# GEOG / LATI 249: ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY IN LATIN AMERICA













From upper left clockwise: Andean landscape (Ecuador), Amazonian landscape (Amazon region), Machupichu (Perú), Mural Nuestra Identidad Cultural (*Mural 'Our cultural identity'*; likely Guatemala), Leader of Asurini tribe (Brazil), City of Sao Paulo (Brazil)

**Instructor:** Xavier Haro-Carrión (he / his / him)

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Office: CARN 110 B

Office hours:

Monday: 4:30 – 5:30

Tuesday & Thursday: 4:30 - 5:30

Friday: 1:00 2:30

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Office Hours: 2nd floor of the Library

Wednesday: 8:00 - 9:00pm Thursday 2:30 - 3:30pm

Class time and location: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:40 pm–11:10 am, ARTCOM 202

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

Geog / Lati 249 is a regional course designed to acquaint students with the physical and human geography of Latin America. It is a general introduction to Latin American environments and peoples from a geographic perspective, with emphasis on

human-environment processes . No prerequisites are required and effort is made to make the material accessible to a broad range of students. While the course will have an emphasis on environment, to facilitate learning, the course will be divided the material into three components:Physical, Cultural, and Economic Geography. The learning outcomes of this course are:

- (1) To demonstrate knowledge on the variety of physical environments covering Latin America
- (2) To understand the cultural, social, and historic factors that influenced the creation of Latin American cultural diversity
- (3) To understand the economic, social, and environmental consequences of Latin American economic liberalization and globalization.
- (4) To demonstrate critical thinking in evaluating background information for migration, political instability, poverty, (un)sustainable development, and other processes throughout the diverse regions of Latin America.

To achieve these objectives the classes will consist of lectures, group discussions, video/film presentations, writing assignments, a podcast, and invited speakers.

#### **TEXTBOOK**

# Required readings

Mann, Charles. 2011. 1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus, 2nd. ed. New York: Vintage. 553 pp.

Cepek, Michael. 2018. Life in Oil. University of Texas Press. 286 pp.

## Recommended reading

Clawson, David (2018) Latin America and the Caribbean: Lands and Peoples, 6th Edition. Oxford University Press. 462 pp.

# COURSE STRUCTURE, RESOURCES, AND ASSIGNMENTS

## **Structure**

We will use a hybrid lecture-discussion format during class. Lectures will be short, at the beginning of class, and are meant to be very interactive and not a one-way monologue, so feel free to ask questions, and expect me to ask you questions, too. The readings are an accompaniment to the day's lecture-discussion. In many cases, group discussions or activities related to a particular reading will follow lecture time. From day to day, I will try to give you specific instructions about how thoroughly I want you to read a particular article or chapter, and also try to preview how we will use it in class.

#### Resources

Course materials, including lecture slides, readings and assignment instructions, will be made available on Moodle. I will hold regular office hours to discuss questions, issues or concerns about the class in detail. If your schedule conflicts with posted office hours, we can schedule a different meeting time. Outside of class and office hours, email is the best way to contact me. I respond to email as soon as possible, but I mostly respond during work hours (9:00 am to 5:00 pm on weekdays)

### **Papers**

You will write two academic essays in this class:

**Paper 1. Food, Culture, and Environment.** The main part of the activity is to prepare a typical dish from a Latin American country and share it with the class at our Food Fiesta on February 13. On the night your group presents its dish, you will tell us a little about the preparation, origins, and cultural significance of the food, in a short (5-10 minute) oral presentation. Finally, you will also turn in a short paper (approx. 3-4 pages) that tells a similar story – but the paper is an individual assignment, so you can shift the focus a little.

Paper 2. Precarious futures / troubled pasts / ethical return: the case of indigenous peoples in Latin America. This assignment will take advantage of a series of events, partially sponsored by Latin American Studies, which will take place during March 5-7, 2020. We will have the honor to have Margaret Randal as part of this event. Margaret is a photographer, activist and academic who has lived a significant percentage of her life in Latin American countries including Mexico, Cuba and Nicaragua. The event seeks to engage the public in conversations around a perceived precarious future, in exploring the historic and cultural dimensions of these patterns and in assembling the conditions necessary for an "ethical return". You will be required to attend many of these events and reflect about it in the framework of the struggle of indigenous peoples in Latin American to protect the environment. I think it is possible to claim that the relationship between indigenous peoples and the rest of a more "westernized" Latin-American society has been, at best, troubling in the past. At present, many efforts to protect the environment are led by indegenous communities, but the future of these movements seem precarious at times. Within this context, the concept of ethics emerges not only to analyze the validity of indegenous peoples claims, but to analyze our own role as society. More instruction about this assignment will be given as the event approaches.

