

## SO 188

### CONTEMPORARY LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN SOCIETY

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#### Course Description

This course introduces the basic political, economic, and sociological elements of contemporary Latin America and the Caribbean. It begins with an overview of the historical events that have shaped the region. While examining the region as a whole, this course also emphasizes the political, economic, and cultural diversity that characterizes Latin America and the Caribbean. Drawing from several disciplines, while emphasizing sociological approaches, this course explains some of the positive, as well as the more dubious events in contemporary Latin American and Caribbean society. Topics include popular culture, migration, political change, regional integration, urbanization, gender, and inequality, among others. Case studies will be selected for more detailed discussion based on current events.

#### Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Have an understanding of major historical events in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Understand the ways in which the historical, political, economic, and social climate of the region has shaped its contemporary society.
- Understand the region's heterogeneity, including its ethnic and cultural diversity.
- Understand some of the major debates surrounding regional integration, immigration, and emigration.

#### Course Requirements

1. Attendance and Participation (20% of final grade)  
This is a seminar, and your overall performance in the course depends on your commitment to reading and actively participating in discussions. Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to have read the required material before class and arrive prepared for discussion. Missing more than two classes will result in an automatic failure of the participation portion of your grade.
2. Pop quizzes (10% of final grade)  
There will be occasional unannounced quizzes, based on the readings and/or lectures. Students are responsible for being in class for the quizzes; there will be no make-up quizzes.
3. Short response papers (30% of final grade)  
These papers should be 2-3 pages in length, and the topics will be announced in class. Papers will be graded based on content, grammar, organization, and the solidity of your argument.
4. Research paper (25% of final grade)  
Students will be required to write one research paper, 8-10 pages in length. The topics will be discussed in class, but you are strongly encouraged to meet with the professor to discuss your topic.
5. Research Presentation (15% of final grade)  
Students will be required to do a presentation of the findings of their research project in class. All students will be expected to attend all of the research presentations and provide feedback to classmates.

### **Academic Honesty and Plagiarism**

The following is an excerpt from the 2008-2009 Course Catalog, stating Fairfield University's policy regarding academic honesty, academic dishonesty, and plagiarism. This policy will apply to this course:

Fairfield University's primary purpose is the pursuit of academic excellence. This is possible only in an atmosphere where discovery and communication of knowledge are marked by scrupulous, unqualified honesty. Therefore, it is expected that all students taking classes at the University adhere to the following Honor Code:

"I understand that any violation of academic integrity wounds the entire community and undermines the trust upon which the discovery and communication of knowledge depends. Therefore, as a member of the Fairfield University community, I hereby pledge to uphold and maintain these standards of academic honesty and integrity."

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Students are sometimes unsure of what constitutes academic dishonesty. In all academic work, students are expected to submit materials that are their own and are to include attribution for any ideas or language that are not their own. Examples of dishonest conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Falsification of academic records or grades, including but not limited to any act of falsifying information on an official academic document, grade report, class registration document or transcript.
- Cheating, such as copying examination answers from materials such as crib notes or another student's paper.
- Collusion, such as working with another person or persons when independent work is prescribed.
- Inappropriate use of notes.
- Falsification or fabrication of an assigned project, data, results, or sources.
- Giving, receiving, offering, or soliciting information in examinations.
- Using previously prepared materials in examinations, tests, or quizzes.
- Destruction or alteration of another student's work.
- Submitting the same paper or report for assignments in more than one course without the prior written permission of each instructor.
- Appropriating information, ideas, or the language of other people or writers and submitting it as one's own to satisfy the requirements of a course – commonly known as plagiarism. Plagiarism constitutes theft and deceit. Assignments (compositions, term papers, computer programs, etc) acquired either in part or in whole from commercial sources, publications, students, or other sources and submitted as one's own original work will be considered plagiarism.
- Unauthorized recording, sale, or use of lectures and other instructional materials.

In the event of such dishonesty, professors are to award a grade of zero for the project, paper, or examination in question, and may record an F for the course itself. When appropriate, expulsion may be recommended. A notation of the event is made in the student's file in the academic dean's office. The student will receive a copy.

