Textbook:

Latin America and the Caribbean: A Systematic and Regional Survey, 6th Edition Brian W. Blouet (College of William and Mary), Olwyn M. Blouet (Virginia State Univ.) September 2009, ©2010
An atlas is highly recommended. Suggested—Goode’s World Atlas

Readings:

All readings will come from the assigned text book or from journal articles that are available online. Specific pages and articles to read for class will be assigned one class prior. Students are encouraged to read all assigned material and be ready and able to discuss in class.

Place Names:

There will be two lists of place-names provided for studying throughout the semester, one list for Mexico and the other list for Central America and the Caribbean. There will be a short section of place-name identification on each exam.

Exams:

There will be three (3) exams throughout the semester. Each exam is worth 100 points and consists of name-place identification, multiple choice, short answer, and essay. There will be three main section exams and the final will not be comprehensive.

Book Review:

All students must chose one book from the class reading list or find a book and have it approved by the instructor. They must read it and provide a three to five (3-5) page review of the book by the end of the semester. Paper must be between 3 and 5 pages, double spaced, Times New Roman text, and 12 point font. The book review is worth 100 points, and is due three (3) weeks before the final class.
Grading:

There will be 300 points from exams, 100 points for the book review, and 100 points for attendance, participation, and in-class discussion, for a total of 500 points throughout the semester. The UNO standard grading guidelines will be observed.

Class Focus and Outline:

This course will focus on the evolution, contrast, and development of human landscapes throughout Middle America and the Caribbean. These landscapes have been influenced by indigenous histories, European contact and culture, western development, regional conflicts, and peace resolutions.

I. Intro: Historical Background and Contextual Setting (Ch. 1-6)
   a. Human diversity, background, and terms
   b. Physical diversity, historical places
   c. General outlook, trends, and tendencies of Middle America

II. Caribbean Landscape: Past, Present, and Direction (Ch. 8)
   a. Historical, political, and economic geography
   b. Specific islands and their character
   c. Current development trends and direction

III. Central America: Past, Present, and Future (Ch. 10)
   a. Main features, past, direct and indirect political and military involvement by U.S.
   b. Northern Part
   c. Southern Part

   Exam # 1: around mid-term week

IV. Mexico and the Evolution of Cultural Landscape (Ch. 3)
   a. Pre-Hispanic Mexico
   b. Conquest
   c. Colonial influence on landscape, economy, and politics

   Exam # 2: Before Spring Break
V. Modern Mexico (Ch. 9 and selected Journal Articles)
   a. Landscape, politics, economy, and development trends
   b. NAFTA, the border, and Zapatistas
   c. Immigration issues and the Drug Trade

Exam # 3: Finals week at assigned time

Tentative Reading Schedule:

January
10: Discuss course syllabus and class requirements
12: Ch. 1-3
17: Ch. 4
19: Ch 5
24: Ch. 6
26: Ch. 8
31: Ch. 10

February
2:
7: Review
9: Exam #1
14:
16: Selected article readings
21: Selected article readings
23: No Class—CRT out of Town---Find Articles in Library
28: No Class—CRT out of Town---Find Articles in Library

March
1: Selected article readings
6: Selected article readings
8: Selected article readings
13: Review
15: Exam #2
20: Spring Break—No Class
22: Spring Break—No Class
27:
29: Ch. 9

April
3: Selected article readings
5: Book Review Due
10: Selected article readings
12: Selected article readings
17: Selected article readings
19: Selected article readings
24: Review
26: Exam #3

May
April 30-May 4: Finals Week---No Test During Finals Week

Some suggested books for out of class reading assignment:

Colonialism and Landscape---Andrew Sluyter
Many Mexicos---Lesley Byrd Simpson
Incidents of Travel in Yucatan---John L. Stephens
Mexico: Narco-Violence and a Failed State?---George W. Grayson
The Motorcycle Diaries---Ernesto Che Guevara
Something in Vallarta or Something Like a Dream---Robert Richter
Search for the Camino Real---Robert Richter
Food for the Few---Gerardo Otero
Globalization and the Power of Peasants: La Via Campesina---Annette Aurelie Desmarais
El Gran Pueblo: A History of Greater Mexico---William H. Beezley and Colin M. MacLachlan
Mexican Politics: The Dynamics of Change---Howard Handelman
The Course of Mexican History---Michael C. Meyer and William L. Sherman
The Spanish Empire in America---C.H. Haring
A Guide to the Historical Geography of New Spain---Peter Gerhard
How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents or In the Time of Butterflies---Julia Alvarez
**Name-Place List:**

Bahamas
Havana
Cuba
Jamaica
Haiti
Dominican Republic
Puerto Rico
Lesser Antilles
Aruba
Caribbean Sea
Gulf of Mexico
Panama
Panama Canal
Costa Rica
Nicaragua
Lake Managua
Lake Nicaragua
Honduras
El Salvador
Guatemala
Belize
Mexico
Merida
Mexico City
Guadalajara
Monterrey
Lake Chapala
Ciudad Juarez
Nogales
Tijuana
Cabo San Lucas
Gulf of California
Pacific Ocean

All Mexican States and Capital Cities