

University of Toronto
Department of Geography
GGR341H1: Changing Geography of Latin America
Winter 2015

Time: Mondays 11 AM-1 PM
Location: SS 1074

Exclusion : GGR 249H1S

Instructor: Christian Abizaid
Office: Sidney Smith Hall, 5055
Office hours: Thursdays 1:00-3:00 PM,
or by appointment
Email: christian.abizaid@utoronto.ca

TA: Joanna Kocsis

Course description

Not long ago, Latin America seemed very distant to Canada and in the mind of Canadians. Today, our ties with Latin America are stronger than ever before –through investment, trade and consumption, foreign aid, tourism, migration, environmental and human rights issues, as well as culture and the media– yet Canadians still have a limited understanding of this fascinating region. Bound together by a common cultural heritage and colonial history, Latin America is, nevertheless, characterized by an incredible diversity of physical and cultural landscapes. Countries and people in this region continue to face many important challenges, including poverty and persisting socioeconomic disparities, environmental destruction, migration, and violence. At the same time, Latin America has been the cradle of a number of social movements against the neoliberal project in the region and beyond. This course seeks to develop a general understanding of present-day Latin America using a thematic overview and case studies to examine the diversity of Latin American landscapes (physical and cultural), and how they are changing within the context of globalization. The course is divided into two parts. Part 1 provides a general survey of the region with an emphasis on human-environment interactions, past and present. It addresses the physical environment and major historical, political, economic and social processes determining development patterns from colonial to present times. Part 2 connects the first section to relevant contemporary themes in human geography, including: urbanization, race, migration and transnationalism, environment and development issues, violence and security, and social movements. The course consists primarily of lectures, complemented by slides, some videos, and in-class activities. Guest speakers may also be invited.

Evaluation

- **Journal of newspaper coverage on Latin America (15%; due Jan. 29).** A 2 week review and analysis of current events related to the geography of Latin America through the press. More detailed guidelines will be discussed in class. We will continue to follow current events in Latin America throughout the term and will be devoting a few minutes to discuss them in class each week.
- **Research project.** Students are expected to conduct a research project related to the geography of Latin America. Students have the option to work individually or with **one** other student. Students working in pairs must inform the instructor via email **by 11:59 PM on Jan. 19**. Detailed guidelines will be provided later. The assignment is divided into two parts:
 - **Paper proposal (10%; Due Feb. 12)** This is a 1-2 page submission that outlines the proposed topic/issue for the research paper, why it is important and how you are going to address it. This brief assignment will serve as a way to introduce your idea to me, as well as to get early feedback before you start doing the work.

- **Research paper (30%; Due March 26) (~2500 words if working individually; ~4000 if working in pairs)** A short research paper that explores a specific question/issue related to a relevant theme in recent/current Latin American geography. A list of themes will be distributed with the guidelines for the assignment.
- **Participation and in-class activities (10%; ongoing)** (i.e., discussions, current events, case-studies, quizzes)
- **Final cumulative exam (35%; during official final exam period)**

Readings

Required textbook:

- **Kent, R. B. 2006.** *Latin America - Regions and People*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Other useful resources:

- **Blouet B.W. and O. M. Blouet (eds.).** 2015. *Latin America and the Caribbean, A systematic and Regional Survey 7th Ed.*. Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley and Sons. (older editions are also available)
- **Caviedes, C. and G. Knapp.** 1995. *South America*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall
- **Gwynne, R. and C. Kay (eds.).** 2004. *Latin America Transformed: Globalization and Modernity*. London, UK: Arnold, New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press.
- ***The Journal of Latin American Geography (JLAG)***: <http://go.utlib.ca/cat/7725525> (for more comprehensive coverage access via Project Muse)
- ***Latin American Research Review (LARR)***: <http://go.utlib.ca/cat/7730401>
- **The New York Times, Miami Herald, Los Angeles Times, The Washington Post, The Guardian (UK), BBC, CBC.**
- **CIA The World Factbook**: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>
- **Latin American Network Information Center (Lanic)**: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/>
- **United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC-CEPAL)**: <http://www.eclac.cl/default.asp?idioma=IN>

The required textbook will be available for purchase as an e-book directly from the publisher at: <http://www.guilford.com/books/Latin-America/Robert-Kent/9781572309098>, or as paperback through the UofT Bookstore. In order to reduce paper use and to minimize your costs, readings not included in the textbook will be made available through the course's BLACKBOARD, typically through links to the U of T Libraries. Alternative arrangements will be made for readings that are not available in e-format.

