LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES (LAST)

LAST 100a / HIST 305a, Introduction to Latin American Studies: History, Culture and Society  Staff
What is Latin America? The large area we refer to as Latin America is not unified by a single language, history, religion, or type of government. Nor is it unified by a shared geography or by the prevalence of a common language or ethnic group. Yet Latin America does, obviously, exist. It is a region forged from the merging of diverse cultures, historical experiences, and processes of resistance. This course provides an overview of Latin America and the Caribbean from the 16th century up to the present. While the class aims to provide students with an understanding of the region, due to time constraints, it focuses primarily on the experiences and histories of selected countries. The course introduces students to some of the most important debates about the region’s history, politics, society, and culture. The course follows a chronological structure while also highlighting thematic questions. Drawing on academic readings, films, music, art, literature, testimony, oral histories, and writings from local voices the class explores the political transformation of the region, as well as topics related to ethnic and racial identity, revolution, social movements, religion, violence, military rule, democracy, transition to democracy, and migration.  

LAST 214a / AFAM 186a / PLSC 378a / SOCY 170a, Contesting Injustice  Staff
Exploration of why, when, and how people organize collectively to challenge political, social, and economic injustice. Cross-national comparison of the extent, causes, and consequences of inequality. Analysis of mobilizations for social justice in both U.S. and international settings. Intended primarily for freshmen and sophomores.  

* LAST 222a / SPAN 222a, Legal Spanish  Mercedes Carreras
An introduction to Spanish and Latin American legal culture with a focus on the specific traits of legal language and on the development of advanced language competence. Issues such as human rights, the death penalty, the jury, contracts, statutory instruments, and rulings by the constitutional courts are explored through law journal articles, newspapers, the media, and mock trials. Enrollment limited to 18. A maximum of one course in the 200-230 range may count as an elective toward the Spanish major.  

* LAST 223a or b / SPAN 223a or b, Spanish in Film: An Introduction to the New Latin American Cinema  Margherita Tortora
Development of proficiency in Spanish through analysis of critically acclaimed Latin American films. Includes basic vocabulary of film criticism in Spanish as well as discussion and language exercises. Enrollment limited to 18.  

* LAST 225b / SPAN 225b, Spanish for the Medical Professions  Mercedes Carreras
Topics in health and welfare. Conversation, reading, and writing about medical issues for advanced Spanish-language students, including those considering careers in medical professions. Enrollment limited to 18.  

* LAST 227b / SPAN 227b, Creative Writing  Maria Jordan
An introduction to the craft and practice of creative writing (fiction, poetry, and essays). Focus on the development of writing skills and awareness of a variety of genres and techniques through reading of exemplary works and critical assessment of student work. Emphasis on the ability to write about abstract ideas, sentiments, dreams, and the imaginary world. Enrollment limited to 18. A maximum of one course in the 200-230 range may count as an elective toward the Spanish major.  

* LAST 228a / SPAN 228a, Borders & Globalization in Hispanophone Cultures  Luna Najera
The borders that constitute the geographical divisions of the world are contingent, but they can have enormous ordering power in the lives of people and other beings. Human-made borders can both allow and disallow the flow of people and resources. Like geographical borders, social borders such as race, caste, class, and gender can form and perpetuate privileged categories of humans that restrict access of excluded persons to natural resources, education, security, and social mobility. Thus, bordering can differentially value human lives. Working with the premise that borders are sites of power, in this course we study bordering and debordering practices in the Hispanic cultures of Iberia, Latin America, and North America, from the 1490s to the present. Through analyses of a wide range of texts students will investigate the multiple ways in which social, cultural, and spatial borders are initiated, expressed, materialized, and contested. Some of the questions that will guide our conversations are: What are social borders and what are the processes through which they perdure? How do the effects of local practices that transcend borders (e.g., environmental pollution, deforestation) change our understanding of borders? How does globalization change discourse about borders? (To be conducted in Spanish.) Prerequisite: SPAN 140 or 145, or in accordance with placement results. A maximum of one course in the 200-230 range may count as an elective toward the Spanish major. Permission is managed through the YCS registration system.  

LAST 232a / ANTH 232a / ARCG 232a, Ancient Civilizations of the Andes  Richard Burger
Survey of the archaeological cultures of Peru and Bolivia from the earliest settlement through the late Inca state.  

* LAST 243a or b / SPAN 243a or b, Advanced Spanish Grammar  Staff
A comprehensive, in-depth study of grammar intended to improve students’ spoken and written command of Spanish. Linguistic analysis of literary selections; some English-to-Spanish translation. Enrollment limited to 18.  

LAST 244b / SPAN 244b, Writing in Spanish  Margherita Tortora
Intensive instruction and practice in writing as a means of developing critical thinking. Recommended for students considering courses in literature. Analysis of fiction and nonfiction forms, techniques, and styles. Classes conducted in a workshop format.
emancipation, in the second part of the twentieth century, and particularly around 1968, Latin America embraced the world discourse of politicians such as Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders, to populist social movements such as the Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street. Analyses are supported by comparative assessments of various empirical instances in the US and around the world, from populist investigation of the populist phenomenon in party systems and the social movement arena. Conceptual, historical, and methodological orthodox interpretations. An interdisciplinary study of the process of revolutionary change and cold war at the grassroots level. Analysis of revolutionary movements in Latin America against the backdrop of the Cold War. Critical examination of popular images and inequality in the twentieth century. Topics include institutional design, historical legacies, corruption, clientelism, and violence. Brazilian concrete poetry in international perspective; production and theory of concrete poetry, translation, and criticism during the second half of the twentieth century. Brazilian concrete poets in the context of visual and concrete poetries. Representative works include ‘Pilot Plan’ and Theory of Concrete Poetry, graphic and spatial poems, and public expositions of works. Brazilian concrete poets were among the leaders of an international neo-vanguard movement in mid-twentieth century related to geometrical abstraction in painting. In the journals Noigandres and Invenção, and the Theory of Concrete Poetry the Brazilians link their poetries to Pound, Mallarmé, cummings and other inventive figures in world poetry, while relating poetry to graphic arts through reference to painting and to semiotics, including Fenollosa’s essay on the Chinese character. The exhibit in S. Paulo’s Museum of Modern Art in December 1956 was the beginning of the public exhibition of concrete poetry, now the topic of anthologies, websites, criticism, and museum retrospectives. Concrete poetries dominated the production of poetry in Brazil for half a century with a major effect on cultural and intellectual life. Prerequisite: PORT 140 or equivalent.

