Revolutionary Lives Project

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Description:

Revolutionary Lives Project

Overview:
Three major components will scaffold this “revolutionary lives” project. In two of the components, each group (3-4 students) will work together to construct both a final presentation and poster project (to be presented at Festival of Scholars) that represent the human side of revolutionary activism. In the third component, students will work individually on a “revolutionary lives” blog that will require them to chart a fictionalized journal for a chosen historical figure within their revolutionary movement over the span of approximately 6 years. This journal activity will demand students conduct research on an individual within the revolutionary movement of their group’s assigned country, requiring the critical research skills of biographical analysis from primary and secondary source materials, but also the creative thinking skills to translate those facts into a fictionalized journal entry (600 words). Over the course of these weekly journaling assignments (due on Sundays at 11:59pm) students will be gathering data on both the individual lived experience of their character, as well as the broader context of revolutionary change. During the second half of the semester students will then be working within their groups to prepare a thirty-minute presentation on the revolutionary movement from the collective perspective of their characters. In the final stage of the project, they will translate this presentation from an oral format to a written (poster) format for (eventual) display at Xavier's Festival of Scholars in April. In these second two stages of the project they will not only be developing their teamwork and collaborative skills, their skills as self-regulated learners, and their oral and written communication abilities. More detailed information regarding the presentation, poster display, and journal entries will be provided in class and on Brightspace in the first weeks of the class.

Overall Learning Objectives

1. Students will demonstrate critical research skills of biographical
analysis in assessing primary and secondary source materials, and creative thinking skills translating those facts into a fictionalized journal entry

2. Students will demonstrate competency in effective group communication and teamwork through collaborative projects, as well as the ability to self-regulate their own learning and present their new knowledge to others through oral (class presentation) and written (academic poster) means.

**Component #1: Revolutionary Lives Journals**

In this component of the Revolutionary Lives project, students will work individually on a semester-long “revolutionary lives” blog that will require them to chart a fictionalized journal for a chosen historical figure within their revolutionary movement over the span of approximately 5-20 years. This journal activity will demand students conduct research on an individual within the revolutionary movement of their group’s assigned country, requiring the critical research skills of biographical analysis from primary and secondary source materials, but also the creative thinking skills to translate those facts into a fictionalized journal entry (600 words). Over the course of these weekly journaling assignments (due on Sundays at 11:59pm) students will be gathering data on both the individual lived experience of their character, as well as the broader context of revolutionary change.

**Goal:** To understand the personal and political aspects of revolutionary change through the charting of a partially fictionalized individual journey in a journaling assignment.

**Specific Learning Objective:** To demonstrate critical research skills of biographical analysis in assessing primary and secondary source materials, and creative thinking skills translating those facts into a fictionalized journal entry

**Instructions:** Once students select an individual from the list provided (below) for their group, they will begin conducting research on that individual. However, it should be noted that minimal secondary research exists and students will be expected to fictionalize aspects of their character’s life in order to construct
believable journal entries. Journals will be written once a week (due Sundays at noon; late submissions will lose \( \frac{1}{2} \) point per day) and should be at minimum 600 words. Entries should be written first in a word processing program and checked for grammatical and syntax errors before being uploaded into the discussion board for their group. They will be graded on a scale of 1-10; nine entries should be completed by the end of the semester (weeks 3-7 & 8-12; ten opportunities) for a possible total of 90 points. Finally, each entry should make a reference to at least one major revolutionary moment or event (and no more than 3 per entry) with an appropriate scholarly citation. Entries should be written in first person and reflect on personal thoughts and feelings; however, they should also reference revolutionary activities and movements within the country as well as known events in the individual’s life. Before beginning your entries, you should think about the span of time you wish to cover (between 5-20 years), and make sure that you chart out a general time trajectory for your individual that falls within the time span of the country.

