

PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY

School of Liberal Arts

L352.455 D Area Studies: Latin America

OBJECTIVES

This course like all the College Studies Area Studies courses is designed to make you a more effective professional and a deeper, more wide ranging individual. Through readings, discussions, music and film, the course enhances your sensitivity to multicultural and gender concerns. This course has an additional goal of improving your information literacy. The ability to retrieve and evaluate information from a variety of sources has become an essential component of many jobs. By honing your research skills, this course will greatly accelerate your professional development. This course is designed to be a bridge between the more locally focused courses you took in the School of Liberal Arts in your first year and the capstone course L911 you will take in your final year. It will familiarize you with some of the most pressing global concerns of the present age and help you see your major in more international terms.

The course explores the links between culture, politics and economics. Often, a historical perspective will best illuminate these linkages. As a consequence, gaining historical understanding of other parts of the world is a prime concern of area studies courses. Globalization is a word much bandied about these days. This course seeks to transcend a pop internationalism to show you how contemporary cultural processes and economic trends have global dimensions. The course where possible will show how these global processes and trends affect the practice and purpose of your professions, both in the present and in the future.

In particular, this course introduces students to some of the major issues in contemporary Latin American cultural, political and economic development. The course's approach will be multidisciplinary, drawing on history, anthropology and literature. We will highlight five themes: the paradoxes of Latin American development, the cultural construction of nationhood and citizenship, the struggle to save Latin America's environment from devastation, the formation of regional trading blocs, and the significance of a longstanding tradition of popular resistance to economic exploitation and political repression.

Since Independence, Latin America has only sporadically realized economic prosperity and social cohesion. Despite some successes, Latin America's economic growth has been erratic and uneven and its political life has often been violent and frequently authoritarian. Social cohesion has proven an elusive goal. This course will consider why Latin America's problems have proven so intractable and how in spite of these deep rooted problems, Latin America still has achieved much, particularly in its intellectual and cultural production.

Since Latin American nations achieved their independence from Spain and Portugal in the nineteenth century, they have preoccupied themselves with the questions of citizenship and national identity. Latin American governments have tended to exclude rather than incorporate. The list of the marginalized is quite long: women, the poor, gays, people of African descent and Native Americans. This course explores how in contemporary Latin America, many nations are transforming themselves culturally and politically to include previously neglected and exploited sectors of their populations.

In recent years, many Latin Americans, particularly the youth, have been taking greater pride in their natural environment. Since the Iberian invasion of Latin America in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Latin Americans of European descent have seen nature as an economic resource to be brutally exploited. That attitude is rapidly changing and strong conservation movements have sprung up throughout Latin America, especially in Brazil, Chile and Costa Rica. This course examines the reasons for the remarkable success of the Costa Rican environmentalists and will explore the origins of the highly lucrative Costa Rican ecotourist industry.

In Latin America, the creation of cultural identities has been intertwined with a continuing tradition of popular resistance. The Spanish preconquest populations, for example, have resisted cultural incorporation through a variety of means including careful preservation of old patterns of community life and ritual and, when necessary, violent rebellion. Poor peasants in nations like Mexico often have organized political movements and, on occasion, armies to get back their land and in nations like Argentina, factory workers have been aggressive participants in national politics. The prevalence of this spirit of resistance has often misled outside observers who confuse it with chronic political instability. The course considers the role that popular resistance plays in contemporary Latin America cultural and political life.

Globalization is nothing new in Latin America. For centuries, Latin America has been subject to the vagaries of the International Economy. However, the demise of international communism, the rise

of the European Economic community and the "microchip revolution" have presented Latin America with a whole new set of opportunities and challenges. Emerging from the economically catastrophic years of the 1980s, Latin American nations have formed a number of trading blocs. These blocs are suppose to promote a fresh wave of modernization of Latin American economies and ensure the economic autonomy and survival of the region. So far these trading blocs have experienced rough going. This course investigates why the creation of viable trading blocs has been so difficult and what the consequences might be if they fail.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Arguedas	<u>Deep Rivers</u>
Biesanz	<u>The Ticos</u>
Bouvard	<u>Revolutionizing Motherhood</u>
Tracy Novinger	<u>Communicating with Brazilians</u>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Class Participation 10%

Midterm 20% (includes map test, Novinger, Bouvard & Biesanz)

Essay on Arguedas - 20%

Research Essay 30% (see Separate Hand-out)

Oral Presentation - 20%

(Note: To receive a passing grade, you must complete all the course requirements).

PAPERS

You will be required to write two papers for this course. One paper will be a five page essay on the cultural construction of nationhood in Peru. The second paper will be a research paper between seven and ten pages long exploring the connections between contemporary Latin America and your area of professional specialization. Both papers must be typed and properly footnoted. **In addition, your papers must be stapled and each page must be numbered.**

Papers which contain more than five errors or are not properly footnoted will be returned ungraded. Be specific in your papers. Style counts. Please do **not** e-mail papers. E-mailed papers will **not** be read and graded. Please familiarize yourself with the University's regulations regarding academic honesty. This course will enforce a zero tolerance policy for any form of plagiarism, whether planned or accidental. I will check all papers for plagiarism using the latest software programs. Those students who are guilty of plagiarism will receive a grade of "0" on their paper and will be reported to the university administration.

Your grade on your essays will reflect how well I think your work meets the following nine criteria:

- Effective introductory and concluding paragraphs
- Clean, uncluttered sentences with clear subjects and active verbs
- Well structured paragraphs with forceful topical sentences
- Strong overall sense of organization
- A good argument or working hypothesis
- Textual examples from all parts of the assigned text
- Essay more analytical than descriptive
- Essay goes **beyond** classroom work
- Clear citations and a comprehensive bibliography

If you received a grade lower than 85, you have the option of rewriting any of your essays, provided they were turned in on time. Before you have turned in a rewrite, you must have had both an individual conference with me **before** the last week of classes and a session at The Learning Center. I will mark your resubmitted work and record the higher of the two grades. Please remember when handing in your rewritten work, you **must** also turn in your original paper. Rewrites submitted without the original will not be graded. Students are *strongly* advised to keep copies of all their papers for this course on disk until after the final exam.

