Introduction to Latin America Studies (LAS3002)  
Fall 2013  
Florida International University

Professor Information

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Instructor:</th>
<th>Professor Brian Fonseca</th>
<th>Phone:</th>
<th>305-348-7420</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office:</td>
<td>LC220</td>
<td>Fax:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Hours:</td>
<td>By appointment</td>
<td>Email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:fonsecab@fiu.edu">fonsecab@fiu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website:</td>
<td><a href="http://www.lacc.fiu.edu">www.lacc.fiu.edu</a></td>
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Course Description:
Introduction to Latin American Studies is a multidisciplinary course that will introduce students to the fundamental geographic, historical, political, cultural, demographic, economic, and security dimensions of Latin America and the Caribbean. Its overall purpose is to enhance students' understanding of basic concepts and experiences that shape and define Latin American and Caribbean states today. The syllabus is set up to approach regional discourse from a geographic and thematic approach. This course is intended for students of any area of studies interested in improving their understanding of the region.

Course Objectives:
- Recognize the geographic location of Latin American and Caribbean states.
- Understand the political and cultural evolution of the region from the pre-Columbia and colonial periods through to the contemporary environment.
- Explain the prevailing historical, geographical, political, cultural, economic, and security experiences that shape and define states across the region.
- Define some of the basic concepts particular to the region.
- Describe comparatively, the unique demographic composition of Latin American and Caribbean states.
- Explain some of the most important contemporary challenges facing the region today.
- Describe the socio-economic conditions within states.
- Explain the engagement of extra-hemispheric actors engaged in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Course Readings:
There is no textbook for the Fall 2013 LAS3002 offering. Instead, the Professor will provide course readings using a variety of free, publicly available scholarly journals and credible media sources. Required readings and videos will be located in blackboard’s Course Content section.

Twitter will also be used to facilitate discussions on contemporary issues in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Professor reads everything he posts; however, his posts do not necessarily reflect his own views. Various perspectives will be presented. Students are encouraged to do their own research before taking positions on issues and challenges facing the region.

Course Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Research Paper</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Postings &amp; Virtual Meetings</td>
<td>250 (210 Points (5/post) for Meeting Posting Requirement and 40 Points for Attending Required Virtual Meetings)</td>
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Course Grading scale

- A = 1000-950
- A- = 949-900
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>899-850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>849-800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>799-750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>749-700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>699-650</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>649-600</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 600</td>
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**Midterm & Final Exam**—Exams will be available through Blackboard during the dates outlined in the syllabus. Students will have two hours to complete roughly 40 questions. Exam format will be a combination of multiple choice questions and short answers. All questions will come from the materials located in the Course Content section.

- **Midterm Exam** is **due between October 21-23, 2013**.
- **Final Exam** is **due between December 2-4, 2013**.

The professor will not offer make-up exams, please do not ask. It is highly recommended that you write down the dates so you don’t miss the window and do not wait until the very end to take it—to avoid issue you might run into. The Professor will send out announcement reminding the class, but it is not the Professor’s responsibility if you fail to take the exam during the window allotted.

**Discussion Postings**—The following are guidelines for participation in online discussions:

- Students should post a minimum of three times per week (Monday—Sunday) to demonstrate comprehension of the course readings and lecture materials. One posting per week should be original (you derived the discussion topic) and two postings should be in response to other students or the professors posting.
- Original postings are **due by Friday each week** and must be a minimum of 200 words (this will ensure students have posts to respond to each week).
- Response postings are **due by Sunday each week** and must be a minimum of 100 words.
- During week 1 students should introduce themselves in the homepage section of the discussion forum. Postings should include at minimum 1. Name; 2. Country of origin; 3. Any travel in Latin America; 4. First thoughts that comes to mind when you think about Latin America and the Caribbean; 4. Motivations and expectations in taking this course.

Online discussion boards are for the purpose of fostering student reflection; therefore, posting should reflect an analytical approach and not simply repeat other peoples work. Students should cite research and course material in their postings. Students should incorporate quotes from other student responses as a way of synthesizing and extending the conversation. Also, keep in mind that forum discussions are public, and care should be taken when determining what to post. If you need to send a private message to an instructor or student, please use Blackboard Messaging.

**Individual Research Papers**—The purpose of this research paper is afford students the opportunity to explore a research topic of choice in the area of Latin American and Caribbean and studies and enable the Professor to measure students’ ability to conduct research and write effectively in the social sciences. Students will select one of the fours themes below and propose a focused and defined research question. Individual Research Papers must provide analysis and not simply regurgitate historical facts or others peoples’ work. The professor will use the same grading rubric used for discussion posts (see grading rubric in the syllabus). **Individual Research Papers due December 8, 2013 by 11:59PM**

Themes: Students must select a research topic within one of the following themes. Students must select a country, region, or population/society in Latin America and the Caribbean as the subject of the research paper.

