

The William Paterson University of New Jersey
Latin American and Latino Studies Program
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Online Office hours: Tuesday 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM

LAS 201 Winter 2011-12: Introduction to Latin American Studies

Course Description: The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the study of Latin America from the pre-Columbian period to the present. The class will analyze texts in their cultural, historical, political, and ethical contexts. Class will include a mixture of lectures, group work, films, and online discussions of assigned reading.

Objectives: Introduce students to a wide range of questions and subjects concerning Latin America. Read with greater understanding about Latin American issues, having acquired the necessary skills through close critical examination of selected resources. Discuss the crucial comparative elements common and uncommon to all Latin America. Discuss key historical, political and cultural movements.

Texts/Readings: *Selected Essays and Films provided by the instructor or available online.*

Grading System:

A) Final Exam Total - 30% (I will post the exam online and students will choose the questions they wish to answer (Short responses and one essay question)

B) Online class participation and activities- 30%. Discussion boards: weekly participation online is 10% and consists of a post or response to a question and one reply (or more) to your classmates.

C) New York Times Assignment - Total - 20% (see explanation below)

D) Response paper 20% (One, 2-3 pages)

NYT Assignment: You are to read 1 article in the *New York Times* – the article must be related to Latin America. Choose an area: science, sports, politics, economy or arts. After you have read the article you are to summarize it in one paragraph (50 words) and then explain how it relates to the Latin American Studies (50-100 words). Post a link to your article in the discussion board online and post your summary and explanation below the link. The audience for your summary and explanation is your friend who knows nothing about the topic. Your classmates will respond to your article and comments.

-Important: I will be available for online consultation during office hours and by appointment.

Date	Topic	Reading/Assignments
Week 1	Introduction, Early and Modern History.	New York Times Assignment
Week 2	Society, Family, Religion, Culture and Thought	Response Paper
Week 3	Economy and Political Culture U.S.-Latin American Relations	Final Exam