

University of Oregon
Geography 214 – Geography of Latin America
Fall 2014

Class location: 110 Fenton Hall
Meeting time: M-W 08:30-09:50

Instructor: Mercedes Lu
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Office Hours:
Fridays: 4:00-6:00 pm

GTF: Belén Noroña
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Office Hours:
Wednesdays 3:00-4:00 pm
Thursdays 11:00 am -12:00 pm

Course description

Latin America is a dynamic region undergoing profound social, political and economic changes. Today it is not only United States' fastest-growing trading and strategic partner but has also expanded relations with China, India and other countries. This region is not only experiencing economic and population growth but it is also facing profound social, political and environmental challenges. This course is a systematic introduction to geography of the diverse regions that form part of Latin America, from Central America to the Amazon, Patagonia, the Caribbean and the Andes. It focuses on all the major aspects of the Latin American makeup: is physical, economic, political and cultural geography and environmental issues. Special attention is given to such issues such as the legacies of colonialism and the regions' social-spatial transformations in the last century: growing cities, migration, U.S. - Latin American relations and the effects of "free-trade" globalization. This historical perspective allows analysis of the social, cultural, political and economic factors shaping and transforming Latin America today.

Class objectives

At the end of this course students should be able to:

- (a) Explain fundamental concepts such as colonialism, imperialism, mestizaje, indigenism, class and race relations and its influence on modern Latin America.
- (b) Recognize and analyze the influence of economic and cultural globalization at the regional scale and in different sites.

(c) Summarize at least two key factors defining the political, economic, social-environmental transformations of Latin America today.

Methods of instruction

Students are strongly encouraged to make contributions to the class by active and regular discussion and presentation. Therefore it is imperative that you come to class regularly to demonstrate your contribution to class. In addition, class discussions, guest lectures, videos and group debates will be used to foster interactive learning.

No textbook is assigned for this course. All reading materials will be posted on Blackboard, under 'Course Documents' in blackboard.uoregon.edu. Every week there will be required readings for discussion. This course consists primarily on lectures, discussions and case analyses based on the assigned readings, movies and other materials. To get the most from lectures, please be sure to read the assignment materials before attending to class.

Discussion sections

Lectures meet on Mondays and Wednesdays, 08:30-09:50 am, in 110 Fenton Hall. Belén Noroña is the Graduate Teaching Fellow (GTF) leading discussions for this course. Discussion sections will meet in Condon Hall 106 according to the following schedule:

Mondays: 10:00-10:50 am, 11:00-11:50 am
Thursdays: 1:00-1:50 pm, 2:00-2:50 pm

Course grading

Attendance and participation	10%
Discussion exercises	15%
Reading journal	15%
Final project	20% (Due week 9)
Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	20%

Attendance and participation

I expect you to attend class regularly and participate in the class discussion. If you miss a class it is *your responsibility* to obtain notes from a fellow student. Credit for missed classes will only be granted if documented and if you do an additional write-up on a reading of your choice for the topic of that day.

Before each lecture, a lecture outline will be posted on Blackboard, these are only summaries and cannot substitute your own notes.

All the assignments will be due in discussion sections.

Reading journal

As mentioned, weekly readings and other materials will be posted on Blackboard. Every week students are required to post on Blackboard a short summary (could be bullet points) of the key arguments in the weekly reading or other material (i.e. video), a short comment, and (if necessary) issues that you need clarification or have questions about. The weekly reading journal will be due the day before your discussion section.

This material will not only be critical for students to prepare for the course's lectures and discussions, but could be helpful for the exams.

Final Project: Op-ed article (due Week 9 in discussion)

Each student will choose a political, economic, social-environmental topic of your choice (related to the course) and will write an op-ed article of maximum 750 words. In this article the student will discuss one particular issue, express his/her opinion and views of ONE particular topic. An op-ed article is **not** a news article describing an event or situation; it is your opinion about a specific topic what counts. Students are encourage to read the current news from Latin America (could be a region or a country) and define clearly the point you want to give your opinion about. Controversial news topics make great op-ed pieces. Clearly define where you stand. Do not waste too many words providing background information—get to the point and make your point well. Use facts to boost your credibility and make connections with the course materials.

Some sources of materials or ideas for this assignment

http://www.bbc.com/news/world/latin_america/

<http://edition.cnn.com/LATINAMERICA/>

<http://news.yahoo.com/latin-america/>

<http://www.npr.org/sections/latin-america/>

Midterm and final exams

The midterm and final exams consist of short and long answer essay questions, multiple choice questions as well as some map identification sections. No make-up exams are given without a note from a doctor or an athletic commitment for student athletes.

Course Policies:

- **Course Expectations:** As mentioned, I expect each of you to do assigned readings before class, and turn in all write-ups on time (you will not be permitted to work on them during class).
- **Academic Integrity:** Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. You may check the University Catalog and/or the Schedule of Classes for definitions and examples of, and penalties for academic dishonesty. Plagiarism software “SafeAssign,” provided by University of Oregon, will be used to ensure compliance.
- **Due Dates/Make Up Work:** Examinations must be taken as scheduled. Make-ups will be allowed only if you have contacted me **before** the scheduled date, with a documented serious excuse.
- **Laptop use policy:** You may use laptops in class to take notes. In order to use your laptop you will be required to sit in the first two rows of the classroom for every lecture.
- Please be respectful of one another in class and discussion.