**Rubric Guidelines:**

10 - Provides an 600+ word entry that is free of grammatical or syntax errors and offers sophisticated personal development and complex interconnections to revolutionary events and individual life milestones; proper citation of scholarly source provided

9 - Provides an 600+ word entry that is free of grammatical or syntax errors and offers sophisticated personal development and reference to revolutionary events and individual life milestones; proper citation of scholarly source provided

8 - Provides an 600+ word entry that is free of grammatical or syntax errors with personal development and reference to revolutionary events and/or individual life milestones; proper citation provided

7 - Provides an 600+ word entry that has some grammatical or syntax errors and some personal development and/or reference to revolutionary events and/or individual life milestones; citation missing, or improper

6 - Provides an 600 word entry that has some grammatical or syntax errors but offers no substantial personal development or reference to revolutionary events and individual life milestones; no citation

5 - Less than 600 words, significant syntax/grammar errors, no substantial personal development or reference to revolutionary events and individual life milestones; no citation

4 - Less than 600 words, significant syntax/grammar errors, no discernible connection to the revolutionary figure or events; no citation

3 - See above
Example provided to students

[On the day students select their characters, we will work on a character I have chosen, explaining the time frame I selected for the character's entries and discussing as a group the model entry that I composed - thinking about where the research comes from, how it was used, what was fictionalized, etc.]

Character: Carmen Natalia Martínez Bonilla                      Date: September 4, 1944

Today I wrote a letter to President Trujillo. I imagine he will read it, but it will likely only create more problems for my family. I just couldn't help myself; something had to be said, and everyone is too afraid to say anything. My brother, sister, and father have been fired from their jobs, and my little brother Andrés was kicked out of school. I was fired too, and to top it all off we were evicted from our home for supposed “renovations.” Of course, this is all because my older brother and I have been protesting the regime and working towards something better. Trujillo has been in power now 17 years, and things seem to only get worse. I shouldn't even be writing in this journal, but it is all too much to keep inside. Here I am, a thirty-year old single woman without a job trying to protect my family. It’s just too much. I asked in the letter to get our passports (which Trujillo holds for every citizen) so we could leave, even though it kills me to think that way. But it is just too impossible to live in this country anymore. Maybe we will go to Mexico, or Venezuela. I know there are other Dominican exiles living in those places. Or maybe we should go to Puerto Rico, since it is an island like here. It seems all so unimaginable what has happened here since Trujillo took over in 1930. There was a time about five years ago that it seemed like maybe things would change - he had allowed a group of students to organize, but as soon as he permitted it, he made it illegal and so many of my friends ended up in jail. It has gotten so bad that people even have signs that say “In this house, God and Trujillo reign.” Really? He thinks he is equal to a god? Plus he is getting rich by taking over all these businesses. The rich who suck up to him continue to get richer, while the poor just get poorer, and women continue to get trampled on by him and his cronies. . .
I think so often of what life would look like for my family without Trujillo. We would all have jobs, and our house. People would be able to express their opinions (unlike now, where everyone just kisses up to him), and maybe we could begin to work for a more fair system for all people. We could have events where everything didn’t revolve around that man and his rituals. It seems so far away, and so difficult to achieve. But I can’t imagine giving up. They’ve taken nearly everything from us, so I guess we will just have to keep trying to tell people who he really is, and make them realize he is a megalomaniacal ego freak and that he will never just “give up” power through elections.

For now, I am just praying (which I hardly ever do) that he gives us our passports and we can leave. And trying to figure out how we will survive until then. The neighbors (particularly the Francos) have been so nice so far, but I know they don’t have too much to spare. We could try to sell some of our furniture, and mamas jewelry, but I am not sure where to even start. At some point I guess I will have to, but for now I am going to reach out to my friends in the youth group and see if they can help us until we figure out what to do next.

Grading Rubric (Scored out of 10 points)

| At least 600 words (1) | Grammar Syntax Error-Free (2) | References to Historical Events (2) | Proper Citation Format (1) | Development of Personal Life (2) | Interconnections with Historical Events (2) |

Feedback:

*In-class Exercise: Self-Reflection on Character/Journal Progress*

At several points during the semester, we will conduct group work (by country) to assess progress with individual characters and gather data as a group. Students will be asked to spend 2-3 minutes writing 1) the major milestones they have charted for their revolutionary character and 2) how they have done (assessment wise) on their entries, then share them with their group-mates. Groups will be instructed to first talk about the assessment component, sharing and helping each other implement improvements in their work, then to compile the data they have charted for their characters in a single document/timeline that they will continue to build over the course of the semester.
Component #2: Revolutionary Lives Posters

Through this exercise students will acquire collaborative learning and teamwork skills, understanding specifically how to (1) allocate tasks based on ability, (2) pool knowledge, (3) manage collective work scheduling, and (4) build a final product as a group. The final product will be an academic poster on a revolutionary movement in Latin American that will be shown to the instructor and the rest of the class, but also display at the Xavier University Festival of Scholars.