Optional Latin American movie showings

Films provide an excellent opportunity for learning more about a region. Optional movie showings will be organized to complement some themes discussed in class. A brief discussion will follow each movie. Students who attend and participate in these discussions will have the opportunity to earn extra marks. Dates and times will be discussed in class.

Proposed lecture schedule*

| | Topic | Items to remember |
|--|---|---|
| Part 1: A General Survey of Latin America | | |
| Week 1 (Jan. 5): | Course introduction and housekeeping | |
| Week 2 (Jan. 12): | What is Latin America? & Basic Latin American geography | |
| Week 3 (Jan. 19): | Physical Geography | Group list due Jan. 19 if working in pairs for research project |
| Week 4 (Jan. 26): | Latin America before 1492 | News Journal due Jan. 29 |
| Week 5 (Feb. 2): | The Conquest and the colonial period | |
| Week 6 (Feb. 9): | Latin America in the world economy | Proposal due Feb. 12 |
| Feb. 16 | <i>Reading week</i> | |
| Part 2: Contemporary Issues in Latin American Geography | | |
| Week 7 (Feb. 23): | Urbanization | |
| Week 8 (Mar. 2): | Race, migration & transnationalism | |
| Week 9 (Mar. 9): | Environment and development/ Climate change adaptation | |
| Week 10 (Mar. 16): | Violence and insecurity | |
| Week 11 (Mar 23): | Social movements | Research paper due March 26 |
| Week 12 (Mar. 30): | Latin America into the future & course wrap-up | |

* NOTES: Reading week is from February 16-20. Modifications may apply as the term progresses; students will be notified in advance, should any changes be made.

COURSE POLICIES AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Lectures and classroom policies

- Class will start on time (i.e., 11:10 AM). If you have to come into class late, please do so in the least disruptive manner possible. **As a sign of respect to the instructor and the rest of the class, arrivals after 11:30 AM are discouraged, as are early departures.**
- Class preparation and student participation: Although attendance is not formally part of the evaluation for the course, students are expected to do the assigned readings in advance and be prepared to participate in class discussions and in-class activities. I want this class to foster an environment that encourages student participation and questions. Please note that participation does count towards your grade.
- Course manners: You are expected to handle yourselves with respect toward the instructor, teaching assistant, and your peers in all matters related to the course, including participation in class, in-class activities, communications regarding course content or evaluation, etc.
- Etiquette regarding the use of computers and other electronic devices: The use of computers and other electronic devices in class should be limited to activities related to the course. Please turn cell phones off during class—ringers, earphones and texting are disruptive and unacceptable.
- Course notes: As a courtesy, I will be posting my powerpoint slides on BLACKBOARD **after** class. Please note that I am under no obligation to do so and that such notes are intended to assist you and not replace your personal notes.

- Copyright issues: Lectures and course materials are considered intellectual property and are covered by the Canadian Copyright Act. Students wishing to record a lecture or other course material in any way are required to ask explicitly for my permission. If granted, such permission is only for such student's own study purposes and does not include permission to "publish" them online or in any other way. Please refer to the "Rules and Regulations" section of the printed version of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Calendar for further details on UofT Copyright issues.

Written assignments

- Formatting: Coursework must be word processed, double spaced, 12 point font size, unless otherwise noted. Assignments should be proofread prior to submission to insure that they are free of grammatical and spelling errors and must include a list of all references cited in the text, using the APA citation style (see UofT research link in the resources section below). All coursework should include the student's name and the last 5 digits of their ID number, the course's code and name, and that of the instructor, in order to avoid loss or improper identification. Note, however, that there is no need to use a cover page to do so.
- Submission guidelines: All assignments must be submitted electronically through BLACKBOARD **by 11:59 PM** on the date specified by the instructor. It is recommended that you keep copies of your assignments and early drafts until you receive your graded assignment.
- Late submissions: Work submitted late will be accepted with a **5% daily penalty (including weekend days), up to seven days** after the due date. If needed, you may submit your assignment during the weekend as a way to minimize late penalties. In such cases, the date/time of submission will be considered, using 11:59 PM as time of reference. In case of an outstanding **valid** situation you must contact me, preferably in advance. I cannot consider a particular situation unless I know about it, so do not wait until the end of the term to communicate with me if something did come up. For health reasons, a completed University of Toronto Verification of Student Illness or Injury form must be submitted (<http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/>); other proof may be required by the instructor for non-medical reasons (see general guidelines and form put together by FAS available at: <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/petitions/process#documentation>). The required form must be submitted within a week of the missed deadline. No extensions will be granted unless you have communicated with the instructor and your reasons have been deemed valid.

