

**GEO 321/LAS 321**  
**Latin American Development:**  
**Environment & Society**

Mondays & Wednesdays, 2:15-3:35  
Eggers Hall 070

Professor Tom Perreault

Office Hours: Mon 12:00-1:00  
Wed 1:00-2:00  
or by appointment

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### Course Overview

This class examines the political ecologies of economic development in Latin America. In particular, we will focus on the ways in which Latin American environments and natural resources have been (and continue to be) enrolled in projects of regional, national, and local development. As a sub-field of geography, political ecology recognizes that nature and culture cannot be separated, and that our environments are thoroughly social and *political*. That is, who has access to what environments and which resources is a political question, which must take into consideration historically constituted relations of power through which Latin America has emerged and developed. The class is divided into three sections. Part I (Introduction: What and Where is Latin America?) briefly considers Latin America's formation and conceptualization as a region, and its place in the world political economic system. Part II (Development and Underdevelopment in Latin America) examines economic development in Latin America, as it has existed in theory, politics and policy. Topics here include land tenure relations, commodity exports, industrialization, neoliberalism, and the politics of indigeneity. Part III (Political Ecologies of Latin America) takes a case study approach to examine resource use and environmental politics. Topics here include agrarian struggles, natural hazards, water governance, climate justice, extractive industries, deforestation, and biodiversity conservation.

### Required Text and Readings

The class is organized around case studies, which in turn draw on the readings. As such, it is essential that you keep up with the readings in order to discuss them in class. There is one text for this class, available in the SU Bookstore:

Dym, Jordana and Karl Offen 2011. *Mapping Latin America: A Cartographic Reader*. University of Chicago Press. (**"MLA" in course schedule, below**)

This text is optional since we are reading only some of the chapters – too many to scan and post on Blackboard, but not enough to require you to purchase the book. I highly recommend that you purchase it if you can afford to do so because it is a fantastic resource on the historical geography of Latin America. Please note that you *are* responsible for assigned readings, and they will be discussed in class and covered on the exams. But it will be on reserve in Bird Library, in case you don't want to buy the book. All other required readings will be available on Blackboard. *Please bring the week's readings to class, so you can refer to them in discussion.* Readings for this class consist of book chapters and (mostly) academic articles. The class has a moderate to heavy reading load. It is essential that you complete the assigned readings *before* coming to class, so we can discuss them. Class participation in discussions of the readings is an essential part of this course, and will count toward your overall grade. Reading material will also be covered on the two exams. In short, you can't do well in this class without carefully doing the readings each week.

## Course Requirements

Your overall grade for this class will be distributed across two exams, two map assignments, a short critique and presentation of a current issue in Latin America, a short review and critique of a creative work, and participation in class discussion. Additional information will be posted on Blackboard.

## Map Assignments

You have two map assignments due during the semester. For each map assignment you will need to map a process, phenomenon or relationship in Latin America (not *only* a place – you will necessarily map place(s) as part of your map). I define maps as visual representations of spatial data. This is an intentionally broad perspective and leaves room for lots of creative approaches to map making. You do not need to have expertise in cartography or GIS in order to make the maps. A hand drawn map can be effective at communicating information, even if it's not 'technically accurate.' Your first map, due February 7, should show on social processes, relationships or phenomena related to economic and social development (e.g. processes of colonization, urban growth, trade, poverty, etc.). Your second map, due April 4, should illustrate environmental processes as they affect society (e.g. natural disasters, climate change, water use, deforestation, etc.). I will provide you with examples of maps from similar assignments in other classes, to give you some ideas. Your map should be accompanied by a written research paper on the processes or phenomena you represent in your map. The paper should be roughly 1500 words long (about 6 pages double-spaced). Assignment sheets for the map assignment will be posted on Blackboard.

## Current Issue & Critique

Once during the semester, you will be responsible for finding a current news article on a topic related to Latin American environment and development, and reporting on the article to the class. You will also need to submit a brief (~750 word) written review and critique of the article. You will have considerable freedom to choose the focus of your article and the news source. An assignment sheet will be posted on Blackboard.

