

Graduate Seminar: Contemporary Latin America

LABS 5302 | CRN: 24904 | Spring 2021 | Online via Zoom | Tuesdays 6.00-8.50pm

Instructor: Dr Silvia Torezani

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Phone: (915) 747-6829 (n/a due to current COVID social distancing restrictions)

Office: Center for Inter-American and Border Studies (CIBS)

Office Hours: via Zoom, by appointment, (email to arrange time)

Course Overview

There are many ways to describe 'Latin America.' The historical interconnections between Latin America and other regions of the world, including Europe and the United States, are inherent to what we call contemporary Latin America, as are the social, economic, cultural and political consequences of such long and complex interactions. In this class, we will discuss them in depth through a variety of scholarly readings and other materials. This seminar looks at the production and effects of some drastic changes that this region has undergone in the last couple of centuries, with a heavier focus on the Southern Cone countries. We will consider critical events in the region from multiple and different perspectives, including cultural, ideological, territorial, technological, financial and political deployments. We will use conceptual toolkits to analyze moral and practical implications of contemporary issues in Latin America.

Course Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course students will gain: a) a clear understanding of conceptual frameworks to analyze the production and effects of social life; b) the ability to assess critically the various contexts covered; c) the skills to critically apply conceptual frameworks to the analysis of practical challenges in diverse social contexts; d) the ability to identify larger (global) interconnections to seemingly localized issues; e) nuanced awareness of key contemporary issues in Latin America in historical depth.

Course Format

This *course runs as a seminar*. All meetings will be based on the extensive, in-depth, discussion of assigned readings. It is your responsibility to always come to class prepared, with all materials thoroughly and fully covered.

Required Texts

There are 7 required texts for this course. They are:

* **Arendt, H.** (1972) *Crises of the Republic*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. 9780520297937

* **Brennan, J.P.** (2018) *Argentina's Missing Bones*. University of California Press.

* **Fontes, A.W.** (2018) *Mortal Doubt*. University of California Press.

- * **Gálvez, A.** (2018) *Eating Nafta: Trade, Food Policies, and the Destruction of Mexico*. First edition. University of California Press.
- * **Hall, A.C.** (2017) *Framing a Lost City: Science, Photography, and the Making of Machu Picchu* (Joe R. And Teresa Long Series in Latin American and Latino Art and Culture). University of Texas Press.
- * **Jarrin, A.** (2017) *The Biopolitics of Beauty*. University of California Press.
- * **Ryburn, M.** (2018) *Uncertain Citizenship: Everyday Practices of Bolivian Migrants in Chile*. First edition. University of California Press.

Course Requirements

All detailed guidelines for course requirements are available via Blackboard. For due dates see the course schedule at the end of the syllabus.

- ◆ **Class Discussion and Attendance:** (40 points) This is a seminar-style class, therefore, you must come fully prepared and contribute to the day's discussion. You are also expected to come to class on time or a few minutes earlier. Only ONE class absence is permitted. However, on the day you are absent you cannot earn points. I do not accept reading response papers corresponding to classes you did not attend, unless you contact me in advance with a very reasonable justification or in case of an emergency, for which I will require adequate documentation. More than one class absence may negatively affect your overall course grade.
- ◆ **Student-Led Class Discussion:** (40 points) On the first day of class you will be assigned a date for you to lead the discussion during one class session. You will be responsible for presenting the contents of the assigned readings and moderating the class discussion.
- ◆ **Reading Response Papers:** (63 points) (You will need to turn in 7 weekly response papers on each of the assigned readings. These papers must be submitted via Blackboard by 11pm the night prior to the class meeting. The grade of these papers is tied to your class attendance. There will be no make up or extension date for missed assignment deadlines. Missing more than one paper submission may negatively affect your overall grade for the course.
- ◆ **Research Draft, Presentation & Final Paper:** (57 points). This is a multi-part assignment. It involves the following: a) topic selection and outline (7 points); b) final paper draft (15 points); c) final paper (20 points); and d) final oral presentation (15). Note that ALL components are required for the grade. One without the others will result in no grade. (See guidelines on Blackboard).

Course Policies

Late Submission Policy: Assignments submitted passed their deadlines will receive a 10% deduction per day. Only under serious and exceptional circumstances I may waive this penalty. But you must contact me **before** the deadline. After 3 days passed the deadline (weekend days are counted), assignments will **not** be accepted or graded.

