

## SYLLABUS

### Geography of Latin America GRG f319 / LAS f319

Summer 2010 (first session)

Unique numbers 84200 and 85240

Meets MTWThF 11:30-12:45 in room BUR 220 (Burdine)

Professor Gregory Knapp, Department of Geography and the Environment

Office hours Tu 10:30-11:15 GRG 326 or by appointment

TA Solange Muñoz, Office hours TBA

Note: This syllabus is intended to be used together with the official Schedule (with reading assignments), posted on Blackboard

This course is a general introduction to Latin American environments and peoples from a geographical perspective. There are no prerequisites, and an effort is made to make the material accessible to the broadest possible range of students, as citizens and future leaders. At the same time, more advanced students can benefit from the exploration of such topics as landforms, climate, plants and animals, environmental hazards, Native American lifeways and resource management, globalization, population and migration, cities, sustainable development, geopolitics, frontiers, conservation, and cultural survival. The class serves as a basic preparation for travel, business, government service, journalism or volunteer work in Latin America, as well as for elementary or secondary school teaching; it also can serve as a resource for a more advanced career in research.

This course can be used toward a major or minor in either Geography or Latin American Studies. The course can be used to meet the Area B requirement for the Colleges of Liberal Arts and Natural Sciences. This course may **not** be used towards the Area C requirement (some other courses in geography do meet this requirement). This is also a Connexus course (Environmental BDP, and others).

#### Textbooks:

- Robert B. Kent, *Latin America: Regions and Peoples* (Guilford 2006)
- Gregory Knapp, ed. *Latin America in the Twenty First Century: Challenges and Solutions* (UT Press, 2002).

*Recommended (not required):* Charles C. Mann, *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus*

#### Website:

You can access Blackboard for this course on the following site: <https://courses.utexas.edu/>

In addition, other web sites and materials will be assigned during class. **The Blackboard web syllabus and schedule is the official syllabus for this course.** Course lecture Power Points will usually be placed on line within 24 hours after each lecture, but these are no substitute for lecture

notes.

### **Summary of Grading:**

Exams and quizzes test knowledge of locations (with map questions), concepts, explanations, and solutions. The tests contain objective, map, and essay type questions. The student is responsible for all the material in the readings, assigned web pages, and lectures, including maps and other graphics, but the lectures are most important.

- \* **Quizzes and attendance** (15%).
- \* **Two Midterms** (40%), June 16 and June 28.
- \* **Project** (15%). Details will be on Blackboard. Due July 5.
- \* **Final Exam** (30%). 2-5 pm **July 10 must attend!**

Grading is based on total points (90-100 A, 80-89.5 B, etc) and is not "curved." Grades in this course are not on the plus or minus system.

Although the course is designed to be accessible to everyone, this is not an easy course, and some students do earn F's and D's every semester. If you are on probation, or are trying to use this course to raise your GPA to graduate, qualify for a study abroad program, or for other reasons, this course might not meet your needs.

Quizzes are administered randomly but most often they will be given at the start of class at 11:30 am. If you cannot be in class by 11:30 every day, please do not take this course.

### **Classroom Policy on Electronic Devices and Behavior**

Laptops are NOT allowed. Laptops, cell phones, MP3 players, and other such devices must be turned off and stowed during classes and exams. Lectures may not be recorded in any way without prior permission. Online materials may not be copied or distributed without prior permission. In exceptional cases, with prior permission, students will be allowed to take lecture notes on their laptops; in these cases, laptop lecture notes need to be provided to the professor for each class, and students need to pledge not to use computers for any other purpose during class. The professor will not provide feedback on lecture notes.

Students will arrive on time, minimize unscheduled personal breaks, and stay until the class ends. They will respect the views and opinions of their colleagues. Disagreement and debate are encouraged. Intolerance for the views of others is unacceptable.

### **Accommodations for Special Needs**

The University makes reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later

than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

### **Religious Holidays**

By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

### **Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students**

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to their e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

### **Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)**

If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual’s behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

### **U.T. Learning Center**

You may find assistance with specific strategies to help you study effectively at the Learning Center. The Center for Learning offers a range of services to become a better student through assistance in one-on-one tutoring, academic counseling, and other classes. For more information see <http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/>

### **Academic Integrity**

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/>).

