

Special Topics: Urban Latin America LLS 2900-850

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From “Che” Guevara to Garcia Marquez, world renowned Latin Americans are and have been cosmopolitan people. Latin American capitals are the center of government and politics, of academic and artistic production, and of knowledge and commodities exchange. Latin American cities concentrate large percentages of the country’s total population. For example, thirty percent of all Peruvians live in Lima. Since colonial times, Latin Americans have imagined their capital cities as the Nation whereas the countryside has been perceived as their past or their burden or perhaps their idealized origin and authenticity.

There have been four periods in the urban evolution of Latin America, namely,

- The pre-Colombian era (before 1492) ,
- The Colonial City (From 1500-early 1800s),
- The Republican City (mid-1800s until the mid 1940s), and
- The Contemporary city (mid1940s until today) .

This course focuses on the Contemporary period and its current socio-economic dilemmas. Throughout the course the students will read theoretical texts and policy papers from prominent authors and/or development institutions analysing specific issues of Latin American cities.

The world economy has impacted the configuration of Latin American cities. But this relationship has seldom been direct, consistent or self-evident. In fact, as the local economies adapt to world changes, urban labor, housing, transportation and the environment are realigned to take advantage of new economic spaces. In a region of sudden economic burst and decline, this process of adaptation is constantly interrupted while urban renovations get often abandoned. The fragmented and contradictory profile of Latin American cities only reflects these constant disruptions of a period’s idea of city and modernity. The Latin American urban landscape is the portrait of this region’s dreams and failures to develop. Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Caracas, Lima, Mexico DF, Santiago, and Sao Paulo are the case studies that will illustrate the specific sociopolitical challenges shared by all cities in the region.

The region we now know as Latin America has had an urban vocation that preceded the arrival of Europeans. The West found urban societies in the Americas. In fact, they encountered extraordinary cities that they destroyed perhaps in an attempt to erase those magnificent but threatening cultures, in so many ways as advanced as theirs.

After a brief theoretical section, we enter the modern era and examine the major changes in the contemporary world economy and their impact on the region’s urban structure. The readings and discussion will revolve around primacy, globalization and internal migrations to the city. Next, we will look at the challenges facing municipal administrations in adjusting to modern capitalist demands and the social cost of economic policy. Capitalist growth requires social order, the formalization of social contracts for safe transactions. Thus, to facilitate growth, national and local governments change the rules of the game and cities reorganize their forces and even redefine themselves to attract investments. In this process new urban identities and tastes are recreated.

This process gets repeated in every cycle of accumulation. Urban layouts, avenues, buildings, urban services and homes are testimony of the dreams, notions of beauty and ambitions of an urban order. Modernity has been defined and redefined in Latin America but it consistently has been associated with the city. Modernity for Latin Americans is the cherished dream of a city in which all social forces convene in a democratic pact. We have not achieved consensus yet on “what modernity” or “modernity for whom.” Answers to these questions are the arena of political struggle between the formal globalized and the informal-local faces of the city. One can only say, though, that there is no third world region in which modernity has become an object of political struggle, beauty and desire like in Latin America. These emotions are reflected in our architecture as well as in the goals of our urban social movements and their ideologies. Honoring this remarkable characteristic of the Latin American region, the final part of this class devotes special attention to the urban informal economy, the world of women in Latin American cities and our conflicting notions of modernity.

Required Books:

Gilbert, Alan (Ed.) The Mega-City in Latin America. Public Document Online:
<http://www.unu.edu/unupress/unupbooks/uu23me/uu23me00.htm#Contents>

Interamerican Bank of Development
Beyond Facts: Understanding Quality of Life (2008). Public Document
http://www.iadb.org/research/pub_desc.cfm?pub_id=B-632

Interamerican Bank of Development
Building Cities: Neighborhood Upgrading and Quality of Life (2010). Public document to be downloaded from:
<http://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=35132311>

Other required readings will be available at E-Reserves.

Code: **bowman3900** , all lowercase no spaces.

Students may access E-Reserves at <http://eres.unomaha.edu> , or under "Research Tools" at the UNO Library homepage. Click on " Course Reserves " then " Electronic Reserves (ERES) " click on " Search by department, instructor or keyword ".

In the ERES search bar just type in your professor's last name. Click accept and you will be prompted at this point to enter the course page password provided by your professor. Click on the titles of the articles to open the window to the document, the .pdf link is on the bottom of the window under " **File name** ". If you have any questions call **554-2861** and a library staff member is available to answer any question.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES. Upon completion of this class, students should be able to

1. Identify Latin American capitals and their specific geographic, demographic and social characteristics,
2. Know and explain the impact of the global economy on the urban development of Latin American cities,
3. Gain a preliminary understanding of Latin American modernity---gender roles, mass media, and consumption.
4. Explain the impact of disorganized urbanization on the environment.
5. View urban development in Latin America as a process and a challenge to the people to build open urban communities against the prevalent pattern of exclusion.

EVALUATION: Your grade will be a composite of the following tasks,

Regular Student:

Participation: 30 points.

Three Tests, 20 points each

On class presentation or collaboration 10 points

Study Abroad Student

Participation every week, 30 points

Two Tests 20 points each

Two Contributions to the Blog (in Lima) 5 points each

Reflection Paper (Upon return from Peru) 20 points

X-tra credit: Team Player (in Lima) 5 points.

Graduate Student

Participation every week: 30 points

Test One and Two 20 points each

7 page final essay, 20 points.

