



**Faculty of Arts  
Department of History  
Course Outline  
Spring 2025**

**Latin American Studies 301  
Field Study in Latin America**

DRAFT PROPOSED OUTLINE

**Instructor:** Dr. Pablo Policzer

**Email:** [policzer@ucalgary.ca](mailto:policzer@ucalgary.ca)

**Office Hours and Location/Method:** TBD

**Classroom Location, Days and Times:** From April to May 2025, as per GSP Itinerary

**Course Delivery:** In person (in Mexico City and on campus), as per GSP Itinerary

### **Description**

This course will complement and be offered in parallel with **HTST 410.2 Mexico City**, as part of the Spring 2025 field school to Mexico City. In addition to learning specifically about Mexico City through HTST 410.2, LAST 301 will also guide students to reflect more generally upon and better understand Latin American politics, economics, and society. We will focus on the following themes:

1. The legacies of colonialism and the role of indigenous identity: Colonialism in Latin America has a different history than in Canada, and Mexico is an ideal location to examine those differences. Students will explore the complexities of Mexico's – and more generally Latin American – *mestizo* history and culture.
2. Class division and conflict: Class hierarchies are much more highly pronounced in Latin America than in Canada. Students will learn about the origins of why this is the case and explore how these divisions and tensions manifest themselves in various ways in Mexico City, including through how the city itself is laid out.
3. Formal and informal economic relationships: Latin American economies have a much larger informal sector than in Canada. Students will observe this in various locations and reflect on its significance as well as on their own relationship with it.
4. Trust in public and private spaces: Latin American societies generally lack trust in public spaces, which prompts people to escape into private retreats such as gated communities. We will explore the origins of this and observe how it manifests in the city.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Through reflection via first-hand experience and observation in Mexico, analytical papers based on readings and their own experience, and extensive discussion in the field and on campus, students will be able to:

- Identify and describe the form colonialism and indigenous identity took in Latin America, particularly in Mexico, and contrast these with Canada.
- Understand the historical and economic roots of class hierarchies in Latin America.
- Understand the significant role of informal economic activities in Latin American economies, comparing these with the economic structures they are familiar with in Canada.
- Understand the significance of mistrust in the public sphere in Latin American society, including through the phenomenon of private retreats, such as gated communities, and discuss their impact on urban social dynamics and public life in a place such as Mexico City.
- Engage in reflective learning to connect academic theories and their experiences in the field to personal insights, including personal growth gained from the course.
- Understand different points of view on the core issues raised in the class and develop skills to engage with points of view they may not necessarily agree with.

## Reading Material<sup>1</sup>

Required:

- Moraña, Mabel, et al. *Coloniality at Large: Latin America and the Postcolonial Debate* (Duke University Press, 2008); [https://ucalgary.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UCALG\\_INST/15o3ob6/cdi\\_globaltitleindex\\_catalog\\_348775226](https://ucalgary.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UCALG_INST/15o3ob6/cdi_globaltitleindex_catalog_348775226)
- Miller, Marilyn Grace. *Rise and Fall of the Cosmic Race: The Cult of Mestizaje in Latin America* (University of Texas Press, 2004); <https://doi.org/10.7560/705722>. [https://ucalgary.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UCALG\\_INST/15o3ob6/cdi\\_projectmuse\\_ebooks\\_9780292797208](https://ucalgary.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UCALG_INST/15o3ob6/cdi_projectmuse_ebooks_9780292797208)
- Donna Lee Van Cott, "Latin America's Indigenous Peoples", *Journal of Democracy* 18:4 (October 2007), 127-42; [https://ucalgary-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1p0s7n7/TN\\_gale\\_ofa173999341](https://ucalgary-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1p0s7n7/TN_gale_ofa173999341)
- Bayón, Maria Cristina, and Gonzalo A. Saraví. "Place, Class Interaction, and Urban Segregation: Experiencing Inequality in Mexico City." *Space and Culture*, vol. 21, no. 3, 2018, pp. 291-305; [https://ucalgary.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UCALG\\_INST/15o3ob6/cdi\\_proquest\\_journals\\_2067678951](https://ucalgary.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UCALG_INST/15o3ob6/cdi_proquest_journals_2067678951)
- Schteingart, Martha. *Mexico City*. Agenda Publishing, 2023 (selections). [https://ucalgary.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UCALG\\_INST/46139d/alma991030220850104336](https://ucalgary.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UCALG_INST/46139d/alma991030220850104336)
- Leeds, Elisabeth, et al. "Fractured Cities, Second-Class Citizenship and Urban Violence," in Koonings, Kees, and Dirk Kruijt. *Fractured Cities: Social Exclusion, Urban Violence and Contested Spaces in Latin America*. 1st ed., NBN International, 2008; [https://ucalgary.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UCALG\\_INST/15o3ob6/cdi\\_askew\\_sholts\\_vlebooks\\_9781848136748](https://ucalgary.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UCALG_INST/15o3ob6/cdi_askew_sholts_vlebooks_9781848136748) ; <https://web-p-ebshost-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=fde75e24-aa01-4a2e-a850-263a8a6f1797%40redis>

