

ANTH3416: Latin American Peoples and Cultures

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Office: 4030 Smith Lab Course website: Carmen

COURSE MEETING TIME(S):

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Allen, Catherine. 2002. *The Hold Life Has: Coca and Cultural Identity in an Andean Community*. 2nd edition. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books.

De León, Jason. 2015. *The Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kawa, Nicholas C. 2016. *Amazonia in the Anthropocene: People, Soils, Plants, Forests*. Austin: University of Texas Press. (*Available via Carmen*)

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed as an overview of the ethnographic study of Latin America. It explores a number of key themes in contemporary Latin American studies, including transnational migration, borderland security and violence, indigeneity and *mestizaje*, household labor and gender relations, and natural resource management in a time of sweeping ecological change. During the course, students will engage with primary ethnographic texts, including case studies on migration across the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, indigenous life in the rural Andes, and human-environmental relations in the Brazilian Amazon. Together, these ethnographic case studies will help students to develop a nuanced understanding of Latin America as well as the challenges and changes it faces in the 21st century.

By the end of the course, each student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an appreciation of the diverse cultures of Latin America.
2. Express a general understanding of hemispheric relations and how the U.S. has influenced and been influenced by Latin America.
3. Exhibit an understanding of ethnographic methodology as well as its value for tackling complex socio-cultural phenomena.
4. Articulate the changes and challenges Latin Americans face in the 21st century, particularly in relation to transnational migration, culture change, and environmental management.

BREAKDOWN OF GRADING:

Attendance (30 points): Regular attendance is expected of all students. Participation in class discussions is also strongly encouraged not only because it contributes to the intellectual environment of the classroom, but it facilitates individual learning as well.

Reading Responses (7x 5 points): Seven short reading responses (300-400 words) will be administered during semester. These will serve as opportunities to analyze and reflect on key concepts from the course readings. Students must read the chapters or articles assigned here in the syllabus BEFORE the start of each class.

Latin American News Presentation (10 points): Each student will make a brief presentation of a current event or news item that is relevant to the course and, if possible, the particular theme of the assigned readings. These presentations should make use of supporting visual aids. A sign-up sheet will be made available in class.

Mini-Ethnographic Research Project (25 points): Each student will conduct one ethnographic research assignment, which will consist of either interviews or participant observation at a cultural event during the semester. Students will submit a short research report (10 points), which will then serve as the basis for a final ethnographic essay (15 points). More details on this assignment will be provided during the semester.

Exams (2x 50 points): The midterm and final exams will consist of several short answer and short essay questions that frame key concepts and issues described in the course, requiring students to synthesize readings and apply the anthropological insights developed in class.

TOTAL: 200 points

COURSE GRADING SCALE:

100- 92.0%	A
91.9-90.0%	A-
89.9-88.0%	B+
87.9-82.0%	B
81.9-80.0%	B-
79.9-78.0%	C+
77.9-72.0%	C
71.9-70.0%	C-
69.9-68.0%	D+
69.9-62.0%	D
61.9-60.0%	D-
<60.0%	F

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Your work must be your original work. If you use someone else's ideas, either paraphrasing or quoting directly, you must cite the source. If caught cheating, you will be given an automatic '0' for the assignment. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses that could lead to an automatic failing grade in the course.

SPECIAL CLASSROOM ACCOMODATION

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. My office location and hours at the top of this syllabus.

CALENDAR:

Week 1 Introduction to Latin America (Jan. 8-12)

(M): Introduction

(W): What is Latin America? Who are Latin Americans?

Readings: Dorfman reading (Carmen)

(F): The U.S. & Latin America

Readings: De León – Introduction

Week 2 The U.S.-Mexico Borderlands (Jan. 15-19)

(M): NO CLASS – MLK Jr. Day

Readings: None

(W): U.S. Border Policy: Prevention Through Deterrence

Readings: De León – Chapter 1

DUE: Reading Response #1

(F): Ethnographic Study of the Borderlands

Readings: De León – Chapter 2

Week 3 Violence on the Border (Jan. 22-26)

(M): Necroviolence

Readings: De León – Chapter 3

(W): *Chingaderas* / Weapons of the Weak

Readings: De León – Chapter 4

DUE: Reading Response #2

(F): Deportation / Catch & Release

Readings: De León – Chapter 5

Week 4 Build the Wall? (Jan. 29-Feb. 2)

(M): Technological Warfare

Readings: De León – Chapter 6

(W): The Crossing

Readings: De León – Chapter 7

DUE: Reading Response #3

(F): Archaeology of the Borderlands

Readings: None

Week 5 Migrants' Sacrifices (Feb. 5-9)

(M): Risks and Motivations

Readings: De León – Chapter 8

(W): Facing Death

Readings: De León – Chapter 9

(F): Families Apart

Readings: De León – Chapter 10

Week 6 Love, Loss, and Memory (Feb. 12-16)

(M): Memories and Mending Wounds

Readings: De León – Chapter 11

DUE: Reading Response #4

(W): Ambiguous Loss

Readings: De León – Chapter 12

(F): *Land of Open Graves* – Final Discussion

Readings: None

Week 7 Indigeneity and the Andes (Feb. 19-23)

(M): **EXAM 1**

(W): Situating the Andes

Readings: Allen – Introduction

(F): Runakuna Cosmology

Readings: Allen – Chapter 1

Week 8 Gender, Household, and Community (Feb. 26-March 2)

(M): Gendered Labor & the Household

Readings: Allen – Chapter 2

DUE: Reading Response #5

(W): Reciprocity and *Ayni*

Readings: Allen – Chapter 3

(F): Community / *Ayllu*

Readings: Allen – Chapter 4

Week 9 Coca, Trago, and Everyday Ritual (March 5-9)

(M): The Uses and Meanings of Coca

Readings: Allen – Chapter 5

(W): Drinking Together

Readings: Allen – Chapter 6

(F): Rites and Ritual in the Andes

Readings: Allen – Chapter 7 (pp.150-162)

*****SPRING BREAK (March 12-16)**

Week 10 Cultural Continuity and Conflict (March 19-23)

(M): The Great Pilgrimage

Readings: Allen – Chapter 7 (pp.162-173)

(W): Tensions in Tradition

Readings: Allen – Chapter 8

DUE: Reading Response #6

(F): Coca and Cultural Identity

Readings: Allen – Chapter 9

Week 11 Amazonia: People and the Environment (March 26-30)

(M): *The Hold Life Has* – Final Discussion

Readings: Allen – Epilogue

(W): Amazonia in the Modern Imaginary

Readings: TBD

(F): The Pristine Myth

Readings: Kawa Chapter 1

Week 12 People, Soils, and Plants (April 2-6)

(M): Rural Amazonian Livelihoods

Readings: Kawa – Chapter 2

(W): Amazonian Dark Earth

Readings: Kawa – Chapter 3

DUE: Reading Response 7

(F): Weedy Plants and the Agency of Non-Humans

Readings: Kawa – Chapter 4

Week 13 Amazonian Forests and their Future (April 9-13)

(M): The Nature and Culture of Amazonian Forests

Readings: Kawa – Chapter 5

(W): Climate Change and Human Adaptation

Readings: Kawa – Chapter 6

(F): Amazonia & the Anthropocene

Readings: None

Week 14 Looking Forward in the 21st Century (April 16-20)

(M): Ecotourism and Environmental Conservation

Readings: TBD

(W): Globalization and New Media

Readings: TBD

(F): Social Movements & Political Change

Readings: TBD

Week 15 Course Conclusion (April 23)

(M): Final Discussion and Review

Readings: None

FINAL EXAM: Thursday, April 26th 10:00-11:45am