

**GEOGRAPHY 223**  
**GEOGRAPHY OF LATIN AMERICA**

**BULLETIN INFORMATION**

GEOG 223 - Geography of Latin America (3 credit hours)

**Course Description:**

Physical and human geography of Latin America.

Cross-listed Course: LASP 331

**SAMPLE COURSE OVERVIEW**

This course introduces the geography of Latin America in five major contexts:

1. *Physical Geography* – This course examines the boundaries of Latin America and its sub-regions, its different ecosystems, and the characteristics of its varied climate, vegetation, and land patterns.
2. *Historical Geography* – The important historical events that have shaped its current geographical and cultural characteristics are presented for examination.
3. *Population Geography* – The important issues that characterize Latin America’s diverse population: its racial/ ethnic composition; its population growth and its demographic transition; the patterns of mortality, fertility and migration; the settlement patterns; the religious practices; various models of urbanization; and the impacts of urbanization on its environment and health are all considered.
4. *Economic Geography* – The main patterns of economic activity today, and the potential influences of international economic cycles and organizations are identified.
5. *Political Geography* – Major political changes, its current regimes, and the region’s international policies are all displayed.

**ITEMIZED LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**At the conclusion of this course, students should have a clear understanding of the physical, historical, demographic, economic and political issues that describe Latin America as a major world region. Upon successful completion of Geography 223, students will be able to:**

1. Describe the physical landscape and climatic variations in the Latin American region, the impact of multiple geographic issues on its settlement patterns, and the resulting socio-economic conditions of its peoples;
2. Discuss the socio-political outcomes in the region resulting from the overlay of cultures resulting from hundreds of years of foreign conquest and domination;
3. Identify the management forces that led to the region’s founding and development of its major cities, its current geo-political organization and its cultural heterogeneity.
4. Explain the changes wrought upon this region’s societies by the rise of its native civilizations to the time of its European conquerors and now to its currently increasing global role.

5. Recognize the incredibly important role that Latin America played in domesticating many key foods that we consume today, while re-shaping many of the world's principal food sources.

### **SAMPLE REQUIRED TEXTS/SUGGESTED READINGS/MATERIALS**

1. The required text for this class is: Clawson, D. L. (2004). *Latin America and the Caribbean: Lands and Peoples*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Dubuque, IA, McGraw-Hill.
2. Additional handouts and materials for specific topics, including outlines of the Power Point presentations for the week, will be posted on *Blackboard* at the start of each week. Students are encouraged to read forward, print out the outlines, bring them to class, and take notes in each lecture. As these outlines are intended to facilitate note taking, they will be removed from Blackboard after the section's lectures are completed. Once removed, they will not be made available again. Other course materials, such as this syllabus, study guides, additional readings, as well as further specific instructions, will also be available on *Blackboard*.

### **SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS AND/OR EXAMS**

1. **Exams:** This course has three non-cumulative exams. The first exam covers the *Physical and Historical Geography* of Latin America, the second exam covers *Population Geography*, and the final exam covers *Economic and Political Geography*. The exams have both objective questions (multiple-choice, true-false, matching, and map identification) and brief essay and/or short answer questions, which will be drawn from the text, the lectures, possibly the hand-outs and the specially assigned readings. There will be a review of the general information that will be on the exam from the material covered in class.
2. **Assignments/Quizzes:** The grade for assignments and quizzes will be based on student performance in these activities:
  - a. Assignments: Various take-home or in-class assignments will be based on lectures, special articles or film documentaries.
  - b. Map Quiz: During the first month of class, a detailed map quiz will be given to insure students' familiarity with the political and physical characteristics of Latin America. A list of places and land forms that students are required to know will be provided to the student
3. **Country Report:** To familiarize students with the differences that exist in the various Latin American nations, each student will be assigned a country at the start of the semester. They will follow the news of their assigned country, and be prepared to report on important information at prescribed times during the course. A final consolidated written report will be due on the final day of the course.
4. **Book/ Film Reports:** Two Latin American films will be required viewing in this course. The first will be scheduled and shown at a date to be announced early in the semester. Students may view the film at the Cooper Library, or at one of the specially scheduled

times for the film or procure the film from a rental shop or internet source and view it on their own. Information will be provided both in class and on Blackboard regarding options. A *Film Report* for each film will be required based on questions posed by the Instructor and posted on *Blackboard*. There may also be regarding films or books on the *Exams*. Students will select a book to read early in the semester from an approved list and produce a written *Book Report* in the last month of the course. There may also questions on the final *Exam* regarding your selected book.

### **SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE WITH TIMELINE OF TOPICS, READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS, EXAMS/PROJECTS**

- Class 1: Introduction to Course & Course Requirements
- Class 2: Boundaries of Latin America / Country Choices  
Chapter 1
- Class 3: Physical Geography of LA: Landforms / Country Choices  
Chapter 2
- Class 4: Physical Geography of LA: Weather and climate / Chose a Book from List on  
Blackboard  
Chapter 3
- Class 5: Physical Geography of LA: Natural regions/Map Review  
Chapter 4
- Class 6: MAP QUIZ and COUNTRY REPORTS Class Discussion
- Class 7: COUNTRY REPORTS Class Discussion
- Class 8: Historical Geography of LA: Pre-Columbian era /Latin American Film  
Text (p. 151-164) & H 1 (p.51-63)
- Class 9: Historical Geography of LA: Colonial era  
Text (p. 96-113/p.164-171) & H 1 (p.63-86)
- Class 10: Historical Geography of LA: Revolution era / FILM REPORT 1 due  
Text (p. 113-8) & H 1 (p. 87-95)
- Class 11: Historical Geography of LA: Revolution era / Exam Review  
Text (p. 113-8) & H 1 (p. 87-95)
- Class 12: EXAM 1
- Class 13: Population Geography of LA: Demographic characteristics

Text (p. 345-351) & H 2 (p.127-146)

- Class 14: Population Geography of LA: Race, ethnicity, and class  
Text (p.168-182 & p. 190-196)
- Class 15: Pop. Geog. of LA: Urban and Migration / FILM REPORT 2 due  
Chapter 12 & H 2 (p.146-157)
- Class 16: Population Geography of LA: Urbanization & Migration
- Class 17: Population Geography of LA: Environment and Health  
Text (p. 381-384 & 399-419)
- Class 18: Population Geography of LA: Cultural issues and Religion  
Chapters 8 & 9
- Class 19: COUNTRY REPORTS Class Discussion
- Class 20: COUNTRY REPORTS / Exam Review
- Class 21: EXAM 2
- Class 22: Economic Geography of LA: Agriculture and Agrarian development  
Chapter 10
- Class 23: Econ Geography of LA: Mining, economic development, & tourism  
Chapter 11 & p. 381-393
- Class 24 & 25: Econ Geography of LA: Industrialization & development models  
Chapter 11
- Class 26 & 27: Economic Geography of LA: Globalization and free trade zones  
H 3 & p. 393-399
- Class 28: Political Geography of LA: National changes and Intn'l policies  
COUNTRY REPORTS/ Book Report Due/ Final Exam Review  
Chapter 6

**FINAL EXAM according to University exam schedule**