



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Department of History

Latin American Studies 311
Critical Contemporary Issues in Latin America
Winter 2021

Instructor: Hendrik Kraay

Email: kraay@ucalgary.ca

Office Hours and Method: MW 2:00-2:50 pm (Zoom link on D2L)

Course Delivery: Online

Synchronous Class Times: Mondays, 11:00-11:50 am, Mondays: 11, 18, 25 January; 1, 8, 22 February; 1, 8, 15, 29 March; 12 April.

Originally Scheduled Class Times: MWF, 11:00-11:50 am

Teaching Assistant: Mr. Tim Collard

Description:

This course is an introduction to contemporary Latin America (the Spanish and Portuguese-speaking countries of the Americas). It is simultaneously an overview of recent social, economic, and political trends in the region, as well as an examination of current issues in the region. The latter will include the COVID-19 pandemic; the elections expected during this semester in Ecuador, Peru, and Honduras; and other issues that may become important from January to April 2021.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to do the following:

1. Identify and explain the significance of the major social and economic trends in Latin America in the first two decades of this millennium.
2. Identify and explain the significance of the major issues in contemporary Latin America and their relevance for Canada.
3. Explain the significance of major socioeconomic indicators for Latin American countries and the differences among these countries.
4. Analyze (orally and in writing) news articles on Latin America by identifying the type of article and assessing the assumptions that frame the article.
5. Write an analysis of a major issue in contemporary Latin America, either in the form of a briefing based primarily on media articles or in the form of a research essay based primarily on academic sources.
6. Use library resources to find relevant news articles and scholarly resources on

contemporary issues in Latin America.

Reading Material:

Phillip Berryman, *Latin America at 200: A New Introduction* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2016).

The History Student's Handbook (available on the course D2L site).

News Articles To Be Announced Weekly and Delivered via D2L.

Assessment:

Method	Due Date	Weight	Learning Outcome(s)
News Article Analysis Essay I	3 February	10%	2, 4, 6
Mid-Term Examination	26 February	20%	1, 2, 3
News Article Analysis Essay II	1, 8, 15, 22, 29 March (Date To Be Selected)	10%	2, 4, 6
Participation in News Articles Discussions	Mondays, throughout the Semester	5%	4
Proposal for Research Paper or Contemporary Issue Briefing	19 March	5%	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
Research Paper or Contemporary Issue Briefing	6 April	25%	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
Take-Home Final Examination	20 April	25%	1, 2, 3
Total		100%	

Grading Policies:

All grades will be assigned as numerical grades (percentages); the official department conversion to letter grades is included in the attachment to this syllabus. See the grading policies specific to each assignment below. If you have any questions about your graded work, please come to see me in office hours or book an appointment for a Zoom meeting at another time.

Details on Methods of Assessment:

This course is a combination of lectures and seminars. You will be assessed in several different ways in this course. Some of the assignments in this course have specific instructions. Please read the following sections of this syllabus carefully, along with the supplementary instructions that may be posted on D2L.

News Article Analysis Essay I (Due 3 February): Students will select a news article on Latin America from a newspaper or newsmagazine to which the University of Calgary subscribes, published in the previous 30 days, of at least 700 words in length, and write a short essay (no more than 500 words) that identifies the type of article that it is (news, editorial, opinion,

analysis), identifies the periodical in which it was published, identifies the author, summarizes the main points of the article, considers how the journalist (or writer) frames the issues, and relates the article to the themes of this course. Questions that may be addressed in these short essays include the following: What assumptions are embedded in the article? Is the writer in favor or opposed to the developments discussed in the article? How does the journalist present the issues? How does this article relate to themes of this course? What does the issue addressed in this article (or the way that the journalist or writer presents it) tell us about contemporary Latin America?

The assignment should include both the full citation of the newspaper article (e.g. John Smith [if there is a byline], "Peruvian Election Likely To Be Interesting," *Podunkville Times*, 15 January 2021.) and the URL that links directly to the article through the University of Calgary library. After you paste the URL into your document, test it to make sure that it works.

Further instructions for this assignment, and particularly for how to use the University of Calgary library's news databases, are available on D2L. Model news articles analysis essays are also available on D2L.

Assessment of the news articles analysis essays is based on your comprehension of the news article, the effectiveness of your analysis, how well you relate the article to issues discussed in the course, and the quality of your writing.

