GEO3405
GEOGRAPHY OF LATIN AMERICA
Fall 2014
Tuesday (P2 & 3) 8:30 – 10:25 AM
Thursday (P3) 9:35 – 10:25 AM
FAC 120

Instructor: Dr. Simmons
Office Phone: 352-294-7511
Office Address: 3127 Turlington Hall
Office Hours: Tuesday 11AM – 2PM
E-mail: cssimmons@ufl.edu

Course TA: Tyler Rundel
Office: 3108C Turlington Hall
Office hours: 11:00-12:30 Tuesdays and Thursdays
E-mail: rundel@ufl.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES
This course is designed to be an introduction to Latin American Geography, and will consequently cover many topics with a broad-brush stroke, with the aim to fill in some detail regarding contemporary issues facing the region. To facilitate learning, the course will follow thematically with the required text, which divides the material into three components: Physical, Cultural, and Economic Geography.

The objectives of the course are to provide the student with an understanding of: (1) the variety of physical environments covering Latin America, (2) the cultural, social, and historic factors that influenced the creation of Latin American cultural diversity, (3) the economic, social, and environmental consequences of Latin American economic liberalization and globalization, and (4) the manner in which economic, social, and environmental processes coalesce to shape different geographies of development throughout the diverse regions of Latin America.

The classes will consist of lectures, group discussions, video/film presentations, and slides.

TO OPTIMIZE YOUR SUCCESS IN THIS COURSE YOU SHOULD:
• Consistently attend classes and related activities
• Prepare for class by carefully completing assigned readings on time
• Actively participate in class discussions and activities
• Review your notes following each class
• Understand course requirements; if unsure, ask
REQUIRED TEXT:


Other Readings TBA. Additional materials will be made available to you on Canvas (preferably), via e-mail, or delivered as handouts.

COURSE MANAGEMENT: We will be using the Canvas system to manage this course.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Required readings from the text are listed below. On occasion I will supplement our readings with additional required handouts and other materials.

Disclaimer: This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.

Week 1 8/26-28
Introduction to the course.
What is a region? What and Where is Latin America?

Readings: Chapter 1: The Changing Face of Latin America and the Caribbean

*Part I: Physical Geography*

Week 2 9/2 & 9/4

Readings: Chapter 2: Landform Regions; Additional Reading TBA

Week 3 9/9 & 9/11

Readings: Chapter 3: Weather and Climate; Additional Reading TBA

Week 4 9/16 & 9/18

Readings: Chapter 4: Natural Regions; Additional Reading TBA

*Reflection Assignment 1 Due 9/18*

Week 5 9/23
Wrap-up - Summary
9/25
Exam 1 - Physical Geography of LA
Part II: Cultural Patterns

Week 6  9/30 & 10/2

Readings: Chapter 5: Iberian Heritage, Conquest, and Institutions;
Additional Reading TBA

Week 7  10/7 & 10/9

Readings: Chapter 6: Political Change;  Additional Reading TBA

Week 8  10/14 & 10/16

Readings: Chapter 7: Race, Ethnicity, and Social Class;
Additional Reading TBA

Week 9  10/21 & 10/23

Readings: Chapter 8” Latin America as a Culture Region (Hmmm?)”;
Additional Reading TBA

Week 10  10/28 & 10/30

Readings: Chapter 9: Religion; Additional Reading TBA

*Reflection Assignment 2 Due 10/30

Week 11  11/4  Wrap-up - Summary
       11/6  Exam 2 - Cultural Geography of LA

Part III: Economic Patterns

Week 12  11/11 Veteran’s Day – No Class

       11/13

Readings: Chapter 10: Agriculture and Agrarian Development;
Additional Reading TBA

Week 13  11/18 & 11/20

Readings: Chapter 11: Mining, Manufacturing, and Tourism;
Additional Reading TBA
Week 14  11/25

Readings: Chapter 12: Urbanization, Population Growth and Migration;
Additional Reading TBA

11/27 – Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class

Week 15  12/2 & 12/4

Readings: Chapter 13: Development and Health;
Additional Reading TBA

*Reflection Assignment 3 Due 12/4

Week 16  12/9

Course Wrap Up and Summary

FINAL EXAM: December 17th between 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m

GRADING POLICY:

Grades will be based on the following items:

I. Exams – 350 points:

The points will be based on two tests and a final exam. The number of grade points available for each test is 100, for a total of 200 points. The final exam is comprehensive and is worth 150 points. There will be NO early tests, and NO make-up tests, except with a medical excuse.

Tentative dates for exams are:
• Exam 1 - 9/25 Physical Geography of LA and CA
• Exam 2 - 11/6 Cultural Geography of LA and CA
• FINAL EXAM: December 17th between 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m

Exam materials will come from all course sources including material covered in class, readings, labs, and/or videos. Exams will comprise a mix of question types including multiple choice, short answers, brief essays, and mapping. Examples of types of exam questions:

• Multiple Choice
  ____ 1. The Amazon forest region of Peru is roughly the size of:
  a) Brazil b) Maine c) Germany d) UK e) none of the above

• Short Answer
  ___________ is the language spoken by most indigenous people throughout the Andes.
• Short essay
   Explain key human and physical geographical factors involved in economic development differentials in Latin America. Use a relatively wealthy and a relatively poor country for your comparison. What are potential political, economic, and environmental causes and consequences of this difference?

II. Class Participation – 100 points:

Seven class participation assignments will be given throughout the semester. You are allowed to miss TWO activities without being penalized. Participation scores will total 100 points, approximately 20 for each of the 5 activities. There are no make-ups given for class participation. Although attendance will not be taken, class participation assignments will be randomly assigned throughout the term. Therefore, it is in your best interest to attend class.

