

GEOG 301A:
GEOGRAPHY OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
SPRING 2006

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Dawn S. Bowen
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OFFICE: Monroe 303B
OFFICE MW 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
HOURS: T R 4 – 5:00 p.m.
and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course provides an overview of the dynamic region of Latin America and the Caribbean. We will consider economic, political, and social conditions and their impact on the lands and peoples of this region. Although this is a course in regional geography, it is not possible to examine every country and every island; I take a thematic approach and incorporate different places into the discussion of process. The class is writing-intensive, and therefore you are required to prepare several writing assignments (discussed below). This course also satisfies the Global Awareness and Race/Gender ATC requirements.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Menchú, Rigoberta. 1984. *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala*. London: Verso.
Gerlach, Allen. 2003. *Indians, Oil, and Politics*. Wilmington, DE: SR Books.
Kincaid, Jamaica. 1998. *A Small Place*. New York: Farrar , Straus and Giroux.

In addition, there are MANY required readings posted on Blackboard.

INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITIES: It is my job to be prepared for each class and to ensure that you leave class with an appreciation and understanding of the day's topic. In addition, because this is a writing-intensive course, I will endeavor to help you improve your writing skills. I will also work diligently to return assignments in an expeditious manner. Please do not hesitate to see me to discuss class topics, your paper, or any problems you may be having with course material.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES: You are required to attend lectures, read the assigned material carefully, and participate constructively in class discussions. Learning is a cooperative venture. You must take an active role in your education and one way to accomplish this is by expressing your opinions and asking questions. In addition, please note that I regard the accompanying paper guidelines as a contract. You must read the handout carefully, and heed its advice in order to earn a good grade on your paper. Please be aware that it is your responsibility to ensure that an assignment is completed by the deadline.

MAP QUIZZES: During the course of the semester, I will give two map quizzes on the location of countries, cities, regions, and water bodies of the region. The first quiz, on places in Central and South America, will be given on January 23; the second, on the Caribbean, and will be given on April 3. Together they will constitute 7% of your final grade.

DISCUSSION PAPERS: Due Dates: See page 3. One class period prior to each of these dates, I will give you a question(s) about the day's topic. Your 2-3 page response will serve as a basis for your class participation that day. Eleven of these discussion papers are scheduled; you must complete five. Each paper is worth 50 points, for a total of 25% of your final grade.

BOOK CRITIQUE/RESPONSES: You must prepare short (3-4 page) responses to the Menchú and Kincaid texts, and a longer (4-5 page) critique of the Gerlach book. Further details about each of these papers will be available on Blackboard. In total, these three assignments will determine 19% of your final grade.

EXAMS: Exams consist of short identification of relevant ideas, processes, and persons. The identification section of the first exam on the Latin American portion of the course is March 24 and will count for 13% of your final grade. The identification section of the second exam on the Caribbean portion of the course will be given May 3 and will count for 8% of your final grade.

TOURISM PROJECT: Tourism is a significant source of income for many Caribbean islands and the use of advertising to attract tourists is a critical component of the industry. To this end, I ask that you examine a series of ads and determine how places are represented and the message that the ads convey to you. Further details about this assignment, which will contribute 15% of your final grade, can be found on Blackboard.

N A SONJE TOUR: This semester we have a unique opportunity to meet and learn from a trio of Haitians who are visiting the United States on a consciousness-raising tour. A performance is scheduled for the evening of Thursday, April 13. On Friday, April 14, Carla, Arí, and Djalki will come to our class to discuss Haiti. Further details will be posted on Blackboard.

ATTENDANCE POLICY/PARTICIPATION GRADE: I expect you to attend class everyday and be active participants in class discussion. To this end, I will take attendance and record participation levels. Your participation determines 5% of your final grade. You are permitted two absences. After that, each absence will result in a 2.5% deduction from your final course grade.

LATE WORK POLICY: Although I am philosophically opposed to accepting late work of any kind, if you should have a legitimate problem, please see me a few days prior to an assignment deadline to discuss possible options. All work is due at the BEGINNING of class unless otherwise specified. **Late work will be assessed a penalty of FIVE PERCENT for every 24 hour period beginning 10 minutes after the hour that an assignment is due.**

GRADING: The following scale will be used to determine your final letter grade.