Mid-Term Examination (26 February):

The mid-term examination will be based on the textbook chapters, lectures, and news articles from the first six weeks of this course. Students will have a 75-minute period any time on 26 February to write the open-book mid-term examination. Because the mid-term examination seeks to test your individual understanding of course content, collaboration during the mid-term examination is not permitted.

News Article Analysis Essay II (and Small-Group Discussion Leadership) (Due on Different Dates in March): This is a multi-part assignment that includes the following steps:

1. By noon on the Thursday prior to the Monday class during which you will lead a group discussion, submit the full publication information and the University of Calgary Library URL of the news article that you have chosen to the respective dropbox on the course D2L site. Please ensure that your article is not one that has already been discussed. This article should be from a newspaper or newsmagazine to which the University of Calgary subscribes, published in the previous 30 days (7 days is preferable), and at least 700 words in length.
2. By 9:00 am on the Monday that you will lead a small-group discussion, submit your News Article Analysis Essay on the course D2L site. This essay should follow the same format as your first News Article Analysis Essay (see the instructions above and the model essays).
3. Prepare a two-minute presentation on your article, based on the points raised in your News Article Analysis Essay, and consider how it relates to the other articles selected for discussion that day.
4. Lead your group's discussion of the news articles by starting the discussion with your presentation.

By 5:00 pm on the Thursday prior to the Monday discussions, links to the news articles will be posted on the course D2L site. All students should read all of the articles prior to the Monday classes in preparation for the discussions.

Students are encouraged to select a news article that relates to their research paper or to their contemporary issue briefing topic or to one of the course themes.

You will sign up for a due date of your choice in the week of 8-12 February by enrolling yourself in one of the five groups. Students who do not enrol themselves during this window will be randomly assigned by D2L to the remaining slots.

This news articles analysis essay will be assessed in the same way as the first news articles analysis essay

Participation: This is an often-misunderstood component of the course grade. It is not a grade for attendance but, of course, attendance is a necessary prerequisite for quality participation in the Monday news article discussions on which this component of the course is based. Your attendance in the discussion groups will be recorded by Zoom, so it is important that you use your University of Calgary credentials to join the Zoom meeting. These discussions will involve group work and your group's grade will be based on the quality of your answers to the discussion questions that you collectively arrive at. Designate one group member to serve as scribe to log your answers to the discussion questions in the Word document that will be available prior to the Monday class meeting. This student is responsible for submitting the discussion worksheet to the respective D2L dropbox by 2:00 pm on the day of the discussion. For the first weeks of this course, these groups will be created randomly by Zoom. The March discussion groups will be organized around the group leaders (the students who wrote the news articles analysis essays for that date). The scribe for the March discussion groups should be someone other than the author of the news articles analysis essay.

Research Paper or Contemporary Issue Briefing: You will write either a research paper on a contemporary issue in Latin America or a briefing on a contemporary issue in Latin America directed at a government agency, non-governmental organization, or business. Both the essay or the briefing should be about 1,500 words in length and must include footnotes and a bibliography that conform to the style mandated in *The History Student's Handbook*. It is your choice whether you will write a research paper or a contemporary issue briefing.

Additional Requirements for the Research Paper: The research paper should be based primarily on academic sources, both academic books and scholarly articles. The bibliography should include at least six to eight substantial academic or scholarly sources. This is a minimum, and good research papers always have substantially longer bibliographies. This bibliography should be supplemented by two to four news articles related to the topic. There are two parts to this assignment.

- a) **Proposal (Due before 19 March):** The proposal should include your preliminary bibliography and a set of questions, the answer(s) to which will constitute your thesis. The following questions may give you some ideas for how to approach this part of the research paper proposal for a research paper on the issue of corruption in Latin America: What explanations have scholars from different disciplines offered for the prevalence of

corruption in the region? What do scholars from different disciplines consider to be the main social, economic, and political results of corruption? How do scholars explain the different levels of corruption in the region? What solutions to the problems of corruption have scholars offered? Why, according to them, have these solutions succeeded or failed? If your grade on the research paper is higher than the grade on your proposal, I will raise the latter to the same grade as the research paper. Proposals received after 19 March will not be eligible to be raised to the same grade as the research paper.

Additional Requirements for the Briefing on a Contemporary Issue: The briefing on a contemporary issue should be based primarily on news articles. The bibliography should include at least ten news articles published in the last year on the issue that you choose. This is a minimum and good briefings always have substantially longer bibliographies. This bibliography of news articles should be supplemented by two to four academic books or scholarly articles on the topic. Note that you will only be able to do this assignment for a topic that has received sufficient media attention in the last year.