Goal: To understand revolutionary movements in Latin American as an accretion of individual choices and actions through the construction of a national-level overview of the revolution in their chosen country.

Specific Learning Objective: To demonstrate competency in teamwork and collaborative projects, as well as the ability to self-regulate their own learning through the construction of collaborative posters on a revolutionary movement in their Latin American country.

Instructions: Once students have selected their character for the Revolutionary Lives Journals, they will be organically sorted into three groups (Mexico, Cuba, and Chile). Over the course of the semester they will get to know each other’s characters, integrate that learning with course readings, and begin to construct cooperatively a narrative of their particular revolution. In the last third of the class they will use a provided Powerpoint template to construct a poster that summarizes key points of the revolution in their country and also provides enticing visuals and graphics. The poster will be edited, then printed and displayed at Xavier University’s Festival of Scholars in the spring.

Rubric Guidelines: (Constructed by Students, Fall 2018)

Part I. Final Poster: Through this exercise students will acquire collaborative learning and teamwork skills, understanding specifically how to (1) allocate tasks based on ability, (2) pool knowledge, (3) manage collective work scheduling, and (4) build a final product as a group. The final product will be an academic poster on a revolutionary movement in Latin America (produced from a Powerpoint template) that will be shown to the instructor and the rest of the class, but also displayed at
the Xavier University Festival of Scholars. Groups will work together based on country to produce a single final product. The final draft of poster is worth 100 points.

1. **Background/Purpose/Timeline**: purpose of the revolution is mandatory; must also include background, a timeline, and a definition of revolution (each worth five points):

   Expert (5)  Satisfactory (3-4)  Poor (1-2)
   Purpose (up to five)  
   Background (up to five)  
   Definition (up to five)  Timeline (up to five)

2. **Important Figures / Groups / Marginalized Stories**: can include revolutionary lives characters (but if they are must be incorporated into appropriate revolutionary groups); must incorporate two groups and at least three distinct individuals (up to fifteen; five for each of the categories listed)

   Expert (5)  Satisfactory (3-4)  Poor (1-2)
   Group #1  
   Group #2  
   Figure #1  
   Figure #2  
   Figure #3

3. **Ten Point Categories**

   **3. Results/Post-Revolutionary Impact**: Must include some discussion of country after revolution; open to group interpretation
   **4. Larger International Context**: including foreign intervention; **must** include any counterrevolutionary resistance and activism
   **5. Methods/Important Documents**: including levels of violence or non-violence, how the revolution was fought, and methods of resistance
   **6. Visuals/Images/Overall Appearance; must** include at least one map, one important figure, and one figure for cultural background (landscape, people, building, etc); overall is appealing, compelling, not cluttered or running over space; uses large enough font to be visible
   **7. Citations** are utilized, at least one per section; four must be peer-reviewed and in proper format (Chicago)
8. Editing: including proper grammar, spelling, syntax; no typos or literary “boo-boos” in final draft

**Overall Comments:**

*In-class Exercise: Self-Reflection on Character/Journal Progress & Timeline Creation*

At several points during the semester, we will conduct group work (by country) to assess progress with individual characters and gather data as a group. Students will be asked to spend 2-3 minutes writing 1) the major milestones they have charted for their revolutionary character and 2) how they have done (assessment wise) on their entries, then share them with their group-mates. Groups will be instructed to first talk about the assessment component, sharing and helping each other implement improvements in their work, then to compile the data they have charted for their characters in a single document/timeline that they will continue to build over the course of the semester.

During the week(s) that the entire class is reading about one group’s country (Mexico, Cuba, or Chile), the members of that group will be expected to share their timeline of their characters’ activities as part of the revolutionary movement with the rest of the class. Group members (with the remaining students working on other tasks) will be asked to chart the events from their character’s lives on a larger timeline on the board, along with a handful major (national-level) revolutionary milestones. They will be then expected to explain their timeline with the remaining students in the class, as well as discuss of the kinds of sources they used, which they found most useful (and why), and where they faced the most challenges. The remainder of the class will then be expected to provide feedback on their challenges and possible avenues for continued research.

*In-class Exercise: Creating Assessment Rubrics (Poster and Presentation)*

During an individual class period either right before or right after the midterm, students will work together, then in two small groups to create a list of criteria for the final poster and presentation projects, then use those criteria to create an assessment tool for these assignments. The instructor will then type up these rubrics and present them back to the students for final approval.