## **Podcast**

You will do a podcast in this class. You will pick the topic for your podcast loosely based on the general themes of the class: Physical, Cultural, and Economic Geography. The podcast will present a topic of Latin America for a non-Latin America audience. You will have to work to make your podcast engaging but simple enough for someone who is hearing this topic for the first time. Examples more in the physical geography theme could include deforestation in the tropics, climate change in the Andes, etc. Examples more in the cultural geography theme could include a biography, relationships of ethnicity, etc. Examples more in the economic

geography theme could include agriculture, agrarian deform, the relationship between the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Latin America, etc. We will work during the course of the semester to define your topic and work on this assignment.

#### Oral Presentation

During the course of the semester each student will have to prepare an oral presentation about a Latin American country. This assignment is intended to provide additional information about each country and some "funny" or "cool" facts about each of them. The presentation should be very casual and no longer than 8 - 10 unless you plan or an activity (e.g. dance demonstration) as part of your presentation. Also, students will have to post in Moodle a total of four reading about (e.g. new article, blog, etc.) their country. These posts will count as activities.

#### **Activities**

Class activities will include map quizzes, short quizzes in moodle, student lead paper discussions, etc. Many of these activities, especially at the beginning of the semester, will be graded with a complete / incomplete grade. This means that you just have to complete the assignment to get full grade. The objective of this practice is to use your responses as bench marks upon which we could start a discussion with no pressure on the grade.

#### **Exams**

Exams (a mid-term and a final) will consist of short answer, essay, and opinion questions. Make-up exams will only be given in the event of illness or emergencies.

## **GRADING**

Assignment	Points
Paper 1	15%
Paper 2	15%
Podcast	15%
Oral Presentation	10%
Attendance / Class Activities	10%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	15%
Exam Flex	5%

Scale Letter	Range
A	93.0% to 100 %
A-	90.0% to < 93.0 %

B+	87.0% to < 90.0 %
В	83.0% to < 87.0 %
B-	80.0% to < 83.0 %
C+	77.0% to < 80.0 %
С	73.0% to < 77.0 %
C-	70.0% to < 73.0 %
D+	67.0% to < 70.0 %
D	63.0% to < 67.0 %
D-	60.0% to < 63.0 %
F	0.0% to < 60.0 %

#### **COURSE POLICIES**

#### Late work

Most assignments will be turned in using Moodle. Please note that submission times are defined by Moodle's timestamps, it is your responsibility to ensure that your assignments are correctly submitted. Once an assignment is close in Moodle, you will no longer be able to submit it. Depending on the circumstances, late assignments will be accepted with a 10% drop on the final grade for each 24-hour period that it is late.

# **Attendance and Participation**

Attendance is critical for course success and you are expected to attend class regularly. A maximum of two courtesy absences (with no written excuse provided) will be allowed. Please let me know in advance if you require a flexible attendance accommodation for any reason including attending scientific meetings, planned medical visits or religious observance days. Participation will be an important component of this class and can include many kinds of contributions: asking questions in class, contributing to class discussions, etc.

#### Technology

It is vital that all members of the course respect the time and space of everybody. Come on time and be prepared to be engaged and respectful. Please silence your phones and PDA's in the classroom. You might use electronic devices as tools to improve your learning experience (e.g. translation, note taking, etc.) only. If you are prone to continuously check social media or email, I encourage you to completely avoid using your cell phone during class.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to complete and turn in their own work and to follow established academic practices regarding proper use and citation of materials and ideas that are not their own. Engaging in cheating or plagiarism will result in a failing grade in this class. More information is available about Macalester's academic integrity at:

https://www.macalester.edu/academicprograms/academicpolicies/academicintegrity/

## SUPPORTING STUDENT LEARNING

#### **Disabilities**

I am committed to ensuring access to course content for all students, including those with disabilities. If you are encountering barriers to your learning that we can mitigate, please bring them to my attention. I will be happy to work with you to ensure your success in the class. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Contact the Disability Services office by emailing disabilityservices@macalester.edu or calling 651-696-6874 to schedule an appointment to discuss your individual needs. Personalized tutoring, academic support and study skills are available at the Macalester Academic Excellence (MAX) at: <a href="https://www.macalester.edu/max/#/0">https://www.macalester.edu/max/#/0</a>. These resources are

