

# The Americas

LABS 3300 | CRN 28438 | Spring 2020 | Liberal Arts Building 211 | T-R 10.30-11.50am

**Instructor: Dr Silvia Torezani**

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

1415 Hawthorne St (Corner with Crosby)

**Ph:** 747-6829 | **Email:** satorezani@utep.edu

**Office Hours:** Monday 10:00 - 11:30 am and by appointment

**T.A.: Eduardo Bouche**

**Email:** ehbouche@miners.utep.edu, CIBS

## Course Description

This course places Latin America in the global context while taking into account key regional differences. The Americas will take you on a journey to how societies in Latin America have responded to past and contemporary social problems, including migrations, within Latin American countries and migrations from around the world to Latin America, economic and political crises, as well as music, religion, sports and human rights. This course requires the student to think of these problems in specific as well as larger social contexts and establish complex, thoughtful and scholarly informed relationships.

## Course Format

This course runs in a seminar-style format, recommended for motivated undergraduate students interested in developing their knowledge in Latin America. Therefore, the classes are designed as a series of interactive conversations. Group and individual oral and written assignments are set to encourage students to analyse and synthesize information in a rigorous and scholarly manner.

## Course Objectives and Outcomes

We will delve into a variety of reading and thinking exercises aimed at critically assessing the validity and currency of commonly held assumptions about Latin America. At the end of this course, students will gain:

1. General knowledge of relevant geographies and contemporary political, social and cultural events
2. A theoretical framework for understanding key social problems in selected countries in Latin America
3. A more nuanced perspective on the cultural, socio-economic and political interconnections between Latin American countries and the Global North
4. Professional transferable skills, including academic writing, public speaking, team work, leadership and critical and analytical thinking.

## Required Texts

**Eisenbrandt, Matt.** 2017. *Assassination of a Saint : the Plot to Murder Óscar Romero and the Quest to Bring His Killers to Justice.* Oakland, California: University of California Press.

**Gutmann, Matthew, and Jeffrey Lesser.** 2016. *Global Latin America: Into the Twenty-First Century.* Oakland, California: University of California Press.

**Ryburn, Megan.** 2018. *Uncertain Citizenship: Everyday Practices of Bolivian Migrants in Chile.* University of California Press.

## Assignments and Grades

You can earn up to 500 points in the class. All in-class assignments require your engaged participation and physical presence for the entire class period.

- 1. Class Participation and Activities** (graded daily, 100 points or 20%)
- 2. Reading Tests** (3 during the semester, 3 x 50 points = 150 points or 30%)
- 3. Student Presentation and Led-Discussion** (once during the semester, (50 points or 10%)
- 4. Major Final Assignment** (multi-part, 200 points or 40%). You have two options, each with different components you will need to fulfil by their respective due dates (see below and course schedule).

<b>Option I: Service Learning in collaboration with the Center for Civic Engagement</b>	<b>Option II: Research Paper</b>
a. Community group selection (due 2/11, 20 points)	a. Topic selection (due 2/27, 20 points)
b. 20 hours of service learning (due 4/25, 120 points)	b. Paper Draft (due 4/7, 40 points)
c. Service Learning Reflection (due 5/1, 40 points)	c. Final Paper (due 5/1, 120 points)
d. Oral Presentation (due May 5 & 7, 20 points)	d. Oral Presentation (due May 5 & 7, 20 points)

Detailed guidelines for all course assignments will be available on Blackboard.

You will be graded based on the following criteria for all assignments:

- a. Punctuality (recurrent tardiness is unacceptable).
- b. Preparedness. You are expected to come to class prepared, with your readings completed and ready to engage in an informed conversation. While personal opinion is

okay, full points toward the course grade can only be earned on demonstration of having completed the assigned readings.

c. Critical and thorough reflection on the topics covered through the assigned readings. Going beyond the mere summary of reading is expected.

d. Peer-collaboration. There are assignments that require team work. It is expected that you will work to contribute positively to the team.

