



## SPA 307

### Culture and Civilization of Latin America

Prof. William Keeth

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Office Hours: MW 2:00-5:00 pm, F 2:00-3:00 pm or by appointment.

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#### Required material

Texts:

- 1) Chang-Rodriguez, Eugenio. *Latinoamérica: Su civilización y su cultura*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle. (2000).

Other:

- 1) A notebook



#### Suggested Material

Writing Resources:

- 1) The *University of Chicago Spanish Dictionary*. Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 1987.
- 2) *The Concise American Heritage Larousse Spanish Dictionary*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company and Librairie Larousse, 1989
- 3) Noble, Judith. *Complete Handbook of Spanish Verbs*. Illinois: Passport Books, 1992.
- 4) Keenan, Joseph J. *Breaking out of Beginner's Spanish*. U of Texas P, 1994.
- 5) *Diccionario Porrúa de sinónimos y antónimos de la lengua española*. México: Editorial Porrúa, 1991.
- 6) Turk, Phil. *Spanish Grammar Handbook*. Oxford: Berlitz Publishing Co. Ltd., 1993.
- 7) Zollo, Mike. *Spanish Vocabulary Handbook*. Oxford: Berlitz Publishing Co. Ltd., 1994.

WEB Resources:

- 1) Professor's Web Site:  
<http://www.mnsfld.edu/~wkeeth>
- 2) LC&C Main Site:  
<http://latinoamerica.heinle.com/>
- 3) LC&C Self-tests:  
[http://latinoamerica.heinle.com/auto\\_pruebas\\_frame.html](http://latinoamerica.heinle.com/auto_pruebas_frame.html)
- 4) LC&C Internet Activities:  
<http://latinoamerica.heinle.com/activities.html>

#### Overview of course:

In this course we will complete a panoramic study of the history, cultures, and civilizations that embody "Latin America", paying specific attention to the human significance of these traditions, ideas, and philosophies. The organization of this panoramic study will be


chronological, beginning with the Pre-Columbian cultures and ending in the 20th century. Classroom presentations and discussions will pivot around historical, anthropological, sociological, artistic, musical, and cultural themes. The format of the class will include lectures, discussions, debates, oral presentations, and multimedia presentations. Students can expect to work in groups.

**Course Goals**

- ✓ Read and discuss the assigned readings, always in an effort to document the creation of the Latin American “culture/s”.
- ✓ Develop a vocabulary of analytical concepts that help organize, develop, and process the ideas presented or discussed in class.
- ✓ Recognize important ideological, ethnic, cultural, sociopolitical, geographic, and historic factors that have contributed to the formation of Latin American civilizations and identities.
- ✓ Delimit a relationship between the most important trends and aspects of Latin American culture and the historical facts, places, dates, and names that are associated with each trend or aspect.
- ✓ Categorize and interpret meaningful events, paying attention to their cause and effect.
- ✓ Study the most significant historical cultural themes, so as to recognize their chronological patterns of appearance and importance.
- ✓ Reflect on the merits, conflicts, and contradictions that can be associated with these trends and themes.

**Performance and Evaluation**

**Evaluation:**

	Performance Description	Grade	Percentage	System of Evaluation*:  1 Midterm.....25% Research Essay: Preliminary Bibliography.....5% Annotated Bibliography.....5% Final Draft (5-7 pages).....15% Class Participation: Journal & Class Participation.....5% In-Class Presentations.....5% Group Activities.....5% Final Oral Presentation.....10% 1 Final Exam.....25%  <p style="text-align: right;">Total: 100%</p>
	Excellent	A	93 > 100 %	
		A-	90 > 92 %	
	Good	B+	87 > 89 %	
		B	83 > 86 %	
	Satisfactory	B-	80 > 82 %	
		C+	77 > 79 %	
		C	73 > 76 %	
	Marginal	C-	70 > 72 %	
		D+	67 > 69 %	
D		63 > 66 %		
Failing	D-	60 > 62 %		
	F	0 > 59 %		

\*Specific due dates will be listed on the WEB in the Class Calendar and/or assigned periodically in class.