## Creative Work Review & Critique

You will have one creative review and critique paper due during the semester. For this you will need to identify one piece of creative Latin American work – a novel, film, play, painting, sculpture, or substantial musical work (e.g. an album would count, but not just a single song) – and write a brief (~1000 word) review and critique of it. By 'critique,' I don't mean that I expect you to review it negatively. Rather, I expect you to engage critically with the work and place it in the cultural, historical, political, economic and/or environmental context of Latin America. You may submit your Creative review and critique any time during the semester, but no later than Wednesday, April 25. An assignment sheet will be posted on Blackboard.

## Dates to Remember

- February 7: Map Assignment 1 due
- February 28: Exam 1
- April 4: Map Assignment 2 due
- April 25: Last day to submit Creative Review & Critique
- April 30: Exam 2

## Grading

Map Assignment 1	50 points
Map Assignment 2	50 points
Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
Class participation	34 points
Current Issue & Critique	33 points
Creative Work Review & Critique	33 points

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Total 400 points

## Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

Plagiarism on course assignments is a serious offense, and is not acceptable. The University defines plagiarism as:

"The submission of any work by a student is taken as a guarantee that the thoughts and expressions in it are the student's own except when properly credited to another. Violations of this principle include giving or receiving aid in an exam or where otherwise prohibited, fraud, plagiarism, the falsification or forgery of any record, or any other deceptive act in connection with academic work. Plagiarism is the representation of another's words, ideas, programs, formulae, opinions, or other products of work as one's own, either overtly or by failing to attribute them to their true source" (Section 1.0, Syracuse University *Academic Rules and Regulations*).

Plagiarism is a very serious breach of academic honesty, and will not be tolerated in this class. **The first time a student is found to be plagiarizing, s/he will automatically receive a score of 0 for the plagiarized assignment. If the student is caught plagiarizing a second time, s/he will automatically receive an F for the course.** There will be no exceptions. Students are responsible for knowing University definitions and rules regarding academic honesty. For more information on plagiarism and how to avoid it, please see: <http://researchguides.library.syr.edu/content.php?pid=28194&sid=205457>

## Disability-Related Accommodations

Students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 304 University Avenue, Room 309, 315-443-4498. Students with authorized disability-related accommodations should provide a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS to Dr. Perreault and review those accommodations with him. Accommodations, such as exam administration, are not provided retroactively; therefore, planning for accommodations as early as possible is necessary. For further information, see the ODS website, <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu/>

## Student Athletes

I make every effort to accommodate practice and competition schedules for student athletes. Please provide me with your schedule well in advance of anticipated absences. Go Orange!

## Classroom Etiquette

Please use common sense and common courtesy in your behavior in lecture and discussion section. Arrive to class on time. If you *must* arrive late, please enter the room quietly and don't let the door slam behind you. Please don't talk or read during class. Persons behaving in a discourteous manner will be asked to leave the classroom. Classroom behavior will be considered in factoring final grades.

## Electronic Devices

Use of electronic devices is not permitted in this class. This includes phones, laptops, and tablets. Please be sure your phones are silenced *before* coming to class. Texting, checking email, surfing the web, or use of social media during class will not be tolerated. This is common sense and common courtesy. Please plan to take notes the old-fashioned way: with pen and paper.

## Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Identify and critically analyze contemporary environmental issues in Latin America and their relationship to national, regional and global political economic systems
- Identify and critically analyze models of social and economic development in Latin America and how these have changed over time
- Clearly and effectively communicate about issues associated with environment and development in Latin America in writing and verbal formats
- Design and execute a map that clearly and effectively communicates spatial processes and phenomena related to political ecological issues

## Course Schedule

Week/Date	Topic	Readings
<b><i>Part I: Introduction: What and Where is Latin America?</i></b>		
<i>Week 1:</i> Jan 17	Course introduction	
<i>Week 2:</i> Jan 22	What (and where) is Latin America?	Cupples (2013), chap. 1 MLA, chaps. 2 & 36
Jan 24	The making of Latin America: Conquest and colonialism	Jackiewicz and Bosco (2012) MLA, chaps. 3
<b><i>Part II: Development and Underdevelopment in Latin America</i></b>		
<i>Week 3:</i> Jan 29	Controlling labor and space: The hacienda and the plantation <i>Case study: Latifundios in Ecuador</i>	Striffler (2002) MLA, chapss. 18, 31 & 40
Jan 31	Latin America and the global capitalist system <i>Case study: Potosí (Bolivia)</i>	Marichal (2006) MLA, chap. 9
<i>Week 4:</i> Feb 5	Development and dependency: ISI, <i>dependencia</i> and land reform	Jackiewicz and Quiquívix (2012) MLA, chap. 37
Feb 7	Debt, the 'lost decade,' structural adjustment and neoliberalism	Perreault & Martin (2005)
<b><i>Map Assignment 1 due in class</i></b>		
<i>Week 5:</i> Feb 12	No class this week (TP in Mexico)	
Feb 14	No class this week (TP in Mexico)	

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<i>Week 6:</i>		
Feb 19	The politics of indigeneity	Becker (2008, chap. 1) Hale (2004)
Feb 21	Indigenous movements <i>Case studies: Ecuador's CONAIE</i>	Becker (2008, chaps. 8) Dosh & Klingerman (2009)

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<i>Week 7:</i>		
Feb 26	The pink tide and post-neoliberalism	TBA
Feb 28	<b>Exam 1</b>	

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<i>Week 8:</i>		
March 5	Urbanization and the Emergence of the Latin American Mega-City	Gilbert (1994) Auyero (1999)
March 7	The Right to the City <i>Case study: Mexico City</i>	Adler (2015) Zárata (2011)

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Week 8 (March 12 – 16)	<b><i>Spring Break (no classes!)</i></b>	
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<b><i>Part III: Political Ecologies of Latin America</i></b>		
<i>Week 9:</i>		
March 19	Agrarian Struggles 1: <i>Case studies: Honduras, Colombia and Brazil</i>	McSweeney et al. (2014) Taylor (2015) Gurr (2017)
March 21	Agrarian Struggles 2: Debating food sovereignty in Latin America	Food justice dossier (2012) Peña (2015)

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<i>Week 10:</i>		
March 26	Disaster capitalism: The political ecology of natural hazards	Camargo 2015 Stonich 2008
March 28	Climate change, water balance, and food security in the Andes <i>Case studies: Deglaciation in the Andes</i>	Bury et al. (2013) Fraser (2012) Blair (2018)

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<i>Week 11:</i> April 2	Urban water: <i>Case study: Anti-privatization mobilization in Nicaragua</i>	Romano 2012
April 4	Rural water: <i>Case study: Irrigating the Andes</i>	Boelens 2014 MLA, chap. 52
<b><i>Map Assignment 2 due in class</i></b>		

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<i>Week 12:</i> April 9	Extractive industries 1: mining	Bebbington (2009) Bebbington & Williams (2008)
April 11	Extractive industries 2: oil & gas	Finer et al. (2008) Davidov (2012)

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<i>Week 13:</i> April 16	(Under)developing the Amazon <i>Case study: Deforestation in Brazilian forests</i>	Brannstrom (2009) MLA, chap. 51 & 53
April 18	Biodiversity conservation <i>Case studies: Debating REDD in the Andes</i>	Erazo (2013) Spanne (2012)

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<i>Week 14:</i> April 23	Conservation and conflict	Ojeda (2012) MLA, chap. 56
April 25	Catch up and Review	no new readings
<b><i>Last day to turn in Creative Review &amp; Critique</i></b>		

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<i>Week 15:</i> April 30	<b>Exam 2</b>	
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