Communication with the instructor

My preference is to meet with you in person. My designated office hours is a block of time in which I am available to discuss with you course-related matters (for the hours, see the first page of the syllabus). It is time set aside for you-- take advantage of it! Appointments may also be set for students who cannot come during scheduled office hours. For urgent matters or simple questions, you may also contact me via email, but **the rule of thumb is that email should not be a substitute for office hours**. Depending on the situation/issue, I may ask you to come to office hours or set up a meeting in person. Please note that I am not online 24/7 and thus may not be able to respond to your messages right away. I will make an effort to respond to you within 48 hours, but it will take longer during weekends as I remain offline to spend time with my family. Please make sure to use your University of Toronto email account (i.e. @mail.utoronto.ca) and to include the course code "GGR 341" and your name in the title box of your email for easier handling. Other e-mail addresses may be filtered as spam and thus I may be unable to respond to them.

BLACKBOARD

A BLACKBOARD has been set for this course. PowerPoint slides, additional readings, assignments and other useful materials will be posted on it. As mentioned earlier, assignments must be submitted through

BLACKBOARD. BLACKBOARD will also be used by the instructor to communicate with the class. Please make sure to check it regularly.

Grading

Please refer to the University Grading Practices Policy available at:
<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm>

Accessibility needs

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: disability.services@utoronto.ca or <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>. You may also want to contact Accessibility Services Office if you have problems arising from chronic issues or injuries sustained during the term that affect your ability to write tests or complete course work.

Academic integrity

Plagiarism is an academic offense at the University of Toronto. Plagiarism is quoting (or paraphrasing) the work of an author (including the work of fellow students) without proper use of citation. Quotation marks are required when using an author's words. Students also should not be submitting any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought, without first discussing with the instructor. For further information please consult the "Rules and Regulations" section of the Arts and Science Calendar (http://www.artsandscience.utoronto.ca/ofr/calendar/Rules_&_Regulations.html) and check the 'How not to plagiarize' website at: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>.

Cases of suspected plagiarism will be addressed in accordance with the procedure established by the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*.

Useful Library and Writing Resources

UofT Libraries Catalogue: <http://search1.library.utoronto.ca/UTL/search.jsp>

UofT Libraries Research: <http://discover.library.utoronto.ca/students/research>

UofT Writing: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice>

Reading list

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: What is Latin America? & basic Latin American Geography

Required by all students:

Kent, R. Ch. 2 "Latin America as a Culture Region"

Students whose LAST names start with the letters A-I must also read:

Kent, R. Chs.: 4 (The Hispanic Caribbean), 8 (The Andes) and 13 (Brazil's Atlantic Coastal Plain)

Students whose LAST names start with the letters J-Q must also read:

Kent, R. Chs.: 11 (Central American Highlands), 17 (The Pampa) and 19 (The Amazon Basin)

Students whose LAST names start with the letters R-Z must also read:

Kent, R. Chs.: 6 (Mesa Central of Mexico), 10 (Central Valley of Chile) and 15 (The Southern Brazilian Highlands)

Also suggested:

Price, M. D. & C. W. Cooper 2007: Competing visions, shifting boundaries: The construction of Latin America as a world region. *Journal of Geography*, 106 (3) 113-122.
<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/331425>

Week 3: Physical Geography

1. Kent Ch. 3 "The Environment"

2. Norberto O. Garcia, N. O., Nieto Ferreira, R., and E. M. Latrubesse 2009. "Climate and Geomorphologic-related Disasters in Latin America", In: Edgardo M. Latrubesse, Editor(s), *Developments in Earth Surface Processes*, 13: 1-27.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/460692>