## Well-Being

Here at Macalester, you are encouraged to make your well-being a priority throughout this semester and your career here. Investing time into taking care of yourself will help you engage more fully in your academic experience. Remember that beyond being a student, you are a human being carrying your own experiences, thoughts, emotions, and identities with you. It is important to acknowledge any stressors you may be facing, which can be mental, emotional, physical, financial, etc., and how they can have an academic impact. I encourage you to remember that you have a body with needs. In the classroom, eat when you are hungry, drink water, use the restroom, and step out if you are upset and need a break. Please do what is necessary so long as it does not impede your or others' ability to be mentally and emotionally present in the course. Outside of the classroom, sleep, moving your body, and connecting with others can be strategies to help you be resilient at Macalester. If you are having difficulties maintaining your well-being, please don't hesitate to contact me and/or find support from other resources on the following page

# TENTATIVE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNED READINGS FOR LECTURE

there to help you and I encourage you to make good use of them.

Disclaimer: This schedule represents my current plan and objectives. These plans will need to change to enhance learning. Final version of this schedule will be available December, 2019.

Date	Topics / Lecture
Week 1 Jan. 23	Course Introduction Tour of the Digital Resource Center (DRC)

# Week 2

Jan 28, 30

## Part I: Physical Geography

## Jan 28

Lecture: Landform Regions of Latin America and the Caribbean I

Introduce Paper 1
Begin MANN, 1491

# Reading:

Price, Marie D., and Catherine W. Cooper. "Competing Visions, Shifting Boundaries: The Construction of Latin America as a World Region." *Journal of Geography* 106, no. 3 (October 11, 2007):

113–22. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221340701599113

#### Jan 30

**Lecture:** Landform Regions of Latin America and the Caribbean II

Readings:

Denevan, William M. "The Pristine Myth: The Landscape of the Americas in 1492." *Annals of the Association of American* 

Geographers 82, no. 3 (September 1992): 369–85. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8306.1992.tb01965.x.

## Week 3

## Feb 4, 6

#### Feb 4

Lecture: Weather and Climate I

## Readings:

Locatelli, Bruno, Vanessa Evans, Andrew Wardell, Angela Andrade, and Raffaele Vignola. "Forests and Climate Change in Latin America: Linking Adaptation and Mitigation." *Forests* 2, no. 1 (March 18, 2011): 431–50. https://doi.org/10.3390/f2010431.

## Feb 6

Lecture: Weather and Climate II

# Readings:

Casey, Nicholas. "A Lifetime in Peru's Glaciers, Slowly Melting Away." The New York Times, January 26, 2018, sec. World.

https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/26/world/americas/peru-glaciers-andes-melting.html.

https://advance.lexis.com/api/permalink/855a0bb0-d228-47ec-b57e-148 10fd6a954/?context=1516831

MANN Part I Discussion

# Week 4

# Feb 11

Feb 11-14

Lecture: Natural Regions

Readings:

United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP). "The State of Biodiversity in Latin American and the Caribbean: A Mid-Term Review of Progress Towards the AICHI Biodiversity Targets," 2016.

### Feb 13

Lecture: Tutorial about Podcasts (DRC)

# Readings:

United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP). "The State of Biodiversity in Latin American and the Caribbean: A Mid-Term Review of Progress Towards the AICHI Biodiversity Targets," 2016.

