Summer 2011

Geography of Latin America

Environments, Cultures, Futures
Prof. Gregory Knapp



Second Summer Session
GRG s319, LAS s319
Unique Numbers 84745, 86120
Meets MTWThF 11:30-1:00 in room GRG 102 (Geography Building)
Office hours TuTh 10:30-11:15 GRG 326 and by appointment

This course is a general introduction to Latin American environments and peoples from a geographical perspective. There are no prerequisites, and an effort is made to make the material accessible to the broadest possible range of students, as citizens and future leaders. At the same time, more advanced students can benefit from the exploration of such topics as landforms, climate, plants and animals, environmental hazards, Native American lifeways and resource management, globalization, population and migration, cities,

sustainable development, geopolitics, frontiers, conservation, and cultural survival. The class serves as a basic preparation for travel, business, government service, journalism or volunteer work in Latin America, as well as for elementary or secondary school teaching.

This course can be used toward a major or minor in either Geography or Latin American Studies, and for a Latin American concentration in International Relations and Global Studies. In the Geography major, the course meets the human geography core requirement, and is also appropriate for students taking the Cultural Geography, Environmental Resource Management, and General Geography tracks. The course can be used to meet the University's Core Requirement in Social and Behavioral Sciences. It may be used to meet the Foreign Language / Culture requirement for a Bachelor of Science degree (for example, in the College of Natural Sciences). This course may **not** be used towards the Science & Technology requirement (some other courses in geography do meet this requirement). The course has a Global Cultures flag. This is also a Bridging Disciplines course (for either the International Studies or Environment BDP).

<u>Prerequisites</u>: This course should not be taken by anyone who has completed UGS 303: Latin America Environmental History and Sustainability. Otherwise the course is open to all students.

Required textbooks

Robert B. Kent, *Latin America: Regions and Peoples* (Guilford 2006)

Gregory Knapp, ed. *Latin America in the Twenty First Century: Challenges and Solutions* (UT Press, 2002).

In addition, other required materials from the web will be assigned during class.

Optional textbook

Charles Mann, 1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus (2006)

Enrichment materials will be suggested during the course. Students are encouraged to read about current events in Latin America using, for example, the online sites of the BBC, the Economist, or the New York Times. Many Latin American newspapers are online for those who read Spanish or Portuguese.

Blackboard Website

You must access Blackboard for this course on the following site: https://courses.utexas.edu/

The Blackboard web syllabus and schedule is the official syllabus for this course. Course lecture Power Points will usually be placed on line within 24 hours after each lecture, but these are no substitute for lecture notes.

Grading

Exams and quizzes test knowledge of locations (with map questions), concepts, explanations, and solutions. The tests contain objective, map, and essay type questions. The student is responsible for all the material in the readings, assigned web pages, and lectures, including maps and other graphics, but the lectures are most important.

- * Quizzes and attendance (15%). 17 short quizzes will be handed out before, during, and/or after randomly selected lectures and will test a simple concept as discussed in class and also check attendance. They are designed to be finished in less than 2 minutes. Students who arrive late will not be allowed to take quizzes. More than one quiz may be administered in the same class. If you anticipate being late to class, or leaving early, do not take this course! Students missing a quiz will earn a zero; however, the lowest two quiz scores will be dropped. Quizzes may not be excused unless you provide an acceptable reason such as illness (from a physician or student health service). Extracurricular activities are only excusable if cleared with the professor before the beginning of class. Family obligations such as weddings are not excusable unless cleared with the professor before the beginning of class.
- * Two Midterms (40%), July 21 and August 3.
- * Project (15%). Details will be on Blackboard. Due August 10.
- * Final Exam (30%), August 15, 2-5 pm, must attend!

Grading is based on total points (90-100 A, 80-89.5 B, etc) and is not "curved." No plus or minus grades are given in this course (only A, B, C, D, and F).

Although the course is designed to be accessible to everyone, this is not an easy course, and some students do earn F's and D's every semester. If you are on probation, or are trying to use this course to raise your GPA to graduate, qualify for a study abroad program, or for other reasons, this course might not meet your needs.

Classroom Policy on Electronic Devices and Behavior

Laptops are NOT allowed. Laptops, phones, MP3 players, tablets, and other such devices must be turned off and stowed during classes and exams. Lectures may not be recorded in any way without prior permission. Online materials may not be copied or distributed without prior permission. In exceptional cases, with prior permission, students will be allowed to take lecture notes on their laptops; in these cases, laptop lecture notes need to provided to the professor for each class, and students need to pledge not to use computers for any other purpose during class. The professor will not provide feedback on lecture notes.

Students will arrive on time, minimize unscheduled personal breaks, and stay until the class ends. They will respect the views and opinions of their colleagues. Disagreement and debate are encouraged. Intolerance for the views of others is unacceptable.

Accommodations for Special Needs

The University makes reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/.

Religious Holidays

By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to their e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal.

U.T. Learning Center

You may find assistance with specific strategies to help you study effectively at the Learning Center. The Center for Learning offers a range of services to become a better student through assistance in one-on-one tutoring, academic counseling, and other classes. For more information see http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/

Academic Integrity

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/).

SCHEDULE OF LECTURES, READINGS, AND EXAMS

Key to readings:

RK: Robert Kent, Latin America

GK: Gregory Knapp, Latin America in the 21st Century

Charles Mann, 1491

Note: THIS SCHEDULE IS TENTATIVE AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Schedule

July11 Introduction to course

July 12 Countries and Boundaries

July 13 Environment; Volcanoes; Quizzes begin

Readings: RK 37-54, 67-90

July 14 Mountains and Highlands

July 15 Lowlands, Continental Drift

July 18 Climate and Precipitation

July 19 Fauna, Tropical Soils; Southern Cone

July 20 Dry Lands

Readings: RK 113-129, 154-178, 206-235; CM all (optional but highly recommended)

July 21 MIDTERM I

July 22 The First People; Review

July 25 Agriculture, Chiefdoms

Readings: RK 322-347, GK 77-104

July 26 Civilizations

July 27 Aztec and Inca; Iberian Culture

July 28 Conquest Culture

Readings: GK 251-268, RK 246-270

July 29 Plantations and Mines

Aug 1 Newer Commodities, Minerals

Aug 2 New Plantations, Drugs

Aug 3 MIDTERM II

Readings: RK 55-60, 91-112. 130-153, 179-186, 236-245, 271-291-321, 348-389; GK 1-76. 105--250

Aug 4 Transportation, Marketing, Population

Aug 5 Population; Cities

Aug 8 Urban Processes

Aug 9 Development 1

Aug 10 Development 2 PROJECT DUE

Aug 11 Geopolitics

Aug 12 Borders, Review

Aug 15, 2-5 pm. FINAL EXAM must attend!