*In-class Exercise: Poster Peer Review*
During an individual class period after student groups submit drafts of their posters, the entire class will engage in peer-review. In this exercise, students will use the rubric (that they created) to assess the other groups' work and provide oral feedback on how they can improve their posters before final submission.

Component #3 Revolutionary Lives Presentation

In this component of the Revolutionary Lives project, students will work in groups to translate their research and poster presentation into a 30-minute collaborative oral presentation for the rest of the class. In this component they will continue to grow as knowledge experts on their particular country, but also will advance their skills as cooperative learners, advancing in their understanding of (1) allocation of tasks based on ability, (2) pooling knowledge, (3) managing collective work scheduling, and (4) building a final presentation as a group.

Goal: To understand and explain revolutionary movements in Latin American as an accretion of individual choices and actions through the construction of a national-level overview of the revolution in their chosen country presented orally in class.

Specific Learning Outcome: To demonstrate competency in teamwork and cooperative learning, as well as oral communication through a 30-minute group presentation of collaborative posters on a revolutionary movement in their Latin American country to the entire class.

Instructions: In conjunction with the cooperative building of a poster on their’ group’s revolutionary movement, students will prepare a 30-minute group presentation to share the product (the poster), expand on the ideas presented, and reflect on the process of group work. Presentations will be given in class on the final day and will be followed by peer-assessment and class conclusions.

Rubric Guidelines: (Constructed by Students, Fall 2018)

Part II. Final Presentation: In this component of the Revolutionary Lives project, students will work in groups to translate their research and poster presentation into a 30-minute collaborative oral presentation for the rest of the class. Presentations will be 30 minutes long and should be a shared activity across the group. The presentation will be scored out of a possible 80 points.
Includes discussion of:

**Purpose and Background (to the Revolution):** including what led to the revolution and a brief synopsis

**Groups and Ideologies:** including ideologies, figures, and marginalized stories

**Impact of the Revolution:** including results, post-revolutionary realities, and current status of country

**International Ties** of revolution including foreign influences, and involvement of other outside forces

**Revolutionary methods** including mobilization tactics, important documents, guerilla war, violence, non-violence, and a general timeline

**Revolutionary Lives Characters** including how they fit into the revolution and/or their involvement in its progression

**Process / Teamwork:** including how work was divided, who was responsible for which parts of the presentation, and how the group worked together (including challenges) to complete the poster and presentation

**Visuals and Interactivity:** carefully includes at least five relevant images; may also include video (up to three minutes), interactive games or questions, and engagement relative to culture context (food, etc)

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**Overall Comments:**

**In-class Exercise: Teambuilding**

At the very beginning of the semester students will have the opportunity to chose their revolutionary lives character (see component #1) which will organically locate them in one of three groups (Mexico, Cuba, or Chile) based on their interest in that revolutionary movement. I will briefly introduce the overall project and the benefits of teamwork and cooperative learning. They will then engage in a think-pair-share exercise (in their groups) and we will return to full class discussion about benefits and challenges of group work, seeking to find solutions to the things they see as challenging. Finally, they will be asked to share in group their own perceived strengths and weakness and then will assign each member a group leader role as facilitator, historian, and liaison. Teambuilding will continue throughout the semester as groups will work together in small class exercise (including sharing about their character development) and discussion leader roles.

**In-class Exercise: Planning Session**

At the beginning of the last third of the semester (approximately week eleven) students will convene in their groups during class (approximately 1 hour) to plan the poster and presentation portion of the project. They will be asked to work on three tasks – communication methods, meeting times, and delegation of pre-work. In the
first, they will decide which tools they want to use to communicate and collaborate with each other, including but not limited to Google drive, text messaging, Cel.ly, and Dropbox. They will then plan out at least three group sessions for cooperative work. Finally, they will assign each other specific pre-work based on the rubric previously established by the class (see component #2).

**In-class Exercise: Peer Assessment**

Following the final presentation, students will be asked to fill out peer assessments of their team members. They will be assured that these assessments will be kept confidential. Each team member will be asked to identify 1) what components their fellow team members were responsible for; 2) how well they believe those components were completed; and 3) their general assessment of the overall performance of their group peers. They will also be asked to rank themselves according to the same criteria.

**Final Reflection Paper:** The final reflection paper will be due at the scheduled exam time for the course (available online). It will require students to have taken notes on the final group presentations and integrate that learning with their overall understandings developed over the course of the semester, ultimately coming to a definition of Latin American revolutions.