Grading Policy: Grades will be assigned based on the completeness and quality of your work (in writing and orally), your ability to follow guidelines, how you address and incorporate feedback

from previously graded assignments and your engagement during class periods. The more consistent you are in addressing all the course requirements, the better you will do in this course. The grading scale for the course is out of 200 points (100%):

- ◇ **A** 90%-100% = 190 -200 points, based on consistent high-quality work, excellent incorporation of theories, use of concepts and critical analysis of the class materials. The student goes above and beyond the mere completion of assigned readings. The assignments are clearly structured and well written. The student carefully incorporates feedback and follows guidelines.
- ◇ **B** 80%-89% = 160 - 189 points, based on very good consistent work, with incorporation of key concepts, demonstrated ability to identify key issues and implications for the analysis of social problems. The student reports on the readings accurately. The student incorporate most feedback and tends to follow guidelines well but, at times, not consistently.
- ◇ **C** 70%-79% = 140 - 159 points, based on mostly scant readings, possibly with some inconsistencies in quality of work and/or tendency to focus on too much detail but with some difficulty to address the more abstract or conceptual aspect of the assigned materials. Arguments, concepts and theories may not be adequately or consistently incorporated. It is also possible that the student does not express ideas with clarity in their written work. Utilizing the services of the Writing Center is required in such cases.
- ◇ **D** 60%-69% = 120 - 139 points;
- ◇ **F** below 59% = 119 points or below

Academic Honesty and Integrity: As a university student, you are responsible for your own academic behavior and for making yourself fully aware of the university's policies and definition of academic integrity. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism and collusion. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for disciplinary action. In addition to receiving a failing grade in this class, students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions. Further information can be gained from the UTEP Dean of Students web page. Go to <http://www.utep.edu/dos/>, then click the "Student Conduct" tab on the top.

Help with Writing: The UWC or University Writing Center (Library Building 277, on the ground floor) provides a range of services at no cost. Call 747-5112 or visit <http://academics.utep.edu/writingcenter> for more information. The UWC offers online tutoring whereby you upload your paper and they provide comments.

Course Schedule

Date	Due Readings	Due Assignments
Week 1 Tue 1/19	Todorov (video link sent via email week prior to start of semester)	1. Class Discussion on video 2. Response paper 1 (practice, graded)
Week 2 Tue 1/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latin America current affairs bring a relevant short piece of your choice to discuss (details provided on Week 1, during class meeting); • Introduction to key concepts (readings will be emailed to students on week 1) 	1. Class Discussion 2. Bring your articles
Week 3 Tue 2/2	Arendt (whole book)	1. Response paper 1 2. Student-led discussion
Week 4 Tue 2/9	Brennan (whole book) Relevant sections of Arendt's book	1. Response paper 2 2. Student-led discussion
Week 5 Tue 2/16	Jarrin (whole book) Relevant sections of Arendt's book	1. Response paper 3 2. Student-led discussion
Week 6 Tue 2/23	Ryburn (whole book) Relevant sections of Arendt's book	1. Response paper 4 2. Student-led discussion
Week 7 Tue 3/2	Student-selected research articles (2-3 authoritative sources) Part 1	1. Student research topic presentations and peer-feedback
Week 8 Tue 3/9	Student-selected research authoritative scholarly articles (2-3 articles) Part 2	1. Student research topic presentations and peer-feedback 2. Submit Research Topic and Paper Outline -due on Friday 3/12
Week 9 3/15-3/19 SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS MEETING		
Week 10 Tue 3/23	Hall (whole book) Relevant sections of Arendt's book	1. Response paper 5 2. Student-led discussion
Week 11 Tue 3/30	Fontes (whole book) Relevant sections of Arendt's book	1. Response paper 6 2. Student-led discussion
Week 12 Tue 4/6	Galvez (whole book) Relevant sections of Arendt's book	1. Response paper 7 2. Student-led discussion
Week 13 Tue 4/13	Work independently on your final paper draft (no class meeting)	1. Final Paper Draft - due Tuesday 4/13, 11PM via Blackboard
Week 14 Tue 4/20	Final Research Paper Presentation PPT (Part 1)	1. Final Presentation PPT -Submit via Blackboard by Monday 4/19 11pm 2. ALL STUDENTS MUST SUBMIT, regardless of week of presentation
Week 15 Tue 4/27	Final Research Paper Presentation PPT (Part 2)	Continues from previews week
Week 16 Tue 5/4	Final Research Paper and wrap up	1. Submit your Final Research Paper (submit via Blackboard by Tuesday 5/4 11pm)