

Geography of South America

Cultural Landscapes, Environmental Change, and Sustainable Development

GRG 323K / LAS 330 Topic 3

Summer Session 1, 2012

M-Th 2:15-4:15 in Aula 3, IFSA, or on site (subject to variation)

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TA Jonathan Lowell

THE COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO UPDATES

Syllabus last updated May 27, 2012

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines issues of cultural landscapes, human-environment relations, and sustainable development in South America. For summer 2012, the course takes full advantage of its location in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Buenos Aires is South America's second largest city, with about 13 million people in the metropolitan area; it is located at the edge of the subtropical, agricultural Pampa. Buenos Aires has attracted a large number of immigrants from all over the country and a substantial number from the rest of South America, Europe, and Asia. Students will examine selected issues through readings, discussions, and field trips.

Host Institution

Our course in summer 2012 is hosted by the IFSA Butler Program, (IFSA Butler Aula 3; Av. Corrientes 880. Students must take one course in Spanish in addition to this course in Geography for a total of six academic credits.

Course Format

Lectures by the course instructor will be combined with group discussions (including peer group discussions) of questions related to the readings. Many classes will be on site in accessible parts of the city; some classes will meet at other than the regular time. Students are expected to attend all classes, read all materials, submit all assignments on time, and be prepared to participate. They are also expected to participate in additional program activities outside of regular class hours. Students will consult their email frequently for course updates, including updates in the schedule. Every effort will be made to ensure that this class does not conflict with your second class that you must take as part of this Program.

Blackboard web sites: <https://courses.utexas.edu/>

There are two Blackboard web sites. One is a general site for all participants in the Buenos Aires study abroad program. Another site is specific to this course, and will contain pdf files of course readings and other materials and assignments.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THIS COURSE AND UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS REQUIREMENTS

This course may be used towards the Geography major (Cultural Track) and Latin American Studies major (core requirement and/or concentration), and as part of the Latin American minor in International Relations and Global Studies (IRG). This course may also be used for the environmental track in IRG, and the Global Cultures (GC) flag. This program may be used towards the study abroad requirement in IRG.

Prerequisite: Upper Division Standing; this requirement may be waived for study abroad students. The course is open to students in all majors, but students must be admitted to the corresponding Buenos Aires study abroad program.

Summary of Grading:

Grading will be based on a cumulative class logbook (50%), a walking tour / site visit project (20%), and class participation (30%).

The Class Logbook is the record of the class, consisting of responses to questions pertaining to your lecture notes, field trips, and your readings. The logbook must be kept up to date. You will normally maintain the logbook as a rtf or doc file on your computer, and email requested sections to the professor and TA. Students' logbook entries may be used in classroom discussions, including peer groups proctored by students. They will be graded on the basis of overall quality, originality, creativity, and evidence of independent personal investigation. Points will be lost on the basis of factual errors, and failure to complete assignments on time.

For the project, you will work in a team to develop a walking tour or site visit based on a theme involving the cultural, environmental, socio-economic, and/or historical dimensions of the landscape of Buenos Aires. You and your team will lead the class on the tour in one of the final class days. The tour should take about an hour, and should be readily accessible by public transportation from the IFSA Butler headquarters. You could, for example, focus your tour on an example of migration, religion, tourism, food ways, or about the impact of Eva Peron, the "dirty war," or tango culture on the contemporary Buenos Aires urban landscape. By request, you may instead write a conventional term paper on a topic related to the course.

Field Trips

All students are required to participate in the program field trips to Colonia de Sacramento, Uruguay (June 1-2), as well as other required program field trips (City Tour, San Isidro Rugby Game). You will be required to participate in one of the four field trips to Tigre. You will be given questions to answer in your logbook for the various field trips; take notes.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ITINERARY (OVERVIEW) -SUBJECT TO CHANGE

MAY 24, 2012

Reading Assignments from Blackboard or Dropbox will be provided as the course proceeds

Week One: Orientation and Classes Begin

May 23: Arrival, students met at airport and introduced to host families

May 24: Orientation (Circolo Italiano in Recoleta)

May 25: City Tour

May 26: Trip to San Isidro for Rugby Game

Be sure to take notes on your city tour and trip to San Isidro, and enter them in your course Logbook. By 7 pm on Monday, May 28, send Greg via email a paragraph, under 200 words, detailing your biggest surprise or shock about Buenos Aires, as a place and a landscape, so far. Your responses will be shared with other students in class on May 29.

First reading assignment: read the selections from Jordan, Azara, Borges, and Scarpaci on Blackboard. Write up to 300 words comparing and contrasting Azara, Borges, and Scarpaci's views of Buenos Aires (and the Latin American City). How would Jordan categorize their approaches to cultural geography? Email your short essay to Greg and Jon by 7 pm on May 30.

Week Two: Buenos Aires Environment and History

May 28: Field trip: U of Buenos Aires Farm (meet at 10:45 am at IFSA)

May 29: Meet in Aula 3, IFSA. First assignment due.

May 30: Walking tour of Reserva Ecológica Costañera Sur. Leave from IFSA.

May 31: TBA

June 1-2: Colonia Field Trip (all program students)

Be sure to take notes on your trips to the U of Buenos Aires farm, reserve ecologica trip, and colonia trip. Greg will provide you with future reading and writing assignments.

Week Three

June 4 -7 classes

Week Four

June 11-14 classes

Week Five

June 18-19 classes

June 20 Holiday (Flag Day)

June 21 classes

Week Six: Student Led Field Trips and Site Visits

June 25-28 classes and student led trips

Week Seven:

July 2 Student led trips (as needed)

July 3 No classes (study day)

July 4 Final Exams (none for us, but turn in your logbooks); farewell fiesta

July 5 Leave Argentina