Latin American Studies 101
Introduction to Latin American Studies; Latin America and its People
Spring, 2015

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Office hours: Tuesday, 9-11am; and by appointment.

Course Overview and Goals:

This course will explore the people, culture, and history of Latin America with an interdisciplinary approach that will lay the foundation for further study in the region and prepare students for degrees in disciplines such as history, economics, anthropology, political science and more. The objectives for this course are:

1) To introduce students to the pertinent theories and controversies that are foundational to study in the region
2) To explore interconnections between social, economic, and political structures over time and to elucidate diversity and commonality between Latin American people and societies.
3) To improve writing, reading, and critical thinking skills
4) For you to leave this class with a solid research paper and a new perspective on the region

Required books


Other readings and class materials will be found online, in the library, or uploaded by the instructor on Blackboard. The syllabus will be periodically updated to reflect this.

Assignments/Exams

Map Quiz

Yes….you will have to do a map quiz on Jan. 28 in class. This is imperative and foundational knowledge for the course and I take this quiz seriously. If you do not score a 75% or better on your first try, you must meet with me outside of class for a make-up version.

Exams

You will take three exams throughout the course. I will not try and trick you, and, in fact, will likely take many exam questions straight from your discussion questions. The rest will be based
on reading, lecture, and activities we do this semester. Make up exams are permitted only in special circumstances.

**Research Paper**

When you finish the course, I want you to be able to walk away with something material that gets you thinking about what you want to do in school and explore some of your core interests in Latin America. So in lieu of larger exams or weekly assignments, you will write a 7-10 page paper on a topic that interests you. I will provide suggestions if you are having trouble finding a topic. **All topics must be approved by the instructor.**

Requirements of the paper:

You must use 5 to 10 academic sources (including books and academic journal articles). You may use primary sources (photos, historical newspapers, etc) in some cases, but please see me if you plan on doing this first. You must use in-text citations and for a bibliography at the end of the paper. I’ll explain more about the content of the paper and citation details as well get closer to some deadlines.

**Basic paper writing guidelines:**

Papers in this class should be typed in Times New Roman, 12-pt font, normal margins, and double-spaced. You should also include page numbers. All information used in papers should be cited.

**Presentations**

Every few classes a group will present on a reading, or set of readings, for twenty minutes, then lead a short class discussion tying in your readings into what we’ve studied or discussed in class. Each group should provide:

1. Author’s name; book/article title/year
2. The author’s thesis (main argument)
3. Evidence to prove thesis and author’s sources
4. Five thoughtful questions or ideas for discussion from each group member based on themes in the course or current events. Cannot be ‘yes’ or ‘no’ questions.

Readings for presentations will be posted the first week of the course and students must select a date/theme to present on **Jan. 28** in class.

**Electronics and eating in the classroom:**

The world is changing rapidly. Studies suggest that you will retain and process more lecture material if you take hand-written notes, but I will allow laptops and tablets as well as long as you are not disruptive. Please be adult about this. If you want to watch MLBTV or Netflix, or
fervently refresh your Instagram, just do not come to class. Phone volume should be turned off and no texting is allowed in class.

I do not allow eating in class. It’s loud, messy, and it often smells bad (or good). Either way, it’s disruptive. If you have to eat, please step out of class to do so.

**Grading:**

Map Quiz 5%
3 Exams 30% (10% each)
Assignments/ Participation 20%
Research Paper 30%
Group Presentation 15%

Final grades are based on the following:

A:  93-100%
A-:  90-92
B+:  87-89
B:  83-86
B-:  80-82
C+:  77-79
C:  70-76
C-:  65-69
D+:  62-64
D:  59-61
D-:  55-57

Notes on grading:

If you struggle in the first few weeks, don’t fret. You will have time to make a comeback in most cases and I will take hard work and improvement into consideration when determining final grades.

**Extra credit** opportunities will present themselves throughout the semester. If there is an event on campus like a film, presentation, talk etc. on Latin America, submit a two-page review on the event. The first page should be a summary of events, major talking points etc, and the second page a thoughtful reflection based on class materials/readings. You should submit some evidence (photo, brochure etc) that you were actually there as well. The amount of extra credit will depend on the quality of the paper. Maximum two extra credit submissions for each student for the semester will be permissible.

**Late assignments/missing class:** I understand things happen in life, sometimes things that keep us from coming to class and completing assignments on time. Each student can miss up to three classes without any questions. The only exception is that you may not miss class on exam or presentation days except in special circumstances.
Late assignments will be accepted for up to one week beyond the due date, but I will deduct points for these submissions.

**Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:**

Many of you may not fully understand what constitutes plagiarism, but it is your responsibility to know. Violating the code of academic integrity at SDSU can get you kicked out of school. All of you have pledged to work with honesty upon enrollment and will take a quiz on plagiarism in this course.

Cheating will not be tolerated in this class for any reason, and any form of plagiarism will result in a zero for the course and a referral to the Dean. Don’t take this lightly. If you have questions, please ask.

**Student Disability Services:**

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, you contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.

*Course outline: (Note: Readings will be added as the course continues. Also, the course schedule may change depending on the tempo of the course. *)

**Introductions**

**Jan 21:** Introductions and review of the course syllabus

What is Latin America?

**What are Race/Ethnicity/Gender/Class/Culture?**

**Jan 26:** Nuts and bolts on important terminology

*Read: Rivera-Garza, “‘She Neither Respected nor Obeyed Anyone’”*

**Geography**

**Jan 28:** Geography of the Americas
Read: Chasteen, “Introduction”

Select presentation themes/groups

Map Quiz in class (cities, capitals, other features)

Encounter, Columbian Exchange, and the Black Legend

Feb 2: The Columbian Exchange; Disease

Read: Chasteen, “Encounter”
Read: Online piece on Moctezuma and Hernan Cortes (link on Blackboard)

Feb 4: Colonizing Process

Read: “The Requerimiento”
Read: “Sepulveda”
Read: “Guarani letter”
Read: Casting Spells

Colonialism and Slavery

Feb 9: Encomiendo; land systems; fueros;

Read: Chasteen, “Colonial Crucible”

Assignment due: Plagiarism Quiz due

You can find the quiz here: http://library.sdsu.edu/guides/tutorial.php?id=28
Please complete the quiz and send me a screen print of the final page proving you passed the quiz.

Feb 11: Slavery and resistance; Brazil; Haiti v. Dominican Republic

Read: “Maroon Communities”

Presentation #1: Joao Jose Reis, Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The Muslim Uprisings of 1835 in Bahia

Independence and Liberalism (latifundia); Neo-colonialism
Feb 16: Toussaint-Louverture, Bolivar, and Hidalgo

*Read: Chasteen, “Independence” and “Postcolonial Blues”*

Feb 18: Liberalism v. Conservativism

*Read: Chasteen, “Progress”*

Presentation #2: William Beezley, *Judas at the Jockey Club*

**The Mexican Revolution (1911-?); Nationalism; Populism**

Feb 23: Don Porfirio; Uprisings; Land Reform; Unions; Oil

*Read: Chasteen, “Neocolonialism” and “Nationalism”*

Assignment due: Bibliographies (must have five academic sources such as journal articles or library books)

Feb 25: Indigenismo, populism, nationalism

March 2: Exam #1

**Cuban Revolution; Marxism**

March 4: Martí and the US; Castro and Ché

*Read: Chasteen, “Revolution”*

March 9: Special Period

*Read: Cuba Reader excerpts*

**Development and Industry; Neoliberal Militaries**

March 11: Theories on Development; ISI

Presentation on citations
Read: Chasteen, “Revolution” and “Reaction”

March 16: Chile, Argentina, Brazil

Read: How to Read Donald Duck

Presentation #3: Marguerite Feitlowitz, A Lexicon of Terror

Week 9: Cold War continued; Central America

March 18: Guatemala, El Salvador

Read: Danner excerpts

March 23: Nicaragua; Film clips: Missing

Presentation #4: Giaconda Belli, The Country Under My Skin

March 25: Exam #2

March 30-April 5: Spring Break

Transformations, culture, and identity

April 6: Acculturation, creolization, and mestizaje

Read: Mestizaje in Chile

Presentation #5: TBD

Traditional Medicine, Science, and Medicalization

April 8: Scientific Racism (lecture with Argentina; Brazil painting; Phrenology etc)

Read: Sarmiento and Marti excerpts

April 13: Traditional Medicine and Medicalization; curanderismo

Read: Sowell

Presentation #6: Gregory Cajete, Native Science
Sports, Music, Race and Nation

April 15: Physical Education; Olympicism; and the Body

Read: TBD

April 20: Samba; Bachata; Hip Hop; Punk Rock

Read: Fernandes
Read: O’Connor

Presentation #7: Hermano Vianna, The Mystery of Samba

Borders and Flows I

April 22: Plan Colombia, Cartels

Read: Andreas

Assignment due: Research Papers due April 26 at 11:59pm

April 27: Immigration; Film: “Narcocultura”?

Borders and Flows II

April 29: Tourism, crafts, and

May 4: NAFTA; maquiladoras, Zapatismo

Read: Chasteen, “Neo-liberalism”

Presentation #8: TBD

May 6: Wrapping up

Finals: Exam #3