LAST 261a / SPAN 261a, Studies in Spanish Literature I Staff
An introduction to Spanish prose, drama, and lyric poetry from their medieval multicultural origins through the Golden Age in the seventeenth century. Readings include El Cid, La Celestina, Conde Lucanor, and works by Miguel de Cervantes and Calderón de la Barca. Open to students who have placed into L5 courses or who have successfully completed an L4 course in Spanish. Counts toward the major in Spanish. L5, HU

LAST 262a / SPAN 262a, Studies in Spanish Literature II Staff
An introduction to Spanish prose, drama, and lyric poetry from the eighteenth century to the present, centered on the conflict between modernity and tradition and on the quest for national identity. Texts by Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer, Emilia Pardo Bazán, Antonio Machado, Federico García Lorca, Ramón Sender, and Ana María Matute, among others. Open to students who have placed into L5 courses or who have successfully completed an L4 course in Spanish. L5, HU

LAST 266a / SPAN 266a, Studies in Latin American Literature I Staff
Cultural encounters in the New World as interpreted by authors of native American (Aztec and Inca) cultural traditions, the Spanish conquistadors and friars who encountered them and their heirs, and the Mexican creole nun (the now-world-famous Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz) who gave voice to some of their traditions as she created a space for her own writing in the literary world. Their resonance and legacy today. L5, HU

LAST 355a / HIST 355a, Colonial Latin America Staff
A survey of the conquest and colonization of Latin America from pre-Columbian civilizations through the movements for independence. Emphasis on social and economic themes and the formation of identities in the context of multiracial societies. HU 0 Course cr

LAST 370h / HIST 370h, Continuities and Discontinuities of Violence in Latin America María Aguilar
During the second half of the twentieth century, many Latin American countries experienced intense political conflict and waves of repression at the hands of government forces. This course introduces students to the histories of Latin American countries that experienced dictatorships and authoritarian regimes during the Cold War and traces their development into the democratic transitions and current attempts to come to terms with the legacies of violence. The first part of the course explores the factors that led to the seizing of power by military forces, the period of violence, and human rights violations that characterized these regimes. The second part examines the factors that led to democratic transitions and the legacies of authoritarian regimes. The course examines the experiences of countries in South and Central America, with special attention to Argentina, Chile, El Salvador, and Guatemala. HU, SO

LAST 372a / ER&M 342a / HIST 372Ja, Revolutionary Change and Cold War in Latin America Greg Grandin
Analysis of revolutionary movements in Latin America against the backdrop of the Cold War. Critical examination of popular images and orthodox interpretations. An interdisciplinary study of the process of revolutionary change and cold war at the grassroots level. WR, HU

LAST 386a / GLBL 215a / MGRK 237a / PLSC 375a / SOCY 389a, Populism Paris Aslanidis
Investigation of the populist phenomenon in party systems and the social movement arena. Conceptual, historical, and methodological analyses are supported by comparative assessments of various empirical instances in the US and around the world, from populist politicians such as Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders, to populist social movements such as the Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street. SO

LAST 431a / HUMS 229a / LITR 431a / SPAN 431a, Latin American Languages of Liberation: The Long Sixties Staff
This is a multi-media seminar that studies the Latin American cultural and political discourses of liberation throughout the sixties, with an eye at assessing their legacy today. While the language that characterized the foundation of the nation-states in the 19th century was emancipation, in the second part of the twentieth century, and particularly around 1968, Latin America embraced the world discourse of
liberation. This seminar examines languages of liberation in an array of disciplines and artistic practices from South and Central America as well as the Caribbean. We explore regional debates that were also inserted in the larger discourse of the anti-colonial struggles of the global South. Topics include Philosophy of liberation (Dussel), Theology of liberation (the 1968 Council of Bishops in Medellin, Colombia), Theater of the oppressed (Boal), Pedagogy of the oppressed (Freire), Cinema of liberation (manifestos of Third Cinema), the New Song protest movements across the region (both Spanish and Portuguese American music), anti-colonialism in the Caribbean (Césaire, Fanon), anti-neocolonialism (dependency theory, internal colonialism), Indigenous liberation (from the Barbados declarations to the Lacandon jungle declarations), experimental “boom” literature (Cortázar) etc.

* LAST 491a, The Senior Essay  Staff
Preparation of a research paper about forty pages long under the direction of a faculty adviser, in either the fall or the spring term. Students write on subjects of their own choice. During the term before the essay is written, students plan the project in consultation with a qualified adviser or the director of undergraduate studies. The student must submit a suitable project outline and bibliography to the adviser and the director of undergraduate studies by the third week of the term. The outline should indicate the focus and scope of the essay topic, as well as the proposed research methodology. Permission may be given to write a two-term essay after consultation with an adviser and the director of undergraduate studies and after submission of a project statement. Only those who have begun to do advanced work in a given area are eligible. The requirements for the one-term senior essay apply to the two-term essay, except that the two-term essay should be substantially longer.