approaches to the modern history of Argentina, and provides a window into larger processes of sociocultural modernization in Latin American and global history.

As all modern nations, Argentina produced its own narratives of “exceptionalism,” both celebratory and melancholic—and sometimes the two combined. On the one hand, the celebration of its economic prosperity in the late 19th and early 20th century, of the secularist and modernizing policies of its ruling elites, and the ethnic mixing and social mobility of millions of European immigrants in a large and “empty” country, enjoyed a long life and still informs the collective memory. But on the other, the economic crisis of 1930, coupled with the first in a long series of violent coup d’états, produced a somber narrative—rooted in fact in the civil wars of the 19th century—about a supposedly national failure in maintaining its economic growth, its promise of social integration, and its democratic institutions. The rise of Peronism and anti-Peronism in the 1940s, as well as the intense conflicts over militarism and democracy, revolution and liberalism, class struggle and nationalism, and last but not least, the genocidal depths of State Terrorism, reconfigured those original narratives and puzzled Argentine and foreign scholars alike. The transition to democracy in the 1980s reinvigorated the historiography and the social sciences, but the economic debacle led to a series of experiments in neoliberalism that led in turn in 2001 to a catastrophic economic crisis probably worse than that of 1930. This time, however, the democratic system endured the challenge.

The coming of age in the 21st century of new generations of historians trained in a democratic context, benefiting from the significant expansion of the national scientific system and the continuing dialogue with foreign academic traditions, produced another renovation in the historiography. Instead of a solid paradigm, they produced an array of complex new histories, in plural. Some are entirely new vistas on the country’s history, while others are re-interpretations of older perspectives. What they share is a revision of the established narratives on key aspects of the Argentine past: the formation of social classes, the economic links to the global market, the ethnic makeup of the population, the forms of violence, and the gendered nature of social life. This course will introduce students to some of them, with a focus on the 20th century but also drawing from a more distant past and on related disciplines, in order to understand long-term processes.

The themes are diverse and illuminate key themes in global history: the economic interplay of region, nation and globalization; the gendered nature of politics and culture; the anthropology and economics of food and music; the forms of remembering; the history of the state and the political regimes; the intellectual traditions and debates; the
The history of human rights; youth and sexual identities; and of course, fútbol and psychoanalysis. If there is an organizing theme, it is the question of Argentina’s *egalitarian* ethos—the aspiration to equality in economic, social, political, ethnic, and gender terms—which is a way to approach today’s global debates on inequality from a different angle.

The instructor’s larger work on Latin American history provides a comparative and regional framework to students focused on other areas.

**Grades:** 50% of the grade involves attendance and active participation in class, 50% a final paper (8 to 15 pages) based on the weekly readings.

**Readings in Spanish** are available depending on each student’s skills and interests.

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**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES**

[The weekly readings will amount to 150-200 pages for graduate students and to about 100 pages for undergraduate students]

**Week 1 / Introduction: Argentina in global history**
Readings:

Optional readings:

**Week 2 / The 19th century: civil life and civilizing projects in a plebeian society**
Readings:
Either
- Domingo F. Sarmiento, *Civilization and Barbarism* (University of California Press, 2004) [1845], Chapters I-V, VII and XV (90 pages)
- Tulio Halperín Donghi, “Sarmiento’s place in post-revolutionary Argentina,” in T.
Optional readings:

**Week 3 / “Modernization”: immigration, markets, and popular politics**

Readings:

Optional readings:

**Week 4 / Becoming modern: tango**

Readings:

Optional readings:
- Pablo Ben, “Male Same-Sex Sexuality and the Argentine State, 1880–1930,” in Javier Corrales and Mario Pecheny (Eds.), *The politics of sexuality in Latin*
- Jo Baim, Tango: Creation of a Cultural Icon (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2007).

Week 5 / Becoming modern men: fútbol
Readings:
- Eduardo Archetti, Masculinities: Football, Polo, and the Tango in Argentina (Oxford; New York: Berg, 1999), Chapters 2, 3, 6 and 7.

Optional readings:

Week 6 / Becoming Peronists and anti-Peronists
Readings:
- Mark Healey, The Ruins of the New Argentina: Peronism and the Remaking of San Juan after the 1944 Earthquake (Durham [N.C.]: Duke University Press, 2011), Part 1 – Chapters 1, 2 and 3 (p. 21-79)

Optional readings:

Week 7 / The country of the middle class
Readings:


Optional readings:
- Alejandro Dujovne, *Una historia del libro judío: la cultura judía argentina a través de sus editores, libreros, traductores, impresoras y bibliotecas, 2014.*

**Week 8 / Becoming modern women**

Readings:

Optional readings:

**Week 9 / Dictatorship, terror, and remembering**

Readings:

Optional readings:

Week 10 / Post-authoritarian democracy and the egalitarian ethos

Pick one of the following readings:

On the regional integration:

On politics:
- Mariana Heredia, Cuando los economistas tomaron el poder (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2015).
- Javier Auyero, Routine Politics and Violence in Argentina. The Gray Zone of State Power (Cambridge University Press: 2007), Chapters 1-3 (p. 31-95)

On human rights:
- Eugenia Allier Montaño & Emilio Crenzel (eds.), The Struggle for Memory in Latin America: Recent History and Political Violence, (Palgrave, 2015).

On socio-environmental issues:

On “creative industries:”

On psychoanalysis:
On contemporary indigenous Argentina:

Week 11 / No class. Final paper due.