## Week 5

#### Feb 18, 20

# Part II: Cultural Patterns

## Feb 18

**Lecture:** Iberian heritage, conquest and institutions

Readings:

Discussion of MANN, Part II and III

Latin American "Food Fiesta" (@Latin American house)

## Feb 20

Lecture: Political Change

Begin Cepek Readings:

"Chile Protests: Cost of Living Protests Take Deadly Toll - BBC

News." Accessed January 6, 2020.

https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-50119649?fbclid=lwA R24Lgu8fUNkM4b\_5Gb0pSLnB3McoFsG7d879yRzQqB\_I\_HHjlfp48R uP1o.

"Chilean Government Bows to Protests & Agrees to Rewrite Constitution | Democracy Now!" Accessed January 6, 2020.

https://www.democracynow.org/2019/11/12/headlines/chilean\_government\_bows\_to\_protests\_agrees\_to\_rewrite\_constitution?fbclid=lwAR2pihFh1OAVgJ6WQ0\_8J\_fylTTQTxfhtl9jfVfNC2i7WgPxr\_MwZLcMxB

<u>S</u>.

Dube, Ryan. "Latin America, Hit by Slower Growth, Braces for More Instability." Wall Street Journal, January 20, 2020, sec. World.https://search.proquest.com/docview/2342090413?accountid=1 2205. Week 6 Feb 25 Feb 25, 27 Lecture: Race, Ethnicity and Social Class Paper 1 Due Readings: La Cadena, Marisol De. "Reconstructing Race: Racism, Culture and Mestizaje in Latin America." NACLA Report on the Americas 34, no. 6 (May 2001): 16-23. https://doi.org/10.1080/10714839.2001.11722585. **Instructor Presentation:** Ecuador Feb 27 Lecture: Race, Ethnicity and Social Class II Introduce Oral Presentation assignment

Readings:

Carney, Judith A., and Robert A. Voeks. "Landscape Legacies of the African Diaspora in Brazil." *Progress in Human Geography* 27, no. 2 (April 2003): 139–52. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1191/0309132503ph4180a">https://doi.org/10.1191/0309132503ph4180a</a>.

**Instructor Presentation:** 

Guyana

## Week 7 Mar 3

*Mar 3 - 7* 

**Lecture:** Latin America as a Cultural Region

Reading:

Safa, Helen I. "Challenging Mestizaje: A Gender Perspective on Indigenous and Afrodescendant Movements in Latin America." *Critique of Anthropology* 25, no. 3 (September 2005): 307–30. https://doi.org/10.1177/0308275X05055217.

#### **Student Presentations:**

Country 1
Country 2

**Part III: Economic Patterns** 

Mar 5

	Lecture: Extractivism in Latin America
	Reading: Perreault, Tom. "Energy, Extractivism and Hydrocarbon Geographies in Contemporary Latin America." Journal of Latin American Geography 17, no. 3 (2018): 235–52. https://doi.org/10.1353/lag.2018.0048. Student Presentations: Country 3 Country 4 Optional: Film screening/discussion & photo/art exhibit (Weyerhauser Boardroom)
	Mar 6 Mandatory: Margaret Randall Keynote with Q&A (Weherhauser) Optional: Cuban music or cultural event
	<u>Mar 7</u> Optional: Saturday brunch - Dialogue between Margaret Randall and Bimbola Akinbola (Art Commons 102)
<b>Week 8</b> <i>Mar 10, 12</i>	Mar 10 MIDTERM
	Mar 12 MID COURSE EVALUATIONS Paper two due End Cepek Readings: Discussion of Cepek Student Presentations: Country 5 Country 6
Mar 17, 19	SPRING BREAK
<b>Week 9</b> <i>Mar 24, 26</i>	Mar 24 Lecture: Tutorial about Podcasts (DRC) Agriculture and Agrarian Development I Readings:

Brush, Stephen B., and David W. Guillet. "Small-Scale Agro-Pastoral

Production in the Central Andes." Mountain Research and

Development 5, no. 1 (February 1985): 19.

https://doi.org/10.2307/3673220.

## Student Presentations:

Country 7 Country 8

#### Mar 26

Lecture: Agriculture and Agrarian Development II

Readings:

Grisaffi, Thomas. "We Are Originarios ... 'We Just Aren't from Here': Coca Leaf and Identity Politics in the Chapare, Bolivia." *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 29, no. 4 (October 2010): 425–39.

https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1470-9856.2010.00385.x.