- Considerations driving the change in culture and/or demographics.
- Considerations shaping effectiveness and/or evolution of political, economic, or social institutions.
- Considerations shaping insecurity or improving security.
- Considerations driving/shaping social change or failure to increase social inclusions.

Length and Elements: The paper length will be 7 pages (do NOT go over the page limit), double spaced (this does not include your title page, abstract, or references page). You must include a cover sheet with the title of your paper and your name. After the cover page (but before the body of the paper) you must include an abstract, which is a brief, comprehensive summary of the paper, no longer than 120 words. Finally, references should be listed on a separate page after the body of the paper. Your paper should include a title page, abstract (min 250 words), 7 pages of content, and works cited page. Number of references: Your paper should include a minimum of 5 references. Appropriate sources
include: (a) research articles from scientific journals (b) books (but not encyclopedias or textbooks) (c) news articles and analysis. You must be able to cite your source according to one of the following formats: MLA or APA.

Helpful Sources:

Internet Resources—The following list is a starting point for research on topics that explore Latin America and the Caribbean.

- [http://www.americasquarterly.org](http://www.americasquarterly.org) – Americas Society and Council of the Americas
- [http://www.wilsoncenter.org](http://www.wilsoncenter.org) – Woodrow Wilson Center
- [http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop) – Latin American Public Opinion Project
- [http://americas.irc-online.org](http://americas.irc-online.org) – The Inter-Hemispheric Resource Center
- [http://www.focal.ca](http://www.focal.ca) – Canadian Foundation for the Americas
- [http://www.thedialogue.org](http://www.thedialogue.org) – Inter-American Dialogue
- [http://www.eclac.org](http://www.eclac.org) – UN’s Economic Commission on Latin America and the Caribbean
- [http://www.lanic.utexas.edu](http://www.lanic.utexas.edu) – Latin American Network Information Center
- [http://www.iadb.org](http://www.iadb.org) – Inter-American Development Bank
- [http://www.ceres-uy.org/home/index.asp](http://www.ceres-uy.org/home/index.asp) – Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Económica y Social (CERES)
- [http://portal.fgv.br/](http://portal.fgv.br/) – Fundação Getúlio Vargas (FGV) (Brazil)

Specialized Journals—The following is a list of journals that focus on themes in Latin American discourse:

- Latin American Politics and Society
- Latin American Research Review
- Bulletin of Latin American Research
- Journal of Latin American Studies
- Latin American Perspectives
- Journal of Politics in Latin America

Grading Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory: 0%</th>
<th>Partial: 80%</th>
<th>Satisfactory: 90%</th>
<th>Excellent: 100%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Analysis (Understanding of Readings and Course Materials)</td>
<td>Discussion postings show little or no evidence that readings were completed or understood. Postings are largely personal opinions or feelings (i.e. &quot;I agree&quot; or &quot;Great idea&quot;) without supporting statements containing concepts from the readings, outside resources, and relevant research.</td>
<td>Discussion postings repeat and summarize basic, correct information, but do not link readings to outside references, or relevant research and do not consider alternative perspectives or connections between ideas. No sources.</td>
<td>Discussion postings display an understanding of the required readings and underlying concepts, including correct use of terminology and proper citation.</td>
<td>Discussion postings display an excellent understanding of the required readings and underlying concepts. Postings integrate outside sources, relevant research, or specific real-life application (work experience, prior coursework, etc.) to support important points. Well-edited quotes are cited appropriately (no more than 10% of the posting is a direct quotation). Strong analysis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Etiquette in Dialogue with Peers</td>
<td>Discussion postings on the discussion board show disrespect for the viewpoints of others.</td>
<td>Some of the written interactions on the discussion board show respect and interest in the viewpoints of others.</td>
<td>Written interactions on the discussion board show respect and interest in the viewpoints of others.</td>
<td>Written interactions on the discussion board show respect and sensitivity to peers' gender, cultural and linguistic background, sexual orientation, political and religious beliefs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of Writing and Proofreading</td>
<td>Written responses contain numerous grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors. The style of</td>
<td>Written responses include some grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors</td>
<td>Written responses are largely free of grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors. The style of</td>
<td>Written responses are free of grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors. The style of writing facilitates communication.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Module/Topics</td>
<td>Readings/Assignments</td>
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| August 26—September 1, 2013   | Course Analytical Approach Introduction to Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Demographics | **Readings:**  
Why Latin America by Thomas Skidmore  
Does Latin America Have A Common History by Marshall Eakin  
Demographic Slides  
**Assignments:**  
Discussion Posts 1  
Virtual Meeting 1 |