Special Accommodations

If you have a documented disability and require additional accommodations, please contact the Disability Services Office (346-1155; <https://ds.uoregon.edu>) as early in the quarter as possible. Students with physical or learning disabilities should contact me to discuss what modifications are necessary.

Schedule (Reading material is open to modification)

Week 1-1	Introduction No reading material Latin America defined
Week 1-2	Pre-Hispanic background and overview of physical geography Miller, S. (2007). “An Old World Before It Was New,” In <i>An Environmental History of Latin America</i> , pp. 8-36. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Week 2-1	Colonialism and Colonial Legacies Colonization of Central and South America Miller, S. (2007). “The Colonial Balance Sheet” in <i>An Environmental history of Latin America</i> , pp. 77-104.

Week 2-2	<p>Colonization of the Caribbean</p> <p>de Las Casas, Bartolomé. (1484-1566) "Plague of Ants," pp. 34-38, in <i>The Oxford Book of Latin American Short Stories</i> (1997). <u>Placing Latin America</u>, chapter 2: pp. 31-42.</p> <p>Optional: Mintz, S. (1985). <i>Sweetness and Power</i>. Penguin Books, pp. 30-56.</p>
Week 3-1	<p style="text-align: center;">Post- Colonial social – economic legacies</p> <p>Latin America: From colonies to nations</p> <p>Jackiewicz, E. & Quiquívix, L. (2012). "Cycles of Economic Change: political economy from neocolonialism to the Bolivarian revolution" in <i>Placing Latin America</i>, Chapter 3. pp. 45-56.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional: D'Agostino, T. (2005). "Latin American Politics," pp. 75-82; 89-100 in <i>Understanding Contemporary Latin America</i>, edited by Richard S. Hillman.
Week 3-2	<p>1950's - Washington Consensus and Latin America</p> <p>Massey, D., (2006). Chronicle of a Myth Foretold: The Washington Consensus in Latin America. <i>Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science</i>, Vol. 606: pp. 276-315</p>
Week 4-1	<p style="text-align: center;">Race, ethnicity and social class</p> <p>Overview of race, ethnicity and indigenous people</p> <p>Clawson, D. (2006) <i>Latin America and the Caribbean –Lands and People</i>. 4th Ed. Oxford University Press.</p>
Week 4-2	<p>Video: Stepan, A. (2007) <i>Brazil in Black and White</i>. Laurenceville, NJ. Films Media Group.</p>
Week 5-1	<p style="text-align: center;">Geographies of resistance</p> <p>Mexico, Brazil, Central America revolutions</p> <p>Becker, M. (2008). <i>Indians and Leftists in the Making of Ecuador's Modern Indigenous Movements</i>. Duke University Press.</p>
Week 5-2	<p>Cuban revolution today</p> <p>Cohen, R. (2008, Dec. 5). The End of the End of the Revolution. <i>The New York Times</i>.</p>

	http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/07/magazine/07cuba-t.html?pagewanted=all&r=0
Week 6-1	MIDTERM EXAM
Week 6-2	U.S. Migration Navarro, L. (2004) To die a little: migration and coffee in Mexico and Central America. <i>Americas program, Interhemispheric Resource Center</i> , pp. 1-11.
Week 7-1	Alternative politics/power Castaneda, J. (2006). Latin America's left turn. <i>Foreign Affairs</i> . http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/61702/jorge-g-castaneda/latin-americas-left-turn
Week 7-2	Drug geographies Video: Velez, J. (2007). <i>Seis con Ocho</i> . Nomade Producciones.
Week 8-1	Environmental challenges: resource extraction and climate change Bebbington, A. (2009). The New Extraction: Rewriting political ecology in the Andes? <i>NACLA</i> , 42(5):12-20.
Week 8-2	Hall, A.(2011). Getting REDD-y: Conservation and Climate Change in Latin America. <i>Latin American Research Review</i> 46(4), 184-210. Latin American Studies Association.
Week 9-1	Cities Jackiewicz, E., Y Bosco, F. (2012). Chapter 4. Urbanization: Socio-Spatial Dimensions, Challenges, and Prospects <i>Placing Latin America</i> . 2 nd . Edition. pp. 57-79.
Week 9-2	Video: Films for the Humanities & Sciences. (2009). Brazil Urban Planning Challenges. Films Media Group.
Week 10-1	Globalization and Free Trade NAFTA, CAFTA, and other free trade agreements Dingemans A. (2012). Free trade agreements in Latin America since 1990: An evaluation of export diversification. <i>CEPAL Review</i> , 108. Pp. 27-48. <u>READ ONLY</u> pages 27-40 and 46-47.
Week 10-2	China, Mexico, Brazil. New trends for Latin America?
	FINAL EXAM December 8, 2014