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<sup>1</sup> Preliminary list, subject to modification.

- Diane Davis, "City, Nation, Network: Shifting Territorialities of Sovereignty and Urban Violence in Latin America," *Urban Planning* (2020), 5:3, pp. 206-216; <https://www.cogitatiopress.com/urbanplanning/article/view/3095/3095>
- Bayón, Maria Cristina, and Gonzalo A. Saraví. "Place, Class Interaction, and Urban Segregation: Experiencing Inequality in Mexico City." *Space and Culture*, vol. 21, no. 3, 2018, pp. 291–305, [https://ucalgary.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UCALG\\_INST/15o3ob6/cdi\\_proquest\\_journals\\_2067678951](https://ucalgary.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UCALG_INST/15o3ob6/cdi_proquest_journals_2067678951) .
- Cuarón, Alfonso. *Roma*. The Criterion Collection, 2020. [https://ucalgary.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UCALG\\_INST/46139d/alma991028547399204336](https://ucalgary.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UCALG_INST/46139d/alma991028547399204336)
- Marcantonio, Carla. "Roma: Silence, Language, and the Ambiguous Power of Affect." *Film Quarterly*, vol. 72, no. 4, 2019, pp. 38–45, <https://doi.org/10.1525/FQ.2019.72.4.38>.
- Juan David Rojas, "Mexico's Political Revolution," *Compact*, June 3, 2024; <https://www.compactmag.com/article/mexicos-political-revolution/>
- Gambetta, Diego, ed. *Trust: Making and Breaking Cooperative Relations* (Blackwell, 1988), selections.
- Anthony Bourdain, "Parts Unknown: Mexico City", S03 E04: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=31kZyEWkNIY> (warning: violence, strong language, graphic images)

Additional suggested material:

- Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu, *Amores perros* (Alliance Films, 2013); [https://media3-criterionpic-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/htbin/wwform/006?T=CF0645&ALIAS=CF0645\\_EST.KF&M=01o98qmdd&DSTYLE=0#multimedia\\_resources\\_CF0645](https://media3-criterionpic-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/htbin/wwform/006?T=CF0645&ALIAS=CF0645_EST.KF&M=01o98qmdd&DSTYLE=0#multimedia_resources_CF0645)
- Eduardo Moncada, "Deepening Democracy Under Criminal Governance? Comparative Insights from Mexico City", *LASA Forum* (Fall 2022); <https://forum.lasaweb.org/files/vol53-issue4/Dossier-7.pdf>
- Roberto Bolaño, *The Savage Detectives* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013)
- Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude* (selections)

Readings are available online via the links provided, through reserve via the Library, or through D2L. **Students are strongly encouraged to do the readings in advance of our departure so that they can immerse themselves fully in observing and reflecting on Mexico City during the week of travel.**

### Assessment

Method	Due Date	Weight
Participation		30%
First (analytical) paper	May 21	25%
Second (analytical) paper	June 1	25%
Third (personal reflection) paper	June 15	20%

### Grading Policies

Grades recorded out of /100 and posted on D2L as per weights above.  
Grades assessed as per Department of History grading system (detailed below).

