

PERSPECTIVES ON LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

LAMS 1190 – Online Version; Summer Session 1: June 1-July 9, 2010

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This course provides an introduction to the history and culture of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean from an interdisciplinary perspective. Students will gain not only a historical understanding of the diverse nation-states that entered the global economy at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but moreover, a basis for making sound observations and judgments about the contemporary political, economic, social, and cultural realities affecting Latin America and the Caribbean today.

People of Latin American and Caribbean heritage also have shaped the social, political, economic, and cultural landscape of the United States for centuries. As such, this course integrates an examination of the transnational dynamic between Latin Americans and U.S. Latino/as. Students are asked to analyze the shared hemispheric historical experiences among North, Central, and South American as well as Caribbean populations, experiences that challenge us to reconsider fixed regions of study that divide the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean into discrete units of inquiry.

The class moves both chronologically and thematically, covering topics such as political economy, nationalism and national identities, U.S. - Latin American and Caribbean relations and transnational migration, gender, human rights, and popular culture. It also focuses on questions of democratic representation, the struggles by many sectors for political, social, cultural, and economic inclusion, and the ways in which these struggles have been repressed, accommodated, absorbed, or ignored. We will approach the hemisphere comparatively, drawing similarities and differences between different nation-states.

Finally, the course examines how scholars from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds (e.g., history, political science, anthropology, art history, sociology, and religious and cultural studies) have conceived of and studied the histories and cultures of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Interrelated Course Goals

1. Identify and explain the diverse and interconnected histories of Latin America and the Caribbean's many inhabitants. (People)
2. Explain how shifting geopolitical borders and the physical landscapes of Latin American and the Caribbean have shaped the region's economic and social development. Identify those borders and the nations they demarcate as they have shifted over time. (Land)
3. Define the development and implementation of political economic models utilized by both governing elites and popular groups to establish and maintain power and legitimacy throughout the region's history. (Political Economy)
4. Examine how the many different and shifting forms of cultural expression and identity in Latin America and the Caribbean draw on a complex heritage of indigenous, African, European, Asian, national, and transnational influences and show the ways in which the region's popular groups and national governments historically have developed and manipulated cultural production and expression as methods to establish and maintain political power. (Culture)

5. Describe the impact of the long-standing economic, political, social, and cultural ties that link the United States with other nations of the Americas. (US Relations)
6. Distinguish among various disciplinary and methodological approaches to the study of Latin American and the Caribbean. (Knowledge/Disciplines)

Assignments

On-going Assignments

These assignments progress through the length of the term, each time building on the knowledge gained from the previous assignment. They are each focused through your focused study as a Home Country Specialist.

Home Country Specialist

Scholars of Latin America and the Caribbean typically are specialists in one “home” country and examine its history and culture according to the models of their specific discipline (e.g., political science, history, economics, literature, etc). However, scholars’ research and teaching also require them to comparatively understand and evaluate the situation of other countries in the region through the perspective of their “home” country. For example, historians of Mexico may teach survey courses on the entire region that also include the experiences of U.S. Latino populations and Cuban revolutionaries. Rather than assume general historical and cultural similarities in the region, this approach is also meant to underscore the unique national experiences of each country.

With that in mind, for the duration of the course students will become a Home Country Specialist (HCS) of one the following nations (one student per country). Through a variety of projects, HCSs will examine from different and comparative perspectives each of the first five goals of the course (People, Land, Political Economy, Culture, and US Relations). HCSs will pay particular attention to the historical hemispheric experience of their home country with the United States.

Choose one country from the following list. In order to diversify the Home Countries studied, there can be only one country studied per HCS (unless enrollment exceeds the number of countries in which case there can be more than one HCS per country).

- * Cuba
- * Dominican Republic
- * Haiti
- * Puerto Rico
- * Costa Rica
- * El Salvador
- * Guatemala
- * Honduras
- * Nicaragua
- * Panama
- * Argentina

- * Bolivia
- * Brazil
- * Chile
- * Colombia
- * Ecuador
- * Paraguay
- * Peru
- * Uruguay
- * Venezuela
- * Mexico

1. *HCS Newspaper Journal*

In this assignment you will explore the ways in which contemporary media sources report on and interpret the contemporary situation (within the past 5 years) in your selected “Home Country” (HC). For each module you will read two articles on your HC and post a brief (3-4 sentence) written summary of each them. One of the articles must explore the relationship between your HC and the United States (e.g. through politics, economics, migration); the other article can report on an aspect of current life in your country that somehow relates to the theme of the module.

