

Race and Ethnicity in Latin America

ETHNC 5720/POLS 5720/POLS 6720

Spring Semester 2024

Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:25pm-2:45pm, Gardner Commons 5750

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 10am-11am, or by appointment

Office Hours Sign-up: <https://calendly.com/ddemicheli>

Course Description

This course focuses on the construction of race and ethnicity in Latin America and the consequences for understanding contemporary politics and society. We will follow the historical evolution of these ideas and concepts, tracing their origins and variations in Mexico, Brazil, the Andes, and the Caribbean, among other contexts. We will also examine the domestic and international forces that shaped evolving conceptions of ethnicity and race—and ultimately nationality—in the Americas. We will conclude with the modern period, considering how this region of the world once deemed exceptional for its celebration of race mixture and colorblindness transitioned to one that promotes policies like affirmative action and contends with growing ethnoracial mobilization in variety of social and political domains.

Required Materials

There are no materials required for purchase in this course. Students should ensure they have access to the course on Canvas and familiarize themselves with how to access materials through Marriott Library's electronic catalogue.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will:

- gain familiarity with the history of nationalism and race-making in Latin America;
- develop a command of constructivist theories of “race” and “ethnicity”;
- understand how nation-building in the region became racialized, how nation-building shaped racial subjectivities, and the consequences of racial subjectivity for understanding contemporary politics and inequality; and
- develop and hone your engagement with scholarly material through repeated use of your critical reading, writing, and discussion skills.

Teaching and Learning Methods

This course is designed as a discussion-based seminar and will be organized around discussion of the reading(s) assigned for each class meetings. *I expect students to arrive having already completed and thought about all required readings assigned for that day.* I also expect students to be prepared to pose any clarifying questions, discuss the major ideas and themes in the readings, identifying common ideas from other readings in the course, or something else that piques curiosity. The reading load for this course will average roughly one long or two shorter articles for each class meeting. Your main task in preparing for each class meeting is to complete the readings. You might find some of them long, dense, or even unintelligible. But your job is to finish them so we may arrive to a collective understanding of the readings and put them in dialogue with each other.

University Policies

1. ***The Americans with Disabilities Act.*** The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, (801) 581-5020. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.
2. ***University Safety Statement.*** The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu.
3. ***Addressing Sexual Misconduct.*** Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

Lauren's Promise: Lauren's Promise is a vow that anyone – faculty, staff, students, parents, and community members – can take to indicate to others that they represent a safe haven for sharing incidents of sexual assault, domestic violence, or stalking. Anyone who makes Lauren's Promise vows to: 1.) listen to and believe those individuals who are being threatened or experiencing sexual assault, dating violence or stalking; 2.) represent a safe haven for sharing incidents of sexual assault, domestic violence, or stalking; and 3.) change campus culture that responds poorly to dating violence and stalking. By making Lauren's Promise, individuals are helping to change campus cultures that respond poorly to dating violence and stalking throughout the nation.

4. ***Academic Misconduct Statement.*** It is expected that students adhere to University of Utah policies regarding academic honesty, including but not limited to refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, misrepresenting one's work, and/or inappropriately collaborating. This includes the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools without citation, documentation, or authorization. Students are expected to adhere to the prescribed professional and ethical standards of the profession/discipline for which they are preparing. Any student who engages in academic dishonesty or who violates the professional and ethical standards for their profession/discipline may be subject to academic sanctions as per the University of Utah's Student Code: <https://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-410.php>.
5. ***Diversity Statement.*** I stand in support of compassion, dignity, value-of-life, equity, inclusion and justice for all individuals regardless of color, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, language, socioeconomic status, ability, gender, gender identity or expression, immigration status, or any type of marginalization. I stand in support of making our society more inclusive, just, and equitable for all individuals. I stand against individual and systemic racism in all its various forms.

6. ***Undocumented Student Support Statement.*** Immigration is a complex phenomenon with broad impact—those who are directly affected by it, as well as those who are indirectly affected by their relationships with family members, friends, and loved ones. If your immigration status presents obstacles to engaging in specific activities or fulfilling specific course criteria, confidential arrangements may be requested from the Dream Center. Arrangements with the Dream Center will not jeopardize your student status, your financial aid, or any other part of your residence. The Dream Center offers a wide range of resources to support undocumented students (with and without DACA) as well as students from mixed-status families. To learn more, please contact the Dream Center at 801.213.3697 or visit dream.utah.edu.
7. ***Drop/Withdrawal.*** The last day to drop (delete) this course, or elect CR/NC, is Friday, January 19, 2024. The last day to withdraw from this course is Friday, March 1, 2024.
8. ***Other important information to consider:***
 - a. Student Code: <http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>
 - b. Accommodation Policy (see Section Q): <http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.php>
9. ***The University of Utah provides resources for students of various needs, including for:***
 - a. Wellness: <https://wellness.utah.edu/>
 - b. Veterans: <https://veteranscenter.utah.edu/>
 - c. LGBTQ+ students: <https://lgbt.utah.edu/>
 - d. Learners of English as an Additional/Second Language: <https://eli.utah.edu/>
 - e. First generation and low-income students: trio.utah.edu
 - f. Students of marginalized or intersectional identities: diversity.utah.edu/centers/CESB/
 - g. Undocumented students: dream.utah.edu
 - h. Students with children: childcare.utah.edu