3. Film: "The Motorcycle Diaries" (2004), by Walter Salles

Week 4: Latin America before 1492

1. Kent, Ch. 5: 67-77 (but including Table 5.1 on p. 82) & Ch. 7: 113-118.

2. Denevan, W. 1992. The Pristine Myth: The landscape of the Americas in 1492. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 8(3): 369-385.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/460741>

3. Mann, Charles. 2002. 1491. *Atlantic Monthly* 289(3): 41-53. Available online at:

<http://www.charlesmann.org/articles/1491-Atlantic.pdf>

4. Turner, B.L. II. 2010. Unlocking the Ancient Maya and their Environment: Paleo-Evidence and Dating Resolution. *Geology* 38(6):575-576. [2010 Unlocking the Ancient Maya and their Environment: Paleo-Evidence and Dating Resolution](http://www.geology.org/2010/06/2010-unlocking-the-ancient-maya-and-their-environment-paleo-evidence-and-dating-resolution/) Or: <http://geology.gsapubs.org/content/38/6/575.full.pdf+html>

Week 5: The Conquest and the colonial period

Required

1. Kent, Ch. 3: "The Columbian Encounter" section, pp. 49-53.

2. Kent, Ch. 5: From section "European Conquest" to "Early European migration" (inclusive), pp. 77-89.

3. Lovell, W. George. 2010. *A Beauty that Hurts. Life and Death in Guatemala*. Ch. 18: The Colonial Experience. Pp. 107-119. Austin TX: University of Texas Press.
(available through Blackboard)

4. Re-read: Kent, Ch. 6: "Historical geography and economic development" section pp. 94-96 (for Mexico) and Ch.15.: "Historical geography and economic development" section pp. 237-240 (for Atlantic Brazil).

Also suggested for more detailed information on the Colonial Period in Guatemala

Lovell, W. George. 2005. *Conquest and survival in colonial Guatemala : a historical geography of the Cuchumatán Highlands, 1500-1821*. Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/460702>

Week 6: Latin America in the world economy

1. Kent, Ch. 18: Latin America in the World Economy

2. Keeling, D. J. 2004. Latin American development and the globalization Imperative: new directions, familiar crises. *Journal of Latin American Geography* 3(1): 1-21.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/331424>

3. Reading TBD

Week 7: Urbanization

1. Kent, Ch. 14; "Contemporary cities and urban patterns"

***Plus additional readings TBD**

Week 8: Race, migration & transnationalism

1. Kent, R. Ch. 9: "Race and race relations in Latin America" section, pp. 169-177.

2. Durand, J. and D.S. Massey. 2010. New World Orders: Continuities and changes in Latin American migration. *Annals of the American Association of Political and Social Science* 630(1), 20-53.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/248758>

3. Reading TBD

Also suggested:

Mollett, S. 2011. Racial Narratives: Miskito and Colono land struggles in the Honduran Mosquitia, *Cultural Geographies*, 18(1): 43-62.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/460711>

Boudreau, R. and Prada, P. 2012. Exodus of workers from continent reverses old trends. *Wall Street Journal* (January 14, 2012).

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203550304577137174048327642.html>

Henao, L.A. 2010. More Africans finding home in Latin America. *Miami Herald* (January 25, 2010).

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/more-african-immigrants-finding-home-latin-america>

Lima, J., & Martins Jr., A. 2012. Mobility among Latin American migrants: The case of Bolivians in São Paulo and Brazilians in London. *Employee Relations*, 34(6), 594-612.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/349120>

Week 9: Environment and development / climate change adaptation

***Readings TBD**

Week 10: Violence and insecurity

***Readings TBD**

Week 11: Social movements

Bebbington, A., Bury, J., Humphreys-Bebbington, D., Langan, J., Munoz, J.P. and M. Scurrah. 2008. Mining and social movements: struggles over livelihood and rural territorial development in the Andes. *World Development* 36, (12): 2888–2905.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/460761>

***Plus additional readings TBD**

Week 12: Latin America into the future

1. Grugel, J., & Riggirozzi, P. 2012. Post-neoliberalism in Latin America: Rebuilding and reclaiming the state after crisis. *Development and Change*, 43(1), 1-21.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/354024>

2. Bebbington, A. and Humphreys Bebbington., D. 2011. An Andean Avatar: Post-neoliberal and neoliberal strategies for securing the unobtainable. *New Political Economy* 16 (1): 131-145.

<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/145785>