	A	930-1000	A-	900-929	(Excellent)
B ⁺	880-899	B	830-870	B-	800-829 (Commendable)
C ⁺	780-799	C	730-770	C-	700-729 (Acceptable)
D ⁺	680-699	D	600-670		(Marginal)
F	599 and below				(Failure)

Pass/Fail Grades

60% and above P
59% and below F

Mid-term Grades

70% or below U

HONOR CODE: I expect that all students will adhere to the principles of the UMW Honor Code. All written work must include the honor pledge and your signature. I will not tolerate any form of dishonest behavior, whether it is in written work or oral communication.

ASSIGNMENT VALUE

Map Quiz #1	50 points	Kincaid Response	50 points
Menchú Response	75 points	Tourism Project	150 points
Exam #1	120 points	N a Sonje Response	75 points
Discussion Papers (4 @ 50 pts)	200 points	Exam #2	90 points
Gerlach Critique	100 points	Participation	70 points
Map Quiz #2	20 points	TOTAL:	1000 points

COURSE SCHEDULE

JANUARY 18 – 23	URBANIZATION IN LATIN AMERICA: A FOCUS ON MEXICO
JANUARY 25 – FEB 3	ROOTS OF REVOLUTION
FEB 6 – FEB 20	ECONOMIC ISSUES IN LATIN AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT
FEB 22 – MARCH 1	INDIGENOUS SURVIVAL IN THE AMERICAS
MARCH 3 – 10	SPRING BREAK
MARCH 13 – 17	RAINFOREST DESTRUCTION & PRESERVATION
MARCH 20 – 22	DRUG PRODUCTION & THE “WAR” IN COLOMBIA
MARCH 27 – 29	INTRO. TO THE CARIBBEAN & POPULATION ISSUES
MARCH 31 – APRIL 5	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM
APRIL 7 – 10	RACE & IDENTITY IN THE CARIBBEAN
APRIL 14 – 17	FOCUS ON HAITI
APRIL 24 – 28	GEOPOLITICS: JAMAICA & CUBA

DUE DATES (AT NOON)

JANUARY 23	LATIN AMERICA MAP QUIZ
JANUARY 25	DISCUSSION PAPER
JANUARY 30	MENCHÚ RESPONSE
FEBRUARY 10	DISCUSSION PAPER
FEBRUARY 15	DISCUSSION PAPER
FEBRUARY 20	DISCUSSION PAPER
FEBRUARY 27	GERLACH CRITIQUE
MARCH 1	DISCUSSION PAPER
MARCH 15	DISCUSSION PAPER
MARCH 22	DISCUSSION PAPER
MARCH 24	EXAM #1
MARCH 27	KINCAID RESPONSE
MARCH 31	DISCUSSION PAPER
APRIL 3	CARIBBEAN MAP QUIZ
APRIL 5	TOURISM PROJECT
APRIL 10	DISCUSSION PAPER
APRIL 14	DISCUSSION PAPER
APRIL 19	DISCUSSION PAPER
MAY 3	EXAM #2

Support the Llama Project!

Over the past several years, students in this class have been frustrated by the problems of development in Latin America and have felt quite powerless to change the situation. I would like to propose a small class project. Although it will not change the world, it will have a significant impact on one family – and ultimately many others through time. To make a difference, I would like us to provide a llama through Heifer International for a needy family in Andean America (Peru, Ecuador, or Bolivia). As you can see on the organization's web page (www.heifer.org), this small gesture can have a huge impact on the lives of families. I had the opportunity to travel to Ecuador in 2004 and witnessed firsthand the benefits of llama (alpaca) acquisition.

This project is completely voluntary.

No One (including myself) will know whether you choose to participate or not.

The cost of a llama is \$150. There are 25 students in this class, and we will meet 38 times during the course of the semester. Here's the math. If each one of you brings 20 cents to each class meeting (and everyone forgets once or twice!), there will be \$150 in the can at the end of the semester. (If you prefer to give all at once, the total is \$5.) If there is \$150 in the can, I will match your donations, so that we can purchase two llamas and help two families.

I will bring the can to class every day and you can place your contributions in it.