Late papers: After the due dates for papers, I will post on my office door the ID numbers of the students who have not yet submitted their papers. All late papers can only be turned in to the Secretary of the School of Liberal Arts. I will retrieve the late papers from her. Please do not submit late papers directly to me.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Each student in the class will be a member of one of seven groups responsible for making oral presentation on either Mexico or Brazil. The presentations should last between 25 and 30 minutes and each student should speak for at least five minutes. Any student who misses their groups' presentation for any reason other than illness will receive a "0". I will grade the

presentations using the following four criteria:

- Seamless integration of reading, new research, and other course materials
- Accuracy of information
- Quantity of information
- Efficiency of presentation (organization, oral proficiency, effectiveness of audio-visual aids)

HOW TO USE ASSIGNED READING DISCUSSION GUIDES

As you work on the assigned reading, you should take detailed notes on the Reading Discussion Guide questions and write down your answers in a notebook. You should **always** bring this notebook to class. I will not inspect this notebook but I will call on you in class from time to time to answer a Discussion Guide question when we are dealing with a particular reading assignment. If your answer to my question reveals that you have not done the reading carefully enough, it will have a negative impact on your class participation grade. Feel free to hand-in your Discussion Question notebook at any time for feed-back and further guidance

TOPICS

1. South of North: A Geographical, Historical and Political Introduction to Latin America.
2. Progress and Poverty: Economic Growth and Social Inequality in Modern Brazil.
3. Divine Inspiration: The Construction of AfroBrazilian Culture.
4. The Power of a Woman: Women's Activism and Human Rights in Argentina.
5. Miracle or Mirage: The Conservation Struggle in Costa Rica.
6. Many Rivers to Cross: The Native American Question in the Andean Nations.
7. Neoliberalism and Its Discontents: Pinochet's and Lagos' Chile
8. Can Mercosur Soar: Latin America and the New World Economics.

READING ASSIGNMENTS AND CLASS CALENDAR

January 12 Course Orientation.

January 19 Moving: 3-135.

January 24 & 26 November: 136-204.

January 31 & February 2 Buzzard: 1-89; Topic Proposal due for research paper on Wed., February 2.

February 7 & 9 Bouvard: 92-171.

February 14 & 16 Biesanz: 1-140.

February 21 & 23 Biesanz: 143-289.

February 28 & March 2 Arguedas: 3-154; The **MIDTERM** will be given on Mon., February 28. It will include material from class discussions, a map test, Novinger, Bouvard and Biesanz.

March 7 & 9 - Spring Break.

March 14 & 16 - Arguedas: 155-233.

March 21 & 23 - Essay on Reading (Arguedas) **due** on Wed., March 23.

March 28 & 30 Extra Credit Packet on Research Methods **due** on Wed., March 30.

April 4 & 6 Research Paper **due** on Wed., April 6. Please note that e-mailed papers will **not** be accepted *under any circumstances*;

April 11 & 13 April 11: Class presentations - Group 1; April 13: Class presentations - Groups 2 & 3.

April 18 & 20 - April 18: Class Presentations - Groups 4 & 5; April 20: Class Presentations - Groups 6 & 7.

April 25 Concluding discussions.

TESTS AND POLICIES

Grading System:

A	90-100
A	88-90
B+	85-88
B	80-85
B	78-80
C+	75-78
C	70-75
C	68-70
D	60-68
F	0-60

Tests: I will administer one exam during the semester which will be a mid-term. The midterm will include essay questions on the reading and class work, questions on Latin American geography and contemporary history and a map test. Your grade on the essay section of the mid term will be determined by how well your answers meet the following six criteria:

Completeness

Mastery of relevant detail

Effectively addresses question

Accuracy

Coherently presented

Analytical, not descriptive

Please note: Absolutely no excuses will be accepted for missing an exam other than a serious illness on the part of a student or the critical illness of a parent. In both cases, extensive documentation must be provided. Failure to take an exam on the date scheduled will automatically result in a grade of "0". If students are able to provide a valid excuse, they will have the opportunity to write a three to five page typed paper on a topic assigned by the professor in lieu of taking the mid-term.

Class participation grade: I will base your class participation grade on regular attendance, the quality and quantity of your participation in class and group discussions (including presentations), and your deportment in class. Doing work for other courses during class time, taking naps, and manifesting negative classroom behaviors will detract from your grade. More than **two** unexplained absences also will significantly lower your class participation grade as will persistent lateness. Field trips for other courses will count as an "explained absence". Court cases and doctors' appointments will count as an "unexplained absence". Students who leave class early for doctors' appointments and air port pick-ups will be marked absent for that day. You can receive your course class participation grade by e-mail after the course class work is completed. Up until the mid-term, students who are late for class must give their name on a piece of paper along with an explanation for their lateness to the professor after class. Failure to do so will result in the student being marked absent for that day.

Extra credit: This course provides opportunities for extra credit work. Students can exercise their option to complete a three part packet on research methods. Also, at the end of the semester, there will be a research workshop where students can orally present the results of their research. On occasion, there may be extra credit events and field trips. In order to receive extra credit for these events and field trips, you **must** be **present** at the extra credit event and later submit a one and a half page typed "reaction paper" on what you experienced. While I will make every attempt to accommodate everyone's complex schedules, students should realize that usually it just is not possible and I can not satisfy everyone.