The briefing should be directed at a government agency, non-governmental organization, or business and should provide a background discussion of the issue, an analysis of the implications of this issue for the organization or institution to which the briefing is directed, recommendations for what the organization or institution should do, and an evaluation of the risks that it faces if it takes or does not take the recommended actions. The analysis should be informed by the news articles and the scholarly sources.

a) **Proposal (Due before 13 March):** The proposal should include a preliminary bibliography of at least ten news articles on the topic, as well as two to four scholarly sources. It should clearly indicate the organization to which it is directed and should include a list of questions or issues that the briefing will address. The following questions could structure a briefing on the Venezuelan refugee crisis for the Canadian government: Why have so many people left Venezuela? Who are they? Where have they gone? What are the principal obstacles that they face in the places that they are finding refuge? In what ways is this refugee crisis affecting Canada? What can Canada do about this? What has Canada done about this crisis? What should Canada do about this crisis? What will be the likely results of these policy decisions? If your grade on the briefing on a contemporary issue is higher than the grade on your proposal, I will raise the latter to the same grade as the briefing. Proposals received after 19 March will not be eligible to be raised to the same grade as the research paper.

The final research paper or contemporary issues briefing should be submitted in Word format to the D2L dropbox by the end of the day on 6 April. Late research papers will be penalized three percentage points for each day that they are late. Research papers or contemporary issues briefings cannot be submitted to the dropbox folder until the proposal has been graded and returned.

Research papers and contemporary issue briefings will be assessed on the quality of your research; your comprehension of the sources on which the paper or briefing is based; the strength or your thesis statement or the quality of your recommendations; the quality of your writing; and the accuracy of your scholarly documentation (footnotes and bibliography).

Final Examination: A written take-home final examination will be distributed on the last day of classes and is due in Word format to the respective D2L dropbox on 20 April. Assessment of this examination will be based on your understanding of the course content; the quality of your analysis, argument and/or recommendations; and (to a lesser extent than on the news articles analysis essays, research paper, or contemporary issues briefing) on the quality of your writing.

Submission of Written Assignments: All written assignments should be submitted in Word format via the respective dropbox on D2L. Dropbox folders for each assignment will only be available during the window that the assignment is due; dropbox folders for the second news articles analysis essay will only be available to students in the group that has essays due that week. Please do not submit assignments via e-mail.

Office Hours and E-mail:

Please come to see me during scheduled office hours, especially if you are having difficulty with this course. If you cannot meet me during the open Zoom office hours, we can schedule an appointment for another time. Please include “LAST 311” in the subject line of your e-mail messages so that I can differentiate it from spam. I normally attend to e-mail later in the afternoons of workdays and normally do not respond to student e-mails on weekends and holidays.

Academic Integrity Statement:

See the attachment to this syllabus for a definition of plagiarism, a serious academic offence, and the procedures that the Faculty of Arts has instituted in cases of alleged plagiarism. Students are welcome to discuss course readings and assignments with each other; however, collaboration in any form on the mid-term and take-home final examinations is prohibited.

Learning Technologies Requirements

The D2L site for this course contains links to the required readings for the Monday discussions and other relevant class resources and materials. In order to succeed in this course, students will need reliable access to the following technology: a computer with a supported operating system; a current web browser; a microphone and speaker (built-in or external, or a headset); current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled; and a broadband internet connection. A webcam (built-in or external) is also recommended.

On-Line Instruction Statement

Twelve of our class meetings will take place as synchronous (live, in real time) seminars, on all the Mondays during the semester. All students are expected to attend and contribute to these discussions, which will involve group work. For the remaining class “meetings,” recorded lectures of approximately 50 minutes in length will be posted to D2L by 11:00 am on the days that the class would normally have met.

Guidelines for Synchronous Sessions

The eleven discussions of news articles on Mondays in this course will take place via Zoom.

Please prepare, as best as you can, to join these discussions from a quiet space that will allow you to be fully engaged in the discussion. You are encouraged to, if possible, turn on your webcams during these discussions, but you may of course put on a blank background or a background image to protect your privacy; click [here](#) for instructions on how to set a virtual background. Please keep your microphone turned off unless you are speaking.

Only students registered in this course may participate in these seminars. Your display name in Zoom should indicate your legal or preferred name as registered with the University of Calgary. If your D2L and Zoom usernames do not reflect your preferred name or identity, you can contact the IT Support Centre to update it in the Active Directory. This will change the name that shows in all online systems, including Zoom and D2L. It will take about 24 hours for the Support Centre to complete the request.

