

PERSPECTIVES ON LATIN AMERICA

Isidore Newman School
Fall 1999

Course Description

Perspectives on Latin America is a semester course that introduces cultural, geographical, historical, environmental and political issues of the region. Through research, the examination of works of art, historical documents, music and film, students will study topics including (but not exclusive to) Pre-Columbian civilizations, the Colonial Era, the environment, African Influences, U.S./Latin American relations, and their manifestations in art and music. Students will be involved in journal writing, research, and daily discussion.

Course Outline

UNIT	TOPIC	
1	Land and People *Physical and Human Geography *Stereotypes *Culture and Society	4 days
2	Pre-Columbian Civilizations *Mesoamerica (Maya, Aztec) *Andean Region (Inca) *Lowland Region	5 days
3	Conquest and the Colonial Era *Discovery and Conquest *Spain (16 th -18 th centuries) and Colonial Government *The Encomienda and the Hacienda system *Church and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz	5 days
4	Race, Class and Identity *Slavery and the Sugar Industry *African Influence in Modern Latin American Society *Identity and Social Movements	5 days
Test -Units 1-4		
5	Difficulties of Sovereignty *Independence *Foreign Interest (early U.S. involvement) *Caribbean	3 days

6	Politics and Democracy *Political Pendulum *Nationalism, Populism, Militarism, and Dictatorship *Socialism *Democracies and Quasi Democracies	8 days
7	Revolution, Protest, and Guerilla Warfare *Mexico and the Mexican Revolution *Argentina and the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo *Guatemala and the Guatemalan Revolution *Sandinistas and the Contras *Peru and the Shining Path *Mexico and the Zapatistas	6 days
8	U.S./Latin American Relations *Cold War *Trade and Investment *Narcotics *Immigration	8 days
9	Church and Society *Wealth and Influence *Human Rights *Daily Life	2 days
Test 2 Units 5-9		
10	Environment *Rain Forest *Rural and Agricultural Issues *Urban Environmental Problems	5 days
11	Poverty, Health, and Human Rights *Poverty *Urbanization and Population growth *Health Issues *Women in Latin America	8 days
Projects due		
12	Art, Film, and Popular Culture	5 days