| September 2-8, 2013           | Pre-Columbian Period European Conquest and Colonization Independence Movements | **Readings:**  
Introduction: 120 Million Children in the Eye of the Hurricane by Eduardo Galeano  
Colonial Foundations by Thomas Skidmore  
Jamaica Letter by Simon Bolivar  
**Assignments:**  
Discussion Posts 2  
Virtual Meeting 2 |

| September 9-15, 2013          | Southern Cone: Brazil                                                       | **Readings:**  
Brazilian Grand Strategy by Hal Brands  
**Videos:**  
Charlie Rose Interview with Eike Batista  
CERES Interview with Andrew Hurrell (Oxford)  
**Assignments:**  
Discussion Posts 3  
Virtual Meeting 3 |

| September 16-22, 2013         | Southern Cone: Argentina & Chile                                          | **Readings:**  
Crying for Argentina by Foreign Policy Magazine  
Argentina-Uruguay: Too Close for Comfort by MercoPress  
**Assignments:**  
Discussion Posts 4  
Virtual Meeting 4 |

| September 23-29, 2013         | Southern Cone: Uruguay and Paraguay                                       | **Readings:**  
Uruguayan Strategic Culture by Astrid Arraras  
Paraguay's Awful History by the Economist  
**Assignments:**  
Discussion Posts 4  
Virtual Meeting 4 |

| September 30—October 6, 2013  | Andean Region: Peru and Bolivia                                         | **Readings:**  
Peruvian Strategic Culture by Brian Fonseca and Joseph Tulchin  
Bolivian Strategic Culture by Eduardo Gamarra  
**Assignments:**  
Discussion Posts 5  
Virtual Meeting 5  
Submit Individual Research Paper Topic to Professor using Blackboard Message |

| October 7-13, 2013            | Andean Region: Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela                            | **Readings:**  
Twenty-First Century Socialism? The Elusive Search for a Post-Neoliberal Development Model in Bolivia and Ecuador by Amy Kennemore and Gregory Weeks  
Venezuelan Strategic Culture by Harold Trinkunas  
Digging for Peace by the Economist  
**Videos:**  
The Hugo Chavez Show by PBS Frontline  
**Assignments:**  
Discussion Posts 6  
Virtual Meeting 6 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Region/Content</th>
<th>Lecture Readings</th>
<th>Videos</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 21-27, 2013</td>
<td>Midterm Exam available between October 21-23, 2013</td>
<td>Mini Fall Break (Enjoy!)</td>
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<td>October 28—November 3, 2013</td>
<td>Central America: Belize and Guatemala</td>
<td>Readings: &lt;br&gt; Global Forces and System Change in Central America by John Booth, Christine Wade, and Thomas Walker &lt;br&gt; Belizean Strategic Culture by Joseph Palacios &lt;br&gt; Guatemalan Strategic Culture by Edward Fischer</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion Posts 8 &lt;br&gt; Virtual Meeting 8 &lt;br&gt; Submit Initial Outline of Individual Research Paper to Professor using Blackboard Messaging</td>
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<td>November 4-10, 2013</td>
<td>Central America: Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua &lt;br&gt;Gangs in Central America</td>
<td>Readings: &lt;br&gt; Honduran Strategic Culture by Astrid Arraras and Jose Miguel Cruz &lt;br&gt; Ganges in Central America by Claire Ribando</td>
<td>Videos: Nicaragua: An Unfinished Revolution by Al Jazeera (watch all four parts)</td>
<td>Discussion Posts 9 &lt;br&gt; Virtual Meeting 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 11-17, 2013</td>
<td>Central America: Costa Rica and Panama</td>
<td>Readings: &lt;br&gt; Costa Rican Strategic Culture by Jennie Lincoln and Burno Stagno &lt;br&gt; Panamanian Strategic Culture by Orlando Perez</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion Posts 10 &lt;br&gt; Virtual Meeting 10</td>
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| December 2-8, 2013 | Geopolitics: Extra-Hemispheric Actors | **Assignments:**  
Discussion Posts 13  
Virtual Meeting 13  

**Readings:**  
Emerging Relations: China and Latin America by Brian Fonseca  

**Assignments:**  
Discussion Posts 14  
Virtual Meeting 14  
Individual Research Papers due December 8, 2013 by 11:59PM |
| December 9-15, 2013 | **Final Exam available between December 2-4, 2013**  
**Have a Great Winter Break!** |

* Do not move too far ahead of the Course Contents Section. The Professor reserves the right to change/add readings prior to a particular week’s Course Content is visible to the class.