The purpose of the class is to deepen your knowledge of Latin America, train you to critique research on Latin America, undertake independent research and analysis on topics within the field of Latin American Studies as well as to prepare you to present your findings in written and/or oral form either in a traditional setting or on-line. As such, you are expected to work independently throughout the semester with the professor serving as a facilitator. In keeping with this purpose, we will have both traditional, in-class sessions and as well as (perhaps) “virtual,” i.e. Blackboard ones!

Your reading list for the semester will emanate both from me, the professor, and from you, the student. We will discuss what this means in the first class.

Textbooks you need to order from Amazon.com or any other bookstore:

Miller, Arthur and Ilan Stavans, Jacobo Timerman and Toby Talbot. 2002. Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number.

This book details the experience of prisoners who are imprisoned under repressive governments through the story of Jacobo Timerman, a newspaper editor arrested in 1977 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The account is at times gruesome, almost always tragic, yet at the same time speaks to the human spirit that manages to survive such atrocities. This book will put a sense of reality behind the headlines of the media that talk about “the disappeared” and “the arrested.” Timerman’s story is the story of many.


This classic book tries to explain the violent and violence in Latin America. It uses cases from throughout the region and also examines the United States’ role in the region.


In 2006, journalist Gary Leech was kidnapped by the FARC in Colombia. Though held for only eleven hours, Leech uses his experience to construct a historical context for the guerilla-drug business-official government links in Colombia.

This classic, originally written at least two decades ago, chronicles the life of a woman in the “favelas,” the shantytowns of Brazil. The book provides a stark look at the racialization of Brazil and the impact race combined with socioeconomic status exert on life opportunities.

These books are all classics, or soon-to-be classics, in the field. Each of you will generate your own reading list of books and articles during the semester.

Assignments:

1. **Generation of annotated reading list:** Each student will be responsible for researching and listing his/her own reading list for the semester related to his/her research/argumentative paper. This reading list should include at least 4 books and 10 articles. The reading list should be posted to Blackboard (as soon as it is activated). “Annotated” means that you write a little summary (2 or 3 sentences) under each title to explain what it is about. 10% of the final grade. Grade based on a) meeting the minimum number of readings b) quality of the reading list and c) quality of the writing in the annotation.

2. **Participation, attitude, attendance etc.:** Each student is expected to participate actively in both the traditional sessions and the Blackboard sessions for the class. This type of rigorous graduate seminar relies on students for its success. One part of that participation will be your ability to discuss/present the assigned readings, something you will do every week. 20% of your grade.

3. **On-line or in-class presentation:** Each student will choose at least two readings from his/her reading list to present to the class. The presentation must include a) a summary of the work and what it teaches us of importance about Latin America b) a critique of the work---what information it included and what it excluded, detection of bias, counterarguments that could be used to refute the findings c) a list of discussion questions for the class. 10% of your grade.

4. **Research Reflections:** Choose one topic that we cover in class related to research on Latin America. In a 5 page paper, double-spaced, reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the research (what are the main arguments/issues being addressed in the topic? What is missing? What further research should be undertaken?) You will present this both orally and hand in a paper. 20% of your final grade.

5. **Final Research/Argumentative Paper and Presentation:** Complete a 15-20 page research or argumentative paper on a topic of your choice related to Latin America. This paper should include outside research, not just sources from your reading list. Please choose a topic of great interest to Y-O-U! Make it your passion. Read with energy. Do not be afraid of making mistakes. A research paper analyzes a topic (for example, the impact of neoliberal economic policies on poverty rates in Latin America). An argumentative paper takes a stance (why neoliberal policies decrease poverty rates in the Latin American context). In both cases, you need to have outside resources to support what you are writing. You will present your research orally in addition to handing in your paper. 20% of your final grade.
Articles assigned will be either posted on Blackboard or available at the library electronic repository through EBSCO.

6. Journal entries. Each week you will submit a journal entry with your comments on the assigned reading. Entries must be submitted each Wednesday (the day before discussion on the texts take place. They will have a value of 20% of your grade.

GRADE:
- Annotated reading list 10%
- Participation 20%
- Presentations 10%
- Research Reflections 20%
- Final Paper 20%
- Journal Entries 20%

Syllabus may be modified. Plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Students.

NOTE: Each student will invite one speaker to our class to talk about a topic related to our course. Preferently, speakers will present during our 13th week.

Schedule (Subject to modification)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thursday, January 25</td>
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<td>In the first classes we will:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a) introduce ourselves</td>
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<td>b) review the syllabus</td>
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<td>c) answer questions about the class</td>
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<td>d) learn some research skills</td>
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<td>e) talk about contemporary Latin American issues</td>
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<td>f) explore bias/critical reading</td>
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**TOPIC 1: Introduction to Latin America**

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<th>Week 2:</th>
<th>Read:</th>
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Please bring in one mass media (newspaper, magazine, internet source etc.) article about Latin America. Think about the following:

In which country was your article written? What does it teach us about Latin America or a specific issue in Latin America? How does it portray other nations (if it does)? What else can you tell us about the article and its relation to Latin America?
| TOPIC 2: Violence in Latin America-Explaining Its Origins | Week 3 | Read Children of Cain  
| Topic 4: Race and Gender (case study: Brazil) | Week 5  
February 20 | Read Child of the Dark  
|---|---|---|
| Topic 6: Feminicide (case studies Mexico and Guatemala) | Week 7 | Read  
| | March 6 | Spring break 10-14 |
| Topic 7: Student Research | Week 8  
March 20 | First research reflections presentation |
|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------------|
| Topic 8: Student Research  | Week 9  
March 27 | Second research reflections presentation |
| Topic 9: Human Trafficking | Week 10  
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Topic 10: Immigration</strong></th>
<th><strong>Week 11</strong></th>
<th><strong>Read:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>April 10</strong></td>
<td>The web page of US Citizenship and Immigration Services: <a href="http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis">http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis</a></td>
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<td>The NPR series at <a href="http://www.npr.org/series/5310549/the-immigration-debate">http://www.npr.org/series/5310549/the-immigration-debate</a></td>
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| Topic 11: Student Annotated Bibliography | Week 12  
| | April 17  
| | Students will hand in their written annotated bibliography and present at least two of the readings on their bibliography to the class.  
| Topic 12: Guest speakers | Week 13  
| | April 24  
| | Speakers invited by students  
| Topic 13: Latin American Art | Week 14  
| | May 1st.  

| Topic 14 Final research papers and presentations due | Week 15  
May 8 | Class presentations |
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<tr>
<td>Topic 14 Final research papers and presentations due</td>
<td>Final Exam Session</td>
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