Course Policies

Attendance & Punctuality: Given the nature of this course, attendance is required and adjustments cannot be granted to allow non-attendance. However, if you need to seek an ADA accommodation to request an exception to this attendance policy due to a disability, please contact the Center for Disability and Access (CDA). CDA will work with us to determine what, if any, ADA accommodations are reasonable and appropriate. In other circumstances, all students are permitted one unexcused absence per semester for which their grade will suffer no penalty. See the University Regulations (Section III.O) for criteria on excused absences. In order for an absence to be excused, students must notify me via email *prior to the start of the class meeting* that will be missed. Punctuality is also expected as a sign of respect for the other students in the class.

Assignments: Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments are to be submitted in 12-point, Times New Roman font with one-inch margins. Text should be double-spaced. References and in-text citations may follow either Chicago (in-text or footnote variants) or American Political Science Association styles. Both styles are available for download in Zotero (which I highly recommend). All assignments must be submitted in either .pdf or .docx formats. Under no circumstances may you submit a document that you can continue to edit after the due date (e.g., Google Docs). Your submitted assignment should consist of a file, not a URL. Unless otherwise stated, assignments are due by the start of class on the due date. Late assignments can be submitted via email if necessary, and grades will be reduced by one-third of a letter grade for every 12 hours past the due date/time.

Participation and Conduct: Students are expected to participate actively in discussion and to engage with the assigned readings in good faith. Participation can take a variety of forms, including offering critique,

insight, commentary, or topics of discussion; it can also entail active listening, note-taking, asking clarifying questions, and responding to points raised by colleagues. Good faith engagement entails thinking critically about the ideas/arguments presented in each text, taking the author on her terms, and avoiding overly harsh critique simply for the sake of naysaying. Offering criticism and identifying flaws is an essential part of academic discussion. But our goal in seminar is to advance understanding through productive and constructive criticism and analysis, not to demonstrate our intellect by diminishing others’.

Food & Drink: Consumption of food and drink are permitted during lecture, within reason. Eating and drinking should not disturb others in the classroom with noise or smell. And students should not leave behind any trash or mess for other to clean after them.

Electronic Devices in Class: The use of smartphones is strictly prohibited during class meetings. These devices should be silenced or turned off during class. Because much of the course material is available electronically, I will permit the use of laptops in airplane mode. However, I encourage students to avoid using *all* electronic devices in class for several reasons. First, laptops can be distracting to students, who may use them for non-academic purposes. When this occurs, it is obvious to the instructor as well as to your peers (despite what you may think). The main consequence of this distraction is that it deprives the discussion of the contributions you could otherwise make were you attentive and engaged. Second, there is considerable scientific evidence that the use of computers when consuming academic material inhibits engagement, the absorption of facts/knowledge, and memory functions. While typing notes may be more efficient, any potential benefits are far outweighed by the costs. Finally, placing an open laptop in front of you acts as a physical barrier between you and the rest of your peers, which can also inhibit the quality of in-class discussion. You may use a laptop in class if you insist, but I urge you to consider printing the readings (as economically as possible) or taking detailed notes prior to arriving to seminar.

Assignment Grading

The course grading scheme follows. When a course grade falls between integers, I apply a standard rounding procedure: any point total that ends in .0 to .49 will be rounded *down* to the nearest whole number, while any point total that ends in .50 to .99 will be rounded *up*. There is no extra credit in this course.

Course Points	Letter Grade	Description
97+	A+	Above and beyond expectations in terms of quality of content and communications. The work constitutes an original contribution.
93-96	A	Outstanding work in terms of content, quality, and creativity of written and oral expression.
90-92	A-	Very good work—thorough in content and generally well written, though with minor flaws and/or omissions.
87-89	B+	Good work—covers the essentials with adequate depth in substance as well as quality of written/oral expression.
83-86	B	Acceptable work—covers most of the essentials with adequate quality of written/oral expression, though lacks depth in some explanations of subject matter.
80-82	B-	Marginal work—borders on unacceptable—weak written/oral expression, coverage of subject matter lacks attention to some essential points and/or is overly vague about them.
73-79	C+/C	Below standard—lacks adequate coverage of essential points, written/oral expression is very weak.

>72	C- and below	Inadequate work/performance overall. Fails to answer questions, writing is very confusing, vague, and/or does not cover many essential points.
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Course Grades and Assignments

Syllabus Quiz	5%	Due January 12 th by 5pm
Attendance	10%	On-going evaluation
Participation	10%	On-going evaluation
Discussion memos	15%	Once each in February, March, and April
Take-home Midterm	20%	Due Friday, March 1 st by 5pm
Film Review	20%	Due Friday, April 5 th by 5pm
Take-home Final Exam	20%	Due Tuesday, April 30 th by 3pm

Syllabus Quiz. This is a short quiz given via Canvas to ensure that students have read and understand the important details of the syllabus