Examples of English-language newspapers to peruse include but are not limited to the [New York Times](#), [Los Angeles Times](#), and the [Manchester Guardian](#). Their coverage is usually more complete (if not always more perceptive) than that of newspapers that simply subscribe to the wire-services. Other good English-language sources of contemporary news from Latin America include [NACLA Report on the Americas](#), [Latin American Perspectives](#), and the [Latin American Newsletters](#) from London. For those of you who read Spanish and/or Portuguese, there are also several good periodicals from Latin America and the Caribbean; please contact me if you are interested. Most of these publications are available free of charge on the internet.

2. *Comparative Group Discussions*

There will be five small group discussions related to the course goals (People, Land, Political Economy, Culture, and US Relations). In the discussions, students will compare and contrast one central theme from the perspective of each of their Home Countries in a c. 300 word text. Taking turns in groups of approx. five students, during each discussion one student will serve as spokesperson and summarize and integrate the perspectives of the other group participants into one c. 300 word text. The discussions and on-going assignments will assist your preparations for the course final.

Modular Assignments

These assignments pertain to specific modules and course themes.

3. *Modern Map Quiz*

Learn to identify the modern-day country boundaries of Latin American countries, with location and names of capitals. The ability to identify these locations and geopolitical boundaries will assist students throughout the course as they situate the readings and lessons in geographic space. Additionally, this contemporary information will help contextualize the comparative group discussions and the historical dimensions of the three empires map test.

4. *Three Empires Map Test*

Students indicate the historical contours of Latin America and the Caribbean's enduring relationship with colonial powers and how those empires have shaped the region's geopolitical maps.

a. Aztec/Inca Empires: Precontact era-1492

-Identify the extent of the Aztec and Inca empires and principle indigenous populations within them at the time of encounter with Europeans.

b. Spanish/Portuguese Empire: 1492-1810/1889

-Indicate the political administrative units of the Spanish and Portuguese empires. Identify origins of key founding populations (e.g., Europeans, Africans, Native Americans, etc) in Latin America and the Caribbean.

c. U.S. Empire: 1848/1898-present

-Identify the shifting geopolitical contours of Latin America and the Caribbean following the US wars of intervention in 1848 and 1898.

5. *Revolutionary/Political Movement: Case Studies*

In a 3 page (c. 750 word) paper briefly examine the reasons for the historical development of a revolutionary or national political movement in your HC. Examples include Fidel Castro in Cuba, Pancho Villa in Mexico, Rigoberta Menchu in Guatemala, The Landless workers movement in Brazil, and The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina.

6. *Performing Latin America*

Create a cultural artifact (song, poem, story, art piece) that depicts the many different and shifting forms of cultural expression and identity in your HC and how they draw on a complex heritage of indigenous, African, European, Asian, national, and transnational influences .

7. *Final Exam – Professor for a Day*

Exam covering topics from entire course. In the role of professor you will develop a mini course on Perspectives on Latin America and Caribbean with three lectures. Your task is to compose an outline for each lecture, write a justification for the outlines, and to write out one of the *historically based* lectures in complete prose. Therefore, you must decide what the most important events, individuals, and long-term trends have been in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as how you would interpret these events, individuals, and trends.

Final Grade Breakdown

Modern Map Quiz	5%
HCS Newspaper Journal	10%
Comparative Group Discussions	20%
Three Empires Map Test	10%
Revolutionary/Political Movement	10%
Performing Latin America	10%
Final Exam	35%

A's (90-100%) signify outstanding work, above and beyond course expectations. B's (80-89%) are for good work (demonstrating special effort, insight, creativity, thoroughness, clarity, etc.) C's (70-79%) are for satisfactory completion of course requirements. In order to receive full credit for your course work, you must turn them in by their specified due date. Late papers will be marked down 1/3 of a grade (C+ to C, A- to B+) for every day late and an entire grade (B to C) if more than a week late. Time extensions and incompletes will be given only under exceptional circumstances.

Collaboration and Academic Honesty

There are great educational advantages to collaborative learning. If you are able to, I encourage you to work together on the assignments for this course, many of which are appropriate for study groups. It is certainly advantageous to exchange drafts of your papers for constructive criticism before you submit them to me. Such collaboration is quite consistent with academic honesty; indeed, the two go together. Having said that, academic dishonesty, whether cheating or plagiarism, is a serious offense and will result in automatic failure of the assignment and perhaps further action. Please see the section on "Academic Integrity" in The Student Code.

Readings

Articles are available in Electronic Course Reserve (*ECR*) via the class HuskyCT site. Books are available through Powell's Books or Amazon.