There is no Registrar-scheduled final exam for this course.

### **Details on Methods of Assessment**

1. Active participation is crucial in this field study class, which includes seminars and field trips in Mexico City. Thorough preparation and active engagement are essential for a successful and enriching experience, to integrate field observations with a substantive understanding of the literature guiding our discussions. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings and materials before departure to enhance the effectiveness and depth of their learning in the field. Participation will be evaluated based on two key components:

*Seminar Discussions:* The instructor will provide questions on D2L before departure to help students focus on the core issues to be discussed during the visit to Mexico City. These questions will be based on a preliminary list of questions for the writing assignments. The seminar discussions are essential as they serve as the first step to collectively engage with the core themes of the course. Evaluation will be based on their demonstrated familiarity with the readings and the depth of analysis in both the prepared questions and their engagement during the discussions.

*Field Trips:* Similarly, active participation in walking tours, museum visits, and other field activities is expected. Contributions during these activities will be assessed based on both quantity and quality of engagement.

2. Students will complete two (2) brief (~ 1,500 words each) analytical papers in response to assigned questions based on the core topics. Each paper will ask the student to reflect on the readings based on their observations of different aspect of social, economic and/or political life in Mexico City. For example, a field trip to local markets, plazas, and different (wealthier and poorer) neighbourhoods will form the basis for seminar discussion on the core issues, and for the students' more in-depth analysis in the papers. The aim in each paper will be to reflect critically not only on the topics themselves but also on the student's own interaction with it, as an observer and participant. The preliminary list of possible questions includes:
  - How do contemporary expressions of indigenous identity in Mexico City reflect the historical legacies of colonialism? During your observations in specific neighborhoods or cultural sites, what evidence of this legacy did you find, and how does it compare to indigenous expressions you are familiar with in Canada?
  - How has *mestizaje* (racial and cultural mixing) influenced the national identity of Mexico, and how does this compare to *métis* identity in Canada?
  - In your exploration of different districts in Mexico City, how do you observe class divisions manifesting in the urban landscape and daily life? Compare these observations with class divisions in a Canadian city you are familiar with, noting specific similarities and differences.
  - During your time in Mexico City, what examples of the informal economy did you encounter, and how do these activities impact the local communities? Reflect on the

significance of these observations and compare them with the informal economic activities you have seen in Canadian cities.

- How does the existence of a large informal sector affect social and economic inequality in Mexico, and what are the potential policy solutions to integrate informal workers into the formal economy? Might there be some benefits to having a large informal sector?
- Based on your observations in Mexico City, how does the lack of trust in public spaces manifest in urban design and social behaviour? Compare this with public and private spaces in Canadian cities, noting how trust (or the lack thereof) shapes urban living in both contexts.
- How do gated communities and other forms of private retreats reflect and/or reinforce socio-economic divides in Mexico City, and what are the consequences for social integration, urban development, and more broadly for democratic governance? Is it possible to have a thriving democracy with such divides?

3. In addition, students will complete one (1) personal reflection paper (~2,000 words). This is an open-ended exercise in which you are free to write about your personal experience from any perspective that you think is appropriate and personally significant. The following questions/prompts may help. Pick one, or more, or focus on an entirely different question that you find more personally significant:

