

The primary task of a useful teacher is to teach his students to recognize inconvenient facts—I mean the facts that are inconvenient for their party opinions (Max Weber)

INTA 3241a • Fall 2010 • A Travel Journey through Latin American Politics • Instructional Center 115 • T-TH 12:05 sharp to 1:25 • Dr. Kirk Bowman, kirk.bowman@inta.gatech.edu, 404.894.6435

NOTE: Email only to set appointment or at request of professor
Office Hours 152 Habersham T 2-3, W 9-11

NOTE: This syllabus may change at professor's discretion

Latin America is an exciting, diverse, and dynamic region that has considerable variation in economic success, political stability, culture, and development. The purpose of this course is to learn some of the geographical, historical, cultural, political, and economic foundations of the region. We will use a variety of methods and sources to give you a flavor of Latin America. This semester will feature an emphasis on Brazil, Central America, and Mexico. Brazil, because it is on an amazing political, social, and economic run and this fall will feature elections. Central America, because the region demonstrates a gap between development in its countries that is quite useful to explore the issues in this course (and because you might travel there someday). And Mexico, because the drug war and because the country so strongly effects our lives, from NAFTA to immigration to culture.

Note, this is an upper division reading intensive class. If you are not willing to carefully read the assignment before class, you should withdraw. Now. And, despite common beliefs of students, they cannot multitask.

1. You must read for every Tuesday class the Andres Oppenheimer op-eds from the previous week (usually 1-2 per week) available at http://www.miamiherald.com/news/columnists/andres_oppenheimer/

2. For every Thursday class, you must read free Latin American articles at The Economist: available at <http://www.economist.com/world/americas/>

Books, required: (At Engineers' Books)

Al Montero: **Brazilian Politics**. 2005, Polity Press.

Kirk Bowman: **The Perils of Praetorianism**. Penn State University Press.

David Lida: **First Stop in the New World**. Riverhead Books.

SAMPLE Novels, student chooses one depending on research topic. (Not in bookstores)

Jorge Amado: **Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon**. Paperback. (Brazil) (Inequality or entrepreneurship or issues of race or gender issues)

Isabel Allende: **The House of Spirits**. Paperback (Chile) (Human rights or gender issues)

Mario Vargas Llosa: **The Feast of the Goat**. Paperback (Dominican Republic) (Democracy, role of US in Latin America, role of Church, or terrorism)

Gabriel Garcia Marquez: **Love in the Time of Cholera; One Hundred Years of Solitude**

Roberto Bolaño: **The Savage Detectives** (very explicit).

Julia Alvarez: **In the Time of the Butterflies**

Or other novel to be approved by the professor.

Using the selected novel, course materials, and research resources, the student will produce an original and innovative analytical research paper comparing two countries on a selected topic.

The assignment is 10-12 double spaced pages. You MUST have a title and title page. NO BINDING or plastic cover, just stapled. You must have citations from at least 5 different sources, and all 5 sources must not be internet sources. (You can get the full-text articles on the internet, but must be from a book, reference book, or journal). Read the novel, and write an analytical essay that follows one of these two models.

Model 1. Write an essay about some relationship that is covered in the book. There needs to be a dependent and independent variable that should appear in the first few paragraphs of the paper. (This paper explores the relationship between modernization and gender equity....). A comparative case study of two countries will be employed, and you should identify if the cases are similar or different. If you do not know the difference between a most-similar and most-different design, see me soon. The book will be used as spice for the paper, to illustrate the variables, and to make the paper more enjoyable to read.

Model 2: Write an essay that focuses on the symbolism and other literary elements in the novel, and use two cases to flesh out the relationship. This is NOT a summary of the book, but rather focuses on a RELATIONSHIP in the book. Again, you need to find a relationship to discuss (dictatorship and patriarchy, for example). I expect to see all of you at office hours at least once before you start writing too much on this paper. **This assignment is due December 7th.**

Assignments and grades:

It is important that students come prepared for discussion. Therefore, there will be a total of 6 quizzes covering the readings (newspaper and text). Your lowest score will be dropped and the other 5 quizzes will count for 15 percent of your final grade. BEING LATE IS NO EXCUSE. I WILL HAND OUT THE QUIZZES WHEN CLASS BEGINS, and will NOT hand out to stragglers. The midterm will count for 25 percent. The final exam will count for 30 percent. Your research paper will count for 25 of your final grade.

A film assignment where you write an analytical comparison of one film from the HIGH MUSUEM'S LATIN AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL (<http://www.high.org/main.taf?p=4,4,19>) (or other Film Festival in Atlanta) with another Latin American film of your choice will count for the final 5 percent. Please try to be creative in your written assignments. I will have several films on to lend out, including Missing, The Motorcycle Diaries, Fresa y Chocolate, Like Water For Chocolate, Nine Queens, Four Days in September, etc. This assignment should be analytical in nature (not descriptive) and is due AFTER Thanksgiving. No outside citations are required. Paper is to be four pages typed double space with a TITLE and a staple.

Finally, you are required to meet with me during office hours or by appointment to discuss your film and research project assignments. If you do not meet with me once during the semester, you will lose 10 percent of your final grade.

Schedule of Readings, Exams, and Assignments

8/24	Introduction
8/26	Brazil and South America, Introduction
8/31	Montero 1
9/2	Montero 2
9/7	Montero 3
9/9	Readings on Soap Operas and Religion in Brazil
9/14	Montero 4
9/16	Montero 5
9/21	Montero 6

9/23 Montero 7
9/28 Montero 8
9/30 Brazil Takes Off, readings to come.
10/5 Introduction to Central America, readings to come.
10/7 Library day to work on project
10/12 Bowman 1
10/14 Bowman 2
10/19 FALL RECESS
10/21 Bowman 3
10/26 Midterm
10/28 Bowman 4
11/2 Bowman 5
11/4 Bowman 6
11/9 Bowman 7
11/11 Lido 1-53
11/16 Lido 54-106
11/18 Lido 107-163
11/23 Lido 164-230
11/30 Lido 231-278
12/2 Lido 279-330
12/7 TBD
12/9 Review

For a quick overview of current developments in Latin American countries, see www.americas.org You may also consult www.zmag.org or www.wola.org. Organization of American States (www.oas.org) has loads of information. For data and reports, see the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta's Latin American Research Group with excellent links http://www.frbatlanta.org/econ_rd/larg/larg_index.cfm, the UN Economic Commission for Latin America www.eclac.org, and the Interamerican Development Bank www.iadb.org. Economist country briefings at: <http://www.economist.com/countries/>
BBC country briefings: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/country_profiles/default.stm
Library of Congress Country Studies for Latin America: http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/continent_americas.html
<http://lanic.utexas.edu/las.html> (best overall source for links to Latin America)
<http://www.coha.org/> for excellent left-of-center analysis of the region