Peter Winn, *Americas: The Changing Face of Latin America and the Caribbean* (3rd Edition)

http://www.amazon.com/Americas-Changing-Latin-America-Caribbean/dp/0520245016/ref=pd_sim_b_1

John Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire: A Concise History of Latin America* (2nd Edition)

http://www.amazon.com/Born-Blood-Fire-Concise-History/dp/0393927695/ref=sr_1_1 oe 1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1265569477&sr=1-1&condition=used

Other Numbers

Counseling and Mental Health Services 860-486-4705 www.cmhs.uconn.edu

Alcohol and Other Drug Services 860-486-9431 www.aod.uconn.edu

Contact Information

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COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Introductory Module

Module 1: Introduction: Born in Blood and Fire

Readings:

1982 Nobel Prize for Literature address by Gabriel García Márquez.

<http://nobelprize.org/literature/laureates/1982/marquez-lecture-e.html>

Winn, *Americas*, Prefaces and Chap. 1, "A View from the South"

Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, Timeline and Introduction

Román de la Campa, "Latinas/os and Latin America: Topics, Destinies, Disciplines" in *A Companion to Latina/o Studies* Edited by, Juan Flores and Renato Rosaldo, Blackwell, 2007. eISBN: 9781405126229 ECR

Module 2: The Colonial Legacy: Discovery, Conquest, and Resistance

Outlines the pre-colonial and colonial history of the region, tracing the pre-contact history of indigenous civilizations and Spanish and Portuguese colonization.

Readings:

Winn, *Americas*, Prefaces and Chap. 1, "Legacies of Empire"

Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, Chap. 2, "Colonial Crucible"

Film:

Conquistadors (3 parts, 47 minutes each) <http://ffh.films.com/id/4129/Conquistadors.htm>

Module 3: Emerging States: Dilemmas of National Development

Examines the how the region's emerging nation-states developed a sense of identity; worked to build viable states; and initiated projects of economic development.

Readings:

Winn, *Americas*, Chaps. 3 and 4, "Perils of Progress" and "Second Independence?"

Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, Chap. 3, "Independence."

Film:

The Empty ATM: Inside Argentina's Broken Economy (57 minutes)

[http://ffh.films.com/id/12839/The Empty ATM Inside Argentinas Broken Economy.htm](http://ffh.films.com/id/12839/The_Empty_ATM_Inside_Argentinas_Broken_Economy.htm)

Module 4: The Harvest of Empire: Expansion and Migration in 1848 and 1898

Examines the origins of the enduring colonial relationship between the US and Latin America and the Caribbean and how that relationship has resulted in a sustained transnational migration of between the two regions.

Readings:

Gonzalez, *Harvest of Empire*, Introduction and Chap. 3. **ECR**

Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, Chap. 4, "Post Colonial Blues" and Chap. 6 "Neocolonialism"

Film:

Noam Chomsky: American Foreign Policy in Latin America (2 parts)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pnhmq9HI0qY> and

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hxnNXyDkiKs&NR=1>

Free documentaries (Section for Latin America) <http://freedocumentaries.org/>

The Panama Deception | 92 minutes

Why was Manuel Noriega a friend of the United States and why did the US government mark him as an enemy and overthrow his government? This film explores the 1989 invasion in a manner different from what one would have seen on television.

Module 5: Guns and Ballots: Authoritarianism and Democracy

Explores the links between economic policies and the development of authoritarian and democratic political systems. Uses Brazil as case study, comparing it to other countries in the region.

Readings:

Winn, *Americas*, Chaps. 5, "Capital Sins"

Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, Chap. 5, "Progress."

Module 6: To the City: Migration and Urbanization

Explores the causes and effects of migration and urbanization, two of the most important forces transforming Latin America and the Caribbean in the 20th century. Examines Mexico City and the Mexico-US urban/industrial border corridor.

Readings:

Winn, *Americas*, Chaps. 6, "Continent on the Move"

Film:

Mexico City: The Largest City (26 minutes)

http://ffh.films.com/id/11602/Mexico_City_The_Largest_City.htm

Module 7: Revolutions and Revolutionaries

Examines major revolutions in 20th century Latin America using the examples of Mexico (1910-1920), Cuba (1959), and Nicaragua (1979), as well as more recent revolutionary processes in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Peru.

Readings:

Winn, *Americas*, Chaps. 13, "Making Revolution"

Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, Chap. 9, "Reaction"

Francisco Madero, "The Plan of San Luis Potosí" (November 20, 1910), Modern History Sourcebook.