The news articles discussions will not be recorded, but attendance will be logged by Zoom, so it is important that you join these meetings through D2L with your University of Calgary identity. I will extract the attendance list from Zoom's record of the meeting to ensure that participation grades are calculated correctly.

To ensure that Zoom sessions are private, do not share the Zoom link or password with others, or on any social media platforms. Zoom links and passwords are restricted to students registered in this course. Zoom recordings and materials presented in Zoom, including any teaching materials, must not be shared, distributed or published without the instructor's permission.

The use of video conferencing relies on participants to act ethically, honestly, and with integrity; and in accordance with the principles of fairness, good faith, respect, and responsible digital citizenship (as per the University of Calgary's **Code of Conduct**).

Non-compliance may be investigated under relevant University of Calgary conduct policies (**Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy**). If you have difficulties complying with these requirements, contact me so that we can consider appropriate exceptions. For more information on how to get the most out of your Zoom sessions visit the University of Calgary's Guidelines for Zoom.: <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/guidelines-for-zoom/>.

Inclusiveness, Accommodation, and Classroom Conduct:

I am committed to creating an inclusive learning environment for all registered students. If you have conditions or circumstances that require accommodations, you are encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services and to contact me by email or during office hours to discuss reasonable measures that will ensure your success in this course. Such accommodation may include disability (physical or mental wellness, whether visible or not), the need to nurse or occasionally bring a child to class, the wish to be called a different name or pronoun, assistance with writing, or adjusting deadlines because of personal circumstances.

Part of creating an inclusive learning environment involves respecting your fellow classmates. In meeting any university's mandate of encouraging free and open inquiry, we will occasionally discuss topics about which you might be uncomfortable or have a set viewpoint. In

such situations, it is essential that we understand that others have different experiences and perspectives, and that listening respectfully to and showing tolerance toward opposing viewpoints is part of the process of emerging as active, engaged citizens.

To protect the privacy of others, students may not record in any format any activity that occurs within the classroom or online. Permission to record lectures will only be given to students registered with Student Accessibility Services. All material in this course, including but not limited to lectures, handouts, and weekly readings, are under the protection of copyright and may not be distributed to third parties under any circumstances.

Weekly Schedule		
Date	Topic & Reading	Important Dates
11-15 Jan.	<i>Introduction to Latin America</i> Berryman, <i>Latin America</i> , introduction and chap. 1.	
18-22 Jan.	<i>Urban Challenges</i> Berryman, <i>Latin America</i> , chap. 2.	18 Jan. (11:00 am): Synchronous News Articles Discussion
25-29 Jan.	<i>Agriculture in Transition</i> Berryman, <i>Latin America</i> , chap. 3.	25 Jan. (11:00 am): Synchronous News Articles Discussion
1-5 Feb.	<i>Economic Structures</i> Berryman, <i>Latin America</i> , chaps. 4, 13.	1 Feb. (11:00 am): Synchronous News Articles Discussion 3 Feb.: News Articles Analysis Essay I Due
8-12 Feb.	<i>Growth with Sustainability</i> Berryman, <i>Latin America</i> , chap. 5.	8 Feb. (11:00 am): Synchronous News Articles Discussion
15-19 Feb.		No Classes – Reading Week
22-26 Feb.	<i>Class and Inequality</i> Berryman, <i>Latin America</i> , chap. 6.	22 Feb. (11:00 am): Synchronous News Articles Discussion 25 Feb. (noon): Group 1 Submit News Articles for 1 March Discussion to Dropbox 26 Feb.: Mid-Term Examination

Weekly Schedule		
Date	Topic & Reading	Important Dates
1-5 March	<i>Overcoming Legacies of Conquest and Slavery</i> Berryman, <i>Latin America</i> , chap. 7.	1 March (9:00 am): Group 1 News Article Analysis Essay Due 1 March (11:00 am): Synchronous News Article Discussion 4 March (noon): Group 2 Submit News Articles for 8 March Discussion to Dropbox
8-12 March	<i>Gender and Religion</i> Berryman, <i>Latin America</i> , chaps. 8-9.	8 March (9:00 am): Group 2 News Article Analysis Essay Due 8 March (11:00 am): Synchronous News Articles Discussion 11 March (noon): Group 3 Submit News Articles for 15 March Discussion to Dropbox
15-19 March	<i>Governance and Corruption</i> Berryman, <i>Latin America</i> , chaps. 14-15.	15 March (9:00 am): Group 3 News Article Analysis Essay Due 15 March (11:00 am): Synchronous News Articles Discussion 18 March (noon): Group 4 Submit News Articles for 22 March Discussion to Dropbox 19 March: Proposal for Research Paper or Contemporary Issue Briefing Due
22-26 March	<i>Governance and Corruption</i> Berryman, <i>Latin America</i> , chaps. 14-15.	22 March (9:00 am): Group 4 News Article Analysis Essay Due 22 March (11:00 am): Synchronous News Articles Discussion 25 March (Noon): Group 5 Submit News Articles for 29 March Discussion to Dropbox

