LAS 300 – INTRODUCTION TO LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

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Office Hours: 9:00 – 12:00 Mondays or by appointment

LAS 300: (3 credits) Team-taught course representing a variety of disciplines that prepare students for the minor by acquainting them with the broad view – countries and regions; people, traditions and cultures; major events and movements; important political and cultural figures; and significant and representative cultural products such as literature, music, and dance. Meets once, twice, or three times a week for a total of 150 minutes per week for a total of 15 weeks, and also meets for a 2-hour final examination. Online delivery contains extensive written content as well as audio-visual presentations and exercises that includes the same information students in a face-to-face lecture course receive, requiring students to engage the online modules for at least three hours per week. Activities include lectures, extensive reading, compositions, presentations, and quizzes. These various activities average a minimum of 6 hours of work each week to be prepared to engage in face-to-face class meetings or online activities.

Course Description: LAS 300 is an interdisciplinary course that serves as an introduction to the cultures and societies of Latin America. This course will provide students with an overview of the major topics, themes, and processes that have shaped, and continue to shape, Latin America through the study of different disciplines, such as History, Literature, Politics, International Business, Art, Music, and Film. Students will benefit from the unique perspectives and insights that each discipline has to offer.

Course Projects: Students will complete projects from the perspective of their major field of study. International Business students might investigate the recent economic crises in Latin America and look at trade relationships. Political Science students might study the unstable governments of the Twentieth Century, the military dictatorships, or the polemic nature of globalization. Literature students have a wide variety of literary styles and themes to choose from. Forestry students could investigate the variety of tropical hardwoods, or the environmental impact of deforestation. Students will determine the subject and scope of their course project with the professor during the fourth week of the semester. Projects will be
presented in written form as a term paper and will also include an oral presentation during class.

Course Organization: Classes will consist of a mix of introductions to different topics by the professor, discussions of required readings, films, and visits by other professors from different disciplines. There will be weekly online quizzes over assigned readings and films, as well as film essays. Each student will also be required to participate in weekly discussion posts. Because this course only meets once a week, attendance is mandatory. Preparation, participation, and attendance will be critical to your success in the course.

Grading Policy

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<th>A = 90 – 100%</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Quizzes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Discussions</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>B = 80 – 89%</td>
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<td>Film Essays</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>C = 70 – 79%</td>
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<td>Term Project</td>
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<td>D = 60 – 69%</td>
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Required Texts:

**Born in Blood and Fire: A Concise History of Latin America, 3rd Edition**  
by: John Chasteen  
ISBN: 9780393911541  
Publisher: Norton

**Assault on Paradise**  
by: Tatiana Lobo  
ISBN: 9781880684467  
Publisher: Curbstone  
Winner of the 1995 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz Prize

**One Hundred Years of Solitude**  
by: Gabriel García Márquez  
ISBN: 9780060883287  
Publisher: Harp  
Winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature  
New York Times Best Seller  
Oprah’s Book Club

**The House of the Spirits**  
by: Isabel Allende  
ISBN: 9780553383805  
Publisher: Random  
Winner of the Panorama Literario Award
Best Novel of the Year Award
New York Times Best Seller

**FILMS:** We will look at Latin American Films as a major part of this course. Although we will see a few during class, most will be assigned as homework, and will be available to view in the Learning Resource Center in Ferguson G77. Most films are available on Netflix and Amazon.com, and all are available for viewing in the LRC. *Please note that some films are rated R for disturbing images, violence, nudity, or sexual content.*

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Students will be able to describe key elements of Latin American literary style and arts, with broad regional and temporal scope. *Assessed by weekly quizzes, discussions, and quizzes.*
2. Students will analyze the impact of race, class, gender, and ethnicity on the historical and contemporary events studied in the novels and films. *Assessed by written essays on films.*
3. Students will demonstrate an ability to synthesize information about different aspects of Latin America by presenting their own research and analysis that combines the disciplines presented in the course. *Assessed by research project and presentation.*

**Tentative Course Schedule**

1. August 28: What is Latin America?
   Introduction to the course, the participating professors, and discussion:
   Film: *Apocalypto*
   Reading Assignment for September 3:
   *Born in Blood and Fire:* pp. 1 – 46.
   *Assault on Paradise:* pp. 1 – 84. (Spanish edition: pp. 1 - 90)

2. September 4: The Encounter and the Colonies
   Films: *Apocalypto, Yo, la peor de todas*
   Reading Assignment for September 10:
   *Born in Blood and Fire:* pp. 49 – 84.

   Films: *The Mission, Camila*
   Reading Assignment for September 17:
   *Born in Blood and Fire:* pp. 87 – 114.
4. September 18: Independence
Films: The Mission
Braz Cubas
Reading Assignment for September 24:
One Hundred Years of Solitude: Chapters 1 – 5

5. September 25: Postcolonialism and Progress
Film: Like Water for Chocolate
Reading Assignment for October 1:
One Hundred Years of Solitude: Chapters 6 - 11.

6. October 2: Gabriel García Márquez and the Latin American Boom
Films: Like Water for Chocolate
Behind the sun
Reading Assignment for October 8:
One Hundred Years of Solitude: Chapters 12 - 17.

7. October 9: Magical Realism and a generation of authors
Film: The Motorcycle Diaries
Reading Assignment for October 15:
One Hundred Years of Solitude: Chapters 18 - 20.

8. October 16: The Cold War
Film: The Motorcycle Diaries
Reading Assignment for October 22:
The House of the Spirits: Chapters: I, II, and III.

9. October 23: Twentieth-Century Divisions
Film: The Official Story
Reading Assignment for October 29:
The House of the Spirits: Chapters: IV, V, and VI.

10. October 30: Liberation Theology
Film: The Official Story
Missing
Reading Assignment for November 5:
The House of the Spirits: Chapters: VII, VIII, IX, and X.

11. November 6: Injustice and Discontent
Film: Voces inocentes
Reading Assignment for November 16:
The House of the Spirits: Chapters: XI, XII, XIII, XIV, and Epilogue

Film: Voces inocentes
Romero
Reading Assignment for November 19:

13. November 20: Revolutionary Movements
Film:
Reading Assignment for November 26:

14. NO CLASS MEETING November 27: The Missing and the Future
Film:
Reading Assignment due December 3:

15. December 4: Student Presentations

16. December 11: Student Presentations

University Policies: Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must
complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Students with Disabilities**
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/)