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1910potosi.html>

"The Plan of Ayala" (November 25, 1911) <http://www.ilstu.edu/class/hist263/docs/ayala.html>

Fidel Castro, "May Day Celebration (1961): Cuba is a Socialist Nation" (May 1961).

<http://www.marxists.org/history/cuba/archive/castro/1961/05/01.htm>

Optional:

National Security Archive, "The Real Thirteen Days. The Hidden History of the Cuban Missile Crisis."

http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/cuba_mis_cri/

Film:

The Legacy of the Mexican Revolution (30 minutes)

http://ffh.films.com/id/8092/The_Legacy_of_the_Mexican_Revolution.htm

A Place Called Chiapas (93 minutes) Free documentaries (Section for Latin America)

<http://freedocumentaries.org/>

Module 8: Give it the Shade: Race, Class, and National Identities

Explores how since the colonial period race and ethnicity have historically interacted with gender, class, occupation, family, and generational factors to shape societies in the region.

Read:

Winn, *Americas*, Chaps. 8, "A Question of Color"

Nancy Appelbaum et al, "Racial Nations" in Nancy Appelbaum et al, *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003. **ECR**

Module 9: The Thin Edge of Barbwire: Gender, Sexuality and the Changing Roles of Women

Examines, with focus on Chile, the changes that have occurred in peoples experience of gender and sexuality in general and the lives of women in particular in the region in the last half century.

Read:

Winn, *Americas*, Chaps. 9, "In Women's Hands"

William French and Katherine Bliss, "Introduction: Gender, Sexuality, and Power in Latin America since Independence" in William French and Katherine Bliss, eds, *Gender, Sexuality, and Power in Latin America since Independence*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007. **ECR**

María Eugenia Echenique (Argentina), "The Emancipation of Women" (1876)

http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~wldciv/world_civ_reader/world_civ_reader_2/echenique.html

Film:

Chile: From Drama to Hope (59 Minutes) Film on Demand at UCONN,

<http://digital.films.com.ezproxy.lib.uconn.edu/portalSearch.aspx?sAll=t>

and

To Be a Mother in Latin America (60 Minutes) Film on Demand at UCONN,

<http://digital.films.com.ezproxy.lib.uconn.edu/portalSearch.aspx?sAll=t>

Module 10: Sacred and Profane: Public and Private Religiosity

Focuses on the importance of religion in Latin American and the Caribbean from both historical and contemporary perspectives.

Read:

Winn, *Americas*, Chaps. 10, "The Power and the Glory"

Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, pp. 274-277

Film:

Voodoo: A Non-Discriminatory Religion (04:26) <http://digital.films.com/play/B3E5XR>

Module 11: Political Culture, Cultural Politics

Examines the diversity, vibrancy, and historical role of various forms of popular cultural expression in the Americas. Special attention is paid to how popular groups have utilized expressive cultures for political gain.

Read:

Winn, *Americas*, Chaps. 11, "The Magical and the Real"

Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics, <http://hemisphericinstitute.org/hemi/> (spend at least an hour reading and viewing the different elements of this site)

Module 12: The New Frontier: Latin(o) American Migration in the US

Considers the growth in numbers and importance of people of Latin American and Caribbean origin living in the United States.

Read:

Winn, *Americas*, Chaps. 14, "North of the Border"

David Gutiérrez, ed., *The Columbia History of Latinos in the United States Since 1960*, 1-42 **ECR**

Everett Hoagland, "'Illegal' Immigrants & Legal Inhumanity,"

<http://archive.southcoasttoday.com/daily/05-06/05-04-06/02opinion.htm>

Portes and Rumbaut, *Immigrant America: A Portrait*,

<http://books.google.com/books?id=aJxtOzvFvuIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Immigrant+America:+A+Portrait&client=firefox-a&cd=1#v=onepage&q=&f=false>, pp. 1-36

Film:

Americano as Apple Pie: The Latino Experience in America (2-part series, 30 minutes each)

[http://ffh.films.com/id/1650/Americano as Apple Pie The Latino Experience in America.htm](http://ffh.films.com/id/1650/Americano%20as%20Apple%20Pie%20The%20Latino%20Experience%20in%20America.htm)

Module 13: Course Conclusions and Review

Review the material covered in the class, considering how the examples of the various countries studied illustrate the course's learning goals.

Read:

Winn, *Americas*, Epilogue

Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire*, Chap.10 "Neoliberalism"

North American Congress on Latin America (<https://nacla.org/>) Spend at least 1 hour reading through some articles on this site.

Module 14: Final Exam – Professor for a Day