Weekly Schedule		
Date	Topic & Reading	Important Dates
29 March- 2 April	<i>Latin America in the World</i> Berryman, <i>Latin America</i> , chap. 16-17.	29 March (9:00 am): Group 5 News Article Analysis Essay Due 29 March (11:00 am): Synchronous News Articles Discussion 2 April: Good Friday (No Class Meeting)
5-9 April	<i>Latin America in the World</i> Berryman, <i>Latin America</i> , chaps. 16-17.	5 April: Non-Instructional Day (No Class Meeting) 6 April: Research Paper or Contemporary Issue Briefing Due
12-15 April		April 12 (1:00 pm): Synchronous News Articles Discussion
19-29 April	Final Examination Period	April 20: Take-Home Final Examination Due

**THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION APPEARS ON ALL DEPARTMENT OF
HISTORY COURSE OUTLINES**

Departmental Grading System

The following percentage-to-letter grade conversion scheme is used in all Canadian Studies, History, and Latin American Studies courses, except for HTST 200.

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	Description
90-100	A+	4.00	Outstanding performance
85-89	A	4.00	Excellent performance
80-84	A-	3.70	Approaching excellent performance
77-79	B+	3.30	Exceeding good performance
73-76	B	3.00	Good performance
70-72	B-	2.70	Approaching good performance
67-69	C+	2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance
63-66	C	2.00	Satisfactory performance
60-62	C-	1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance.
56-59	D+	1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject
50-55	D	1.00	Minimal Pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject.
0-49	F	0	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.

Program Advising and Student Information Resources

- For program advising in the Faculty of Arts, contact the [Arts Students Centre](#) (ASC).
- For questions about admissions, student awards, common registration issues, financial aid and student fees, contact [Enrolment Services](#)
- Sometimes unexpected circumstances may affect your time table. You can change your registration during the course change period. Please see the [Registration Changes and Exemption Requests](#) page.

Attention history majors: History 300 is a required course for all history majors. You should

normally take it in your second year.

Writing

All written assignments and written exam responses are assessed partly on writing skills. Writing skills include surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) and general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented according to the format described in [The History Student's Handbook](#).

Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when students submit or present the ideas and/or writing of others as if they were their own or when they submit their own work to two different classes. Please see [The History Student's Handbook](#) for more details, but to summarize, plagiarism may take several forms:

- Failing to cite sources properly
- Submitting borrowed, purchased, and/or ghostwritten papers
- Submitting one's own work for more than one course without the permission of the instructor(s) involved
- Extensive paraphrasing of one or a few sources, even when referenced properly, unless the essay is a critical analysis of those works

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence, and written work that appears to contain plagiarized passages will not be graded. All such work will be reported to the Faculty of Art's associate deans of students who will apply the penalties specified in the *University of Calgary Calendar*, [Section K: Integrity and Conduct](#).

Academic Accommodations

Students needing an accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities in the [Student Accommodation Policy](#).

Students needing an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should contact, preferably in writing, the course instructor.

Copyright

The University of Calgary has opted out of the Access Copyright Interim Tariff proposed by the Copyright Board. Therefore, instructors in all University of Calgary courses will strictly adhere to Copyright Act regulations and the educational exceptions permitted by the Act for both print and digital course material. No copyrighted material may be placed on course D2L or web sites without the prior permission of the copyright holders. In some cases, this may mean that instructors will require you to purchase a print course pack from the University of Calgary bookstore or consult books on reserve at the library. Please see the [University of Calgary copyright page](#).

Sexual Violence Policy

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to

learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of Calgary's sexual violence policy guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances. Please see the [sexual violence policy](#).

Other Useful Information

Please see the Registrar's [Course Outline Student Support and Resources](#) page for information on:

- Wellness and Mental Health
- Student Success
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Safewalk

Campus Security (220-5333)

Department of History Twitter [@ucalgaryhist](#)

Winter 2021