- What are the similarities and differences between Mexican/Latin American society and your own? Were there any preconceived notions you had about Mexican/Latin American society that changed after your experience? How did your study and preparation for this trip shape your initial perceptions, and how do those perceptions compare to your firsthand experiences?
- What, if anything, shocked you about Mexican or Latin American society more generally? How have the cultural, social or economic differences you have seen made you more aware of your own society, of its benefits, limitations, strengths, or biases? How might your own culture/society benefit by learning from Mexican and/or Latin American culture and society more generally?
- What aspects of Mexican or Latin American society did you find most intriguing or challenging to understand?
- Has your time abroad influenced your sense of identity? Has experiencing a different society led you to reflect on your personal values and beliefs?
- How has your experience in Mexico/Latin America contributed to your understanding of global issues, such as economic development, environmental sustainability, or social justice? What lessons from Mexican/Latin American society might be applied to address global challenges?
- What was the most challenging aspect of your experience abroad, and how did you overcome it? How did overcoming these challenges contribute to your personal growth and resilience? In what ways, if any, did your experience influence your future academic or career goals?

### **Academic Integrity Statement**

You are expected to produce your *own* written work for this course. Although we have long used artificial intelligence and other technology to search for, process, compile and analyze information, the emergence of tools such as ChatGPT – which allow users to *generate* information – presents a new challenge for higher education. While the debates over how best to respond or adapt to this

unfold, for the purpose of this course, *any use of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT will be considered cheating, on par with plagiarism*, and will be dealt with accordingly, by immediately reporting it to the Dean's Office. The consequences for cheating are severe and range from failing the assignment to failing the course and even being expelled from the university.

Although it may be tempting, keep in mind that using AI to write papers or other assignments defeats the purpose a university education: to develop *your own* critical thinking and writing skills. Your presence in the class therefore constitutes a commitment to produce your own written work, without the assistance of generative AI.

### **Learning Technologies Requirements**

There is a D2L site for this course that contains relevant class resources. To successfully engage in learning experiences in this class, students will need reliable access to the following technology: a computer, tablet, or other device to access D2L and an internet connection.

### **Inclusiveness, Accommodation, Privacy, and Conduct**

I am committed to creating an inclusive learning environment for all registered students. If you have conditions or circumstances that require a formal accommodation, be sure to register with Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible. Such circumstances may include disability or illness whether temporary or permanent, visible or invisible.

To protect the privacy of others, students may not record in any format any activity that occurs within the classroom or online. As outlined in the [University Calendar](#), permission to sound-record lectures will only be given to students registered with Student Accessibility Services.

Part of creating an inclusive learning environment is to respect one's classmates even when there is disagreement. We will occasionally discuss topics about which you might be uncomfortable or have a set viewpoint. In such situations, it is essential that we understand that others have different experiences and perspectives, and that listening and responding respectfully to those with opposing viewpoints is part of the process of emerging as active, engaged citizens.

### **Schedule**

As per proposed GSP itinerary, in conjunction with HTST 410.2 Mexico City: Past and Present.

## THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION APPEARS ON ALL DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY COURSE OUTLINES

### Departmental Grading System

The following percentage-to-letter grade conversion scheme is used in all Canadian Studies, History, and Latin American Studies courses, except for HTST 200. See the university grading system in the calendar: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1-1.html>.

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	Description
90-100	A+	4.00	Outstanding performance
85-89	A	4.00	Excellent performance
80-84	A-	3.70	Approaching excellent performance
77-79	B+	3.30	Exceeding good performance
73-76	B	3.00	Good performance
70-72	B-	2.70	Approaching good performance
67-69	C+	2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance
63-66	C	2.00	Satisfactory performance
60-62	C-	1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance.
56-59	D+	1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject
50-55	D	1.00	Minimal Pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject.
0-49	F	0	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.

**Please Note:** Students are expected to reach the grade range to receive that letter grade (ie. to receive an A- a student will have earned an 80 or 3.7 in the course). Assume that there will be no rounding up unless your instructor announces otherwise.

### Writing

All written assignments and written exam responses are assessed partly on writing skills. Writing skills include surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) and general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented according to the format described in *The History Student's Handbook*.