All main written assignments must be submitted via Blackboard on or before their due dates. See course schedule. **I do NOT accept hand-written work**, with the exception of those developed during class periods, whenever required as part of the day's activities.

You can earn up to 40 extra credit points throughout the semester by attending professor-announced and approved events. You will need to download the Extra Credit Form from Blackboard, have it signed by the event organizer and submit to your professor on the next class period and no later than one week after the event. You may also earn extra credit points by making an appointment with the professor to discuss your final draft, be it of your Service Learning Report or your Final Research Paper.

### **Grading Scale**

A 90%-100% = 450 points or above

B 80%-89% = 400 - 449 points

C 70%-79% = 350 - 399 points

D 60%-69% = 300 - 349 points

F below 59% = 299 points or below

**Note:** It is important, and your responsibility, to keep track of your grades. They will be uploaded onto Blackboard within a week of each submitted assignment.

### **Backing Up Your Work**

It is your responsibility to make sure you back up your work safely and regularly to avoid missing deadlines. It is also your responsibility to keep copies of all your graded work.

### **Using Blackboard**

This course uses Blackboard for grades, assignment submissions and announcements to class, specified assignment submission (i.e. final paper), and other course activities. You can access help by contacting the Help Desk. Visit <http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=63402> for more details.

### **Course Communication**

I always welcome interaction with students. Should you have any questions or concerns relevant to this class or that may affect your performance at any point in time during the semester, please make sure to get in touch with me. I am available during office hours each week and by appointment. My preferred means of communication with students is in person during office hour or via email. I also use the "Announcements"

function on Blackboard extensively. Hence, it is really important that you check Blackboard on a regular basis in between class periods.

I do NOT reply to emails during weekends or UTEP's official holidays. I will do my best to answer your enquiry as early as possible. However, you should allow 24 hours for me to respond during week days. It is always in your best interest to act promptly and contact me with plenty of time, so I can assist you. Please do not wait until the last minute or after assignments are due to discuss your concern, as I may not be able to help.

### **Dropping Class**

I do NOT drop students from class. It is your responsibility to know the University drop dates, and officially withdraw. <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/registrar/Academic%20Calendars/academic-calendar.html>.

### **Information subject to change**

While I have made my best effort to provide dates for due readings and assignments, they may change at your professor's discretion. Changes will be given due notice in class and via Blackboard.

### **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 on-line tutoring whereby you upload your paper and they provide comments.

### **Library Services**

The UTEP Library offers a range of services to support students' research (i.e. how to use databases, how to cite and reference). Visit <http://libraryweb.utep.edu/services/contact.php> for more details. You are required to incorporate your research sources by using the APA 6th edition citation and referencing style. You will find an excellent breakdown on how to correctly use this style by visiting the following site at the UTEP Library, <http://libguides.utep.edu/apa>. For outside sources, another excellent site to visit is the Purdue Online Writing Lab, <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.

### **Technology Support**

Students have access to a wide range of readily available technological resources and support at the UTEP Technology Support Center. For more details, visit <http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=74082>.

### **Counselling Center**

The University Counseling Center offers confidential support to students struggling in their studies due to a diverse range of issues, in English and Spanish. They are located at 202 Union West. Call 747-5302 to make an inquiry or visit their website <http://sa.utep.edu/counsel/>, for more information.

## **Academic 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.

## **Special Needs**

If you have a documented disability and require specific accommodations, you will need to contact the Disabled Student Services Office in the East Union (747-5184). I will make any reasonable accommodations for students with limitations due to disabilities, including learning disabilities. Please see me before or after class as early in the semester as possible, to discuss any special needs you might have.