On class presentation or collaboration 10 points.

Community Members are expected to become familiar with the assigned readings and the class discussions.

One contribution every other week of the semester to the Discussion forum.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

All class participation takes place at the Discussion Board.

To receive full credit for participation, students are expected to weekly provide (1) a summary or a well prepared comment on the readings. And (2) to formulate a follow up comment on a classmate's posting.

Class participation must at all times provide proof of reading, studying and understanding.

Tentative Reading Schedule for
Special Topics LLS 2900-850: Urban Latin America
(Internet Mediated)

Changes to this schedule and to the readings will be made at the instructor's discretion. Students are responsible for being appraised of any changes in the syllabus or course requirements even if you are not present at the time they are announced.

Jan 13 Introduction

Assigned Reading(s):

- Schneier, "A Tale of Two Cities" International Social Science Journal, Aug90, Vol. 42 Issue 3, p337, 17p. Available at E-Reserves

Jan 20 Overview

Assigned Reading:

- Gilbert, A. "The Urban Revolution" in Gwynne and Kay, Latin America Transformed, Ch. 12. pp. 101-115

Jan 27 Lecture: Megacities vs. World Cities.

Assigned Reading(s):

- Sassen, Saskia (2006) Cities in a World Economy, 3rd. Edition. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge, p. 45-54.

Feb 3 Megacities in the Neoliberal Regime

Assigned Reading(s):

- Moisés Arce "The Societal Consequences of Market Reform in Peru." Latin American Politics & Society, Volume 48, Number 1, Spring 2006

Feb 10 Population Growth and Urban Migrations

Assigned Reading:

- Miguel Villa and Jorge Rodriguez "Demographic Trends in Latin America's Metropolies, 1950-1990" **Chapter 2** in Gilbert (Ed) The Mega-City in Latin America
- IDB. "Urban Quality of Life: More than Bricks and Mortar," in Beyond Facts, Part II, **Chapter 8.**

Feb. 15: Test One

Feb 17 The City According to Women

Assigned Reading(s):

- Del Campo, Esther, "Women and Politics in Latin America: Perspectives and Limits of the Institutional Aspects of Women's Political Representation," Social Forces, June 2005, 83(4):1697-1726
- Cathy A. Rakowski "Women as Political Actors: The Move from Maternalism to Citizenship Rights and Power," Latin American Research Review, Vol. 38, No. 2, June 2003
- Ewig, Christina "Global Processes, Local Consequences: Gender Equity and Health Sector Reform in Peru," Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society. Vol 13, No.3, Fall 2006

- Rousseau, Stephanie "The Politics of Reproductive Health in Peru: Gender and Social Policy in the Global South" Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society Volume 14, Number 1, Spring 2007

Feb 24 City Government and Administration

Assigned Reading(s):

- Ward, Peter "Contemporary Issues in the Government and Administration of Latin American Mega-cities" in Gilbert, The Megacity in Latin America. Online Book.

March 3 Participatory Democracy

Assigned Reading(s):

- Schugurensky, Daniel. "Participatory Budget: A Tool for Democratizing Democracy" Talk given at the meeting "Some Assembly Required: Participatory Budgeting in Canada and Abroad," Toronto Metro Hall, April 29, 2004.
- Wampler, Brian. "Expanding Accountability through Participatory Institutions Mayors, Citizens, and Budgeting in Three Brazilian Municipalities." Latin American Politics and Society, Vol. 46, No. 2 (Summer, 2004),

March 10 Land and Housing

Assigned Reading(s):

- Gilbert, Alan. Latin American City, Ch. 5
- Paul A. Peters and Emily H. Stop, "Socio-spatial segregation in Metropolitan Lima, Peru" Journal of Latin American Geography, 6 (1), 2007

March 17: Test 2

March 31 Urban Transport and the Environment

Assigned Reading(s):

- Figueroa, Oscar "A Hundred Million Journeys a Day: The Management of Transport in Latin America's Mega-cities. In Gilbert, The Megacity in Latin America. Online Book.
- Tomic and Trumper, "Powerful drivers and meek passengers: On the buses in Santiago." Race & Class, Vol. 47(1): 49-63 (2005).
- Olivia J. Horna-Campos, Héctor J. Sánchez-Pérez, Inma Sánchez, Alfredo Bedoya, and Miguel Martín, "Public Transportation and Pulmonary Tuberculosis, Lima, Peru" Emerging Infectious Diseases • www.cdc.gov/eid • Vol. 13, No. 10, October 2007

April 7 The World of Work-The Informal Sector

Assigned Reading(s):

- Brillembourg (Ed.) Informal City: Caracas Case, p. 234-237

April 14 Urban Protest

- Brillembourg (Ed.) Informal City: Caracas Case, p.38-45, p. 79-87, and p. 168-176.
- Rosenthal, Anton "Spectacle, Fear and Protest" 2000.

April 21 Modernity

Assigned Reading(s):

- Larrain, Jorge "Modernity and Identity: Cultural Change in Latin America. In Gwynne and Kay Latin America Transformed. Ch. 2
- Vich, Victor "Popular Capitalism and Subalternity: Street Comedians in Lima." Social Text 81, Vol. 22, No. 4, Winter 2004.

- Turino, Thomas. "Nationalism and Latin American Music: Selected Case Studies and Theoretical Considerations," Latin American Music Review, Volume 24, Number 2, Fall/Winter 2003

April 26-28: Final (Test 3)