### Academic Misconduct

Academic Misconduct refers to student behavior which compromises proper assessment of a student's academic activities and includes: cheating; fabrication; falsification; plagiarism; unauthorized assistance; failure to comply with an instructor's expectations regarding conduct required of students completing academic assessments in their courses; and failure to comply with exam regulations applied by the Registrar.

For more information, please see the University of Calgary [Student Academic Misconduct Policy](#) documents, and visit the [Academic Integrity Website](#).

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when students submit or present the ideas and/or writing of others as if they were their own or when they submit their own work to two different classes. Please see *The History*

Student's Handbook for more details, but to summarize, plagiarism may take several forms:

- Failing to cite sources properly
- Submitting borrowed, purchased, and/or ghostwritten papers
- Submitting one's own work for more than one course without the permission of the instructor(s) involved
- Extensive paraphrasing of one or a few sources, even when referenced properly, unless the essay is a critical analysis of those works

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence, and written work that appears to contain plagiarized passages will not be graded. All such work will be reported to the Faculty of Art's associate deans of students who will apply the penalties specified in the university calendar.

### **Academic Accommodation**

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the Student Accommodations policy. Students needing an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than Disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit Student Accessibility Services.

### **Research Ethics**

Students are advised that any research with human participants – including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation – must have the approval of the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board or the Conjoint Health Research Ethics Board. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required. Some courses will include assignments that involve conducting research with human participants; in these cases, the instructor will have applied for and received ethics approval for the course assignment. The instructor will discuss the ethical requirements for the assignment with the students.

### **Instructor Intellectual Property**

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

### **Copyright Legislation**

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright and requirements of the Copyright Act to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

### **Copyright of Educational Materials**



The University of Calgary has opted out of the Access Copyright Interim Tariff proposed by the Copyright Board. Therefore, instructors in all University of Calgary courses will strictly adhere to Copyright Act regulations and the educational exceptions permitted by the Act for both print and digital course material. No copyrighted material may be placed on course D2L or web sites without the prior permission of the copyright holders. In some cases, this may mean that instructors will require you to purchase a print course pack from the University of Calgary bookstore or consult books on reserve at the library. Please see the [University of Calgary copyright page](#).

### **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy**

Student information will be collected in accordance with usual classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty and teaching assistants. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard.

### **MEDIA RECORDING IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

#### **Media Recording for Study Purposes (Students)**

Students who wish to audio record lectures for personal study purposes need to follow the guidelines outlined in [Section E.6 of the University Calendar](#). Unless the audio recording of lectures is part of a student accessibility requirement, permission must be sought by the course instructor to audio record lectures.

#### **Media recording for lesson capture**

The instructor may use media recordings to capture the delivery of a lecture. These recordings are intended to be used for lecture capture only and will not be used for any other purpose. Recordings will be posted on D2L for student use and will normally be deleted at the end of term. Students are responsible for turning off their camera and/or microphone if they do not wish to be recorded.

#### **Media recording for assessment of student learning**

The instructor may use media recordings as part of the assessment of students. This may include but is not limited to classroom discussions, presentations, clinical practice, or skills testing that occur during the course. These recordings will be used for student assessment purposes only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose. The recording will be destroyed as specified by [retention rule 2000.01](#) "Examinations and Student Assignments."

#### **Media recording for self-assessment of teaching practices**

The instructor may use media recordings as a tool for self-assessment of their teaching practices. Although the recording device will be fixed on the instructor, it is possible that student participation in the course may be inadvertently captured. The recording will be destroyed as specified by [retention rule 98.0011](#) "Draft Documents & Working Materials."

### **Sexual Violence Policy**

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of Calgary's sexual violence policy guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that

occur off-campus in certain circumstances. Please see [the sexual and gender-based violence policy](#).

**Other Useful Information**

Please see the Registrar's [Course Outline Student Support and Resources](#) page for information on:

- Wellness and Mental Health
- Student Success
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Safewalk
- Campus Security 220-5333

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*Updated July 2023*