(Fairfield University's Course Catalog 2008-2009, p. 29)

## Students with Disabilities

Fairfield University is committed to providing qualified students with disabilities an equal opportunity to access the benefits, rights, and privileges of its services, programs, and activities in an accessible setting. Furthermore, in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Connecticut laws, the University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified students to reduce the impact of disabilities on academic functioning or upon other major life activities. It is important to note that the University will not alter the essential elements of its courses or programs.

If a student with a disability would like to be considered for accommodations, he or she must make this request in writing and send the supporting documentation to the director of Academic and Disability Support Services. This should be done prior to the start of the academic semester and is strictly voluntary. However, if a student with a disability chooses not to self-identify and provide the necessary documentation, accommodations need not be provided. All information concerning disabilities is confidential and will be shared only with a student's permission. Fairfield University uses the guidelines suggested by CT AHEAD to determine disabilities and reasonable accommodations.

(Fairfield University's Student Handbook 2008-2009, p. 11)

## Fairfield University Writing Center

The Fairfield University Writing Center is a free resource available to all Fairfield University students. At the Writing Center, a trained peer tutor will work individually with a student on anything he or she is writing, at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Tutors have special training to work with students for whom English is a second language. The tutoring conference is collaborative; peer tutors do not write, proofread, or grade papers for students. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, visit the Writing Center website at [www.fairfield.edu/writingcenter](http://www.fairfield.edu/writingcenter) or stop by DMH 255.

## Required Reading

Holden and Villars, *Contemporary Latin America*

Other required readings are available on Blackboard

## Schedule (subject to change)

### January 23 – Introduction & Overview

### January 30 – Geography & History

- *Contemporary Latin America*, Chapters 1 & 2
- Kenneth Jost, "Democracy in Latin America," in *Global Studies: Latin America*, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition.
- "Political Regimes and International Processes" in *Latin America and the Caribbean in the International System*

### February 6 – Contemporary Politics

- *Contemporary Latin America* Chapters 3-7

### February 13 – Economy & Dependency

- *Contemporary Latin America*, Chapters 8-10
- *Understanding the Contemporary Caribbean*, Chapter 5 – Economies of the Caribbean
- Belal Ahmed, "The Impact of Globalization on the Caribbean Sugar and Banana Industries," in Sandra Courtman, Ed., *Beyond the Blood, the Beach, and the Banana: New Perspectives in Caribbean Studies*, Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2004.
- *Taking Sides*, Issue 17: Is the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Good for Latin America?

February 20 – Tourism, Poverty, and Inequality

- Gavan Titley, “All Sites Reserved: All-Inclusive Resorts and the Imagined Caribbean,” in Sandra Courtman, Ed., *Beyond the Blood, the Beach, and the Banana: New Perspectives in Caribbean Studies*, Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2004.
- Robert B. Potter and Sally Lloyd-Evans, “Sun, Fun, and a Rum Deal: Perspectives on Development in the Commonwealth Caribbean,” *Focus*, in *Global Studies: Latin America*, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition.

February 27 – Migration

Adela Pelligrino, “Trends in International Migration in Latin America and the Caribbean”

March 6 – Migration

Film: *Balseros*

March 13 – Spring Break

March 20 – Culture

- *Understanding Contemporary Latin America*, Chapters 11-14

March 27 – Drug and alcohol use

- *Gender Dimensions of Alcohol-Related Problems in Latin America and the Caribbean* (2002) – World Bank report; available online through the DiMenna-Nyselius library  
<http://elibrary.worldbank.org/content/book/9780821351253>
- *The Problem with Drinking* by Cheryl Harris Sharman, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), WHO [http://www.paho.org/english/dd/pin/Number21\\_article04.htm](http://www.paho.org/english/dd/pin/Number21_article04.htm)

April 3 – Today in Latin America and the Caribbean

- Recent and current newspaper articles

April 10 – research presentations

April 17 – research presentations

April 24 – New Directions for Latin America and the Caribbean

- *Understanding Contemporary Latin America*, Chapters 15-17
- *Taking Sides*, Issue 5: Is “Enhanced Commonwealth” the Solution to Puerto Rico’s Colonial Status?
- *Taking Sides*, Issue 18: Is International Aid Successfully Promoting Development and Stability in Latin America?