## **Student Presentations:**

Country 9 Country 10

## Week 10

Mar 31 Apr 2 <u>Mar 31</u>

Lecture: Land Change in Latin America

Readings:

Aldrich, Stephen, Robert Walker, Cynthia Simmons, Marcellus Caldas, and Stephen Perz. "Contentious Land Change in the Amazon's Arc of Deforestation." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 102, no. 1 (January 2012): 103–28. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/00045608.2011.620501">https://doi.org/10.1080/00045608.2011.620501</a>.

"How Amazon Deforestation Is Being Done in the Service of Surging Beef Demand - The Washington Post." Accessed January 6, 2020. <a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2019/08/27/how-beef-demand-is-accelerating-amazons-deforestation-climate-peril/?fbclid=lwAR">https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2019/08/27/how-beef-demand-is-accelerating-amazons-deforestation-climate-peril/?fbclid=lwAR</a> <a href="https://www.bcclerating-amazons-deforestation-climate-peril/?fbclid=lwAR">https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2019/08/27/how-beef-demand-is-accelerating-amazons-deforestation-climate-peril/?fbclid=lwAR</a> <a href="https://www.bcclerating-amazons-deforestation-climate-peril/?fbclid=lwAR">https://www.bcclerating-amazons-deforestation-climate-peril/?fbclid=lwAR</a> <a href="https://www.bcclerating-amazons-deforestation-climate-peril/">https://www.bcclerating-amazons-deforestation-climate-peril/</a> <a href="https://www.bcclerating-amazons-deforestation-climate-peril/">https://www.bcclerating-amazons-deforestation-climate-peril/</a> <a href="https://www.bcclerat

## **Student Presentations:**

Country 11 Country 12

#### Apr 2

	No class - in compensation for previous events outside of regular schedule - work on Podcast  Activity: Introduce your paper two using Audacity
<b>Week 11</b> <i>Apr 7, 9</i>	MOVIE: Even the Rain. Dir. Icíar Bollaín. Morena Films Xavier will be out of town in a conference
Week 12 Apr 14, 16	Apr 14 Lecture: Mining, Manufacturing, and Tourism Discussion of "Even the Rain" Readings: Koens, Jacobus Franciscus, Carel Dieperink, and Miriam Miranda. "Ecotourism as a Development Strategy: Experiences from Costa Rica." Environment, Development and Sustainability 11, no. 6 (December 2009): 1225–37. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-009-9214-3. Student Presentations: Country 13 Country 14  Apr 16 Lecture: Urbanization, Population Growth and Migration Readings: Kaitlin Yarnall, and Marie Price. "Migration, Development and a New Rurality in the Valle Alto, Bolivia." Journal of Latin American Geography 9, no. 1 (2010): 107–24. https://doi.org/10.1353/lag.0.0083. Student Presentations: Country 15 Country 16
<b>Week 13</b> <i>April 21, 23</i>	Apr 21 Lecture: Development and Health Guest Lecture Eric Carter Readings:  "Forget 'developing' Poor Countries, It's Time to 'de-Develop' Rich Countries   Global Development Professionals Network   The Guardian." Accessed January 6, 2020.  https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-netw ork/2015/sep/23/developing-poor-countries-de-develop-rich-countries-

	sdgs?fbclid=lwAR3i1UcKBciYf8bZX4GbolfivASI1qG2lvJAWv241oAX
	hcs6djRiZIVQH0o.
	Student Presentations:
	Country 17
	Country 18
	<u>Apr 23</u>
	Reading and discussion: Buen vivir and alternative Development
	Pathways
	Readings:
	Balch, Oliver. "Buen Vivir: The Social Philosophy Inspiring Movements
	in South America." <i>The Guardian</i> , February 4, 2013, sec. Guardian
	Sustainable Business.
	https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/blog/buen-vivir-phi
	losophy-south-america-eduardo-gudynas.
	ANOTHER READING TBD
	Student Presentations:
	Country 19
	Country 20
Week 14	April 28
April 28, 30	Podcast presentations
	<u>April 30</u>
	Podcast Presentations
	Course Evaluations
	FINAL EXAM WILL BE RELEASED
	FINAL EXAM DUE THURSDAY 5/7 (OFFICIAL EXAM DATE)

Welcome to GEOG / LATI 249!