III. Reflection Papers/Assignments – 150 points:

Reflection Assignments consist of three short (2000 words) papers, including: (1) your understanding of Latin America as a region; (2) analysis of newspaper articles on a contemporary issue in Latin America; and (3) a position paper on a theme to be announced. Each assignment is worth 50 points.

Specific due dates for the papers are given in the course schedule.

These assignments will also fulfill the University’s writing requirements, requiring 2000 words each, for a total of 6000 words. The writing will be evaluated on content, organization and coherence, argument and support, style and mechanics. Evaluations will be on individual work and the evaluated work will be returned to you before the last day of class. To receive writing credit you must receive a minimum grade of C (2.0) and satisfactory completion of the writing component, according to the rubric that follows.

GORDON RULE – RUBRIC FOR EVALUATION: “Satisfactory” and “unsatisfactory” indicate ranges for grades on Gordon Rule assignments.

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<th>CONTENT</th>
<th>SATISFACTORY (Y)</th>
<th>UNSATISFACTORY (N)</th>
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<td>Papers exhibit at least some evidence of ideas that respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provide at least an adequate discussion with basic understanding of sources.</td>
<td>Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off-topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources.</td>
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<th>ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE</th>
<th>SATISFACTORY (Y)</th>
<th>UNSATISFACTORY (N)</th>
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<td>Documents and paragraphs exhibit at least some identifiable structure for topics, including a clear thesis statement but may require readers to work to follow progression of ideas.</td>
<td>Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, may lack any coherent sense of logic in associating and organizing ideas, and may also lack transitions and coherence to guide the reader.</td>
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<th>ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT</th>
<th>SATISFACTORY (Y)</th>
<th>UNSATISFACTORY (N)</th>
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<td>Documents use persuasive and confident presentation of ideas, strongly supported with evidence. At the</td>
<td>Documents make only weak generalizations, providing little or no</td>
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weak end of the Satisfactory range, documents may provide only generalized discussion of ideas or may provide adequate discussion but rely on weak support for arguments. support, as in summaries or narratives that fail to provide critical analysis.

Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Sentences should display complexity and logical sentence structure. At a minimum, documents will display a less precise use of vocabulary and an uneven use of sentence structure or a writing style that occasionally veers away from word choice or tone appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly.

Papers will feature correct or error-free presentation of ideas. At the weak end of the Satisfactory range, papers may contain some spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors that remain unobtrusive so they do not muddy the paper’s argument or points. Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader’s understanding or severely undermine the writer’s credibility.

TOTAL COURSE POINTS = 600

Extra Credit:
Extra credit is available in two forms.

- (1) Students may earn extra credit points by attending a talk on campus related to the course. (Students must discuss with me the topic of the talk, and get prior approval to ensure points are granted). To earn points you must attend the lecture, write-up a 2-3 typed page summary, and present it to the class. **Students are allowed to complete 2 extra credit assignments, each worth 5 points.** The paper must be produced by word processing and be double-spaced with a 12 pt. font. The papers are due by 5:00 PM December 9th - no late papers will be accepted - no excuses!

- (2) Students may earn 1 extra point by reading a relevant and timely news report or article relevant to the class topic that week, and providing a brief discussion to the class (not powerpoint). I will ask at the beginning of class if anyone has something to present. There can be no more than four student presentations during a week, and I must be informed in advance. To get credit, you must turn in a printed copy of the article with citation, and give a succinct and articulate discussion to the class. Students can do this up to five times.

GRADE SCALE:

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<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-79</td>
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CLASSROOM CIVILITY AND RESPECT:

It is essential that all students respect the rights of their fellow classmates to learn. Therefore, I request that you…

DO:

(1) arrive on time, prepared, and ready to participate in class discussions and activities;

(2) respect the right of your fellow classmates to express their opinions;

DO NOT:

(1) carry on conversations outside the class discussion;

(2) read the paper or other materials not directly related to class;

(3) play music, and talk on your cell phone/iPod during class;

(4) make obscene, offensive, and discriminatory comments.

Computers and tablets are allowed, but only for note taking purposes. If you are caught surfing the web, checking e-mail, etc... the computer policy will be revoked for all.

Tardy.... Also, if you come to class late, please quickly find the nearest seat at the side of the room so that you do not disturb your classmates.

If you have questions about appropriate classroom behavior and your responsibility as a member of the UF community, please refer to the student code of conduct at https://www.dso.ufl.edu/scrr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/.
ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Although attendance will not be taken at each class, it is STRONGLY RECOMMENDED that you come! Some test questions will be taken from the class debates, and students are responsible on all tests for materials covered in class and from the assigned readings. In addition, group participation points cannot be made up and they represent a significant portion of your overall grade. If you are going to be absent on an exam day, you must notify me in advance. If that is impossible, you must notify me A.S.A.P.! Notification must be made directly to me and not via e-mail or voice recording. Exams can only be made up if you have a valid excuse with documentation to prove it!!!! Students are able to miss class for religious occasions. However, you must make arrangements with me in advance and it is your responsibility to catch up on class notes for those days you miss.

UF POLICIES:

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities: Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

University Policy on Academic Misconduct: Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

GETTING HELP:

For issues with technical difficulties for E-learning in Sakai or Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- Learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
• [https://lss.ac.ufl.edu/help.shtml](https://lss.ac.ufl.edu/help.shtml)

Other resources are available at [http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help](http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help) for:

• Counseling and Wellness resources
• Disability resources
• Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
• Library Help Desk support

**COURSE EVALUATIONS:**
Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at [https://evaluations.ufl.edu](https://evaluations.ufl.edu). Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at [https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/](https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/).