## Important Due Dates

Preliminary Thesis Statement	February 1 <sup>st</sup>
Preliminary Bib	February 15 <sup>th</sup>
Midterm	February 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Annotated Bib	March 29 <sup>th</sup>

Final Draft Research Essay	April 22 <sup>rd</sup>
Final Oral Presentations	April 24 <sup>th</sup> and April 26 <sup>th</sup>
Final Exam	April 29 <sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm

### Performance:

General Course Expectations: Students should attend every class, prepare their homework assignments, and maintain a class journal (containing notes taken both in the classroom and during assigned readings, or research). Active class engagement will be one of our priorities, so students should not only come prepared daily, but also expect to periodically work in groups and make informal in-class presentations.

Study Method: Students should expand their class notes as soon as possible following each class and should review the previous day's notes before they attend the next class. This allows them to pay closer attention to what is said during class and serves as a *review* of class material. Students should also try to study the most difficult topics first and spend more time studying these same areas. Students should always study in short periods (an hour), periods that include 5 to 10 minute breaks. Creating and sticking to a study schedule is very important. Weekends can represent valuable moments for studying more difficult areas.

Attendance: All students are expected to attend every class. Missing a class does not release a student from any class obligations. Students should keep in touch with classmates and be sure to contact their professor in advance of any absence.

Any absence will result in a 15% reduction of the student's Journal and Class Participation grade.

The professor is NOT obligated to assist students in making-up work missed due to an official field trip, due to an official university function, or due to an illness. Students, however, MAY request permission to miss a class and arrange to make-up missed work prior to their absence. This type of arrangement can waive the 15% attendance reduction, but MUST be completed *at least 24 hours prior* to an absence or illness. Students MAY be required to provide documents supporting their request.

Electronic submission of written work is an effective way of handing in required written work by a specified deadline, especially when a student expects to be absent.

Conduct: Academic honesty, the submission of original work, and student interaction is expected in this class. Any form of cheating may result in failure of the course. Additional information concerning academic honesty can be found in the *Password*.

The Syllabus: This syllabus serves as a contractual agreement. Presence in this class means that you agree to the items stipulated in the syllabus and are aware of any modifications made throughout the semester. One should periodically check the course web site for any updates to the syllabus and/or class calendar. Additional exercises and handy links can be found here, too.

Class records and Grades: Oversee your grade by monitoring your progress and maintaining contact with your instructor. Any exam, quiz, attendance record, homework paper, composition, notebooks, or other student material (which has been returned to the student) becomes the student's responsibility to maintain as a permanent record for the course. Students

are responsible for picking up any materials that are made available to them or are returned in class. If a student loses these records and the professor does not have a copy of the material available, the student will receive a failing grade for the particular activity.

Journals: Journal entries will be kept daily during this class. They must be written in Spanish and should include academic, emotional, creative, and intellectual comments. The instructor will explain in more detail the format for the journal, which will be turned in periodically. The journal entries will not be corrected for grammatical accuracy, rather for the reach of intellectual curiosity and discovery.

Midterm and Final Exams: These are comprehensive written examinations. They usually consist of recognition, map identification, multiple choice, and short essay exercises. Neither the Midterm nor the Final Exam can be made up.

Research essay: The format of this 5-7-page document must follow MLA guidelines for Research papers. This Research essay will be completed and evaluated in a staged process (Preliminary bibliography, Annotated Bibliography, Final Draft, and Oral presentation). More detailed information regarding its content, method of evaluation, and purpose will be presented in class.

Oral Presentations . Students should be prepared to present a number of informal in-class oral presentations related to the material being discussed in class on a particular week. These will be assigned in a random order and may accompany group work exercises. Each student will also present a more formal oral presentation, in which s/he summarizes the central argument and highlights the crucial aspects and arguments of his/her Research essay. More detailed information regarding the oral presentations length, content, and method of evaluation will be presented in class.

#### **Other Operational Matters:**

Disabilities: If a student has a documented disability and requires accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, s/he needs to contact the professor at the beginning of the semester.

Audit& P/F Options: 100 or 200 level courses may not be taken pass/fail to fulfill any General Education requirements. Courses required to complete a major or an academic minor may be included in the pass/fail option at the discretion of the department of Languages and Literature. They also require the chairperson's signature and may not be counted for General Education credit. If a student wishes to audit this course, s/he must seek the approval of the Languages and Literature department and notify the professor within the first seven days of class.

Study abroad: Dr. Blanco can provide information about studying in Costa Rica and various other study-abroad programs for Spanish students. One can also contact the Office of the Provost or Study Abroad advisor for information about available programs and an application. You must provide evidence of a cumulative QPA of 2.5 and submit two references from professors or administrators to participate in these programs.