## Course Schedule

<b>Module 1: Introduction to The Americas</b>			
<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Reading Due</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
<b>1</b>	Tue 1/21	None	None
	Thu 1/23	2 News Clips	1. News Clips (prepared to present and discuss in class) 2. CCE Introductory Session
<b>Module 2: Contemporary Issues</b>			
<b>2</b>	Tue 1/28	Gutmann & Lesser pp. 19-57	Class participation
	Thu 1/30	None	CCE Training Session
<b>3</b>	Tue 2/4	Gutmann & Lesser pp. 58-65, 72-88	Class participation
	Thu 2/6	Gutmann & Lesser pp. 97-113	Class participation
<b>4</b>	<b>Tue 2/11</b>	Gutmann & Lesser pp. 114-127, 131-145	1. Class participation <b>2. OPTION I Due:</b> Community Selection
	Thu 2/13	Gutmann & Lesser pp. 146-162	Class participation & food sampling
<b>5</b>	<b>Tue 2/18</b>	Gutmann & Lesser pp. 167-203	<b>1. Student-Led Presentations</b> (4 sts) 2. Class participation <b>3. OPTION I:</b> start service learning hours
	<b>Thu 2/20</b>	Gutmann & Lesser pp. 207-220	<b>1. Student-Led Presentations</b> (2 sts) 2. Class participation
<b>6</b>	<b>Tue 2/25</b>	Gutmann & Lesser pp. 227-239	<b>1. Student-Led Presentations</b> (2 sts) 2. Class participation
	<b>Thu 2/27</b>	Gutmann & Lesser pp. 240-250	1. Class participation 2. HIV in Latin America - Guest Lecture <b>3. OPTION II Due: Research Topic</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Tue 3/3</b>	Gutman & Lesser (all readings to-date)	<b>Reading Test 1</b>
	Thu 3/5	None The Middle-East and Latin America -Connections	Guest lecture 1. Class participation
<b>Module 3: Migration, Citizenship &amp; Identity</b>			
<b>8</b>	Tue 3/10	Ryburn pp. 1-51	Class participation
	<b>Thu 3/12</b>	Ryburn pp. 53-115	<b>1. Student-Led Presentations</b> (4 sts) 2. Class participation
<b>9</b>	<b><i>Spring Break - No Classes</i></b>		
<b>10</b>	<b>Tue 3/24</b>	Ryburn pp. 116-150	<b>1. Student-Led Presentations</b> (2 sts) 2. Class participation
	<b>Thu 3/26</b>	Ryburn (whole book)	<b>Reading Test 2</b>

<b>Module 4: Justice, Murders &amp; Legal Conundrums</b>			
<b>11</b>	Tue 3/31	Eisenbrandt pp. xiii-37	Class participation
	Thu 4/2	None	1. Class Participation 2. Documentary
<b>12</b>	<b>Tue 4/7</b>	Independent work -No class meeting	OPTION I: Service Hours <b>OPTION II: Paper Draft (submit via Blackboard by 11pm)</b>
	<b>Thu 4/9</b>	Eisenbrandt pp. 38-84	<b>1. Student-Led Presentations (4 sts)</b> 2. Class participation
<b>13</b>	<b>Tue 4/14</b>	None	<b>CCE Facilitated Session [OPTION I]</b>
	Thu 4/16	Eisenbrandt pp. 85-129	<b>1. Student-Led Presentations (4 sts)</b> 2. Class participation
<b>14</b>	Tue 4/21	Independent work -No class meeting	OPTION I: Serv. Hrs/Learning Reflection OPTION II: Work on Final Paper
	Thu 4/23	Eisenbrandt pp. 130-175	<b>1. Student-Led Presentations (3 sts)</b> 2. Class participation
<b>15</b>	Tue 4/28	Eisenbrandt (whole book)	<b>Reading Test 3</b>
	Thu 4/30	Independent work-No Class	<b>Option I: Submit Learning Reflection on Monday 5/1 via Blackboard by 11pm</b> <b>Option II: Submit Final Paper on Monday 5/1 via Blackboard by 11pm</b>
<b>Module 5: Course Wrap Up</b>			
<b>16</b>	Tue 5/5	Final Presentations	Options I & II Final Presentations
	Thu 5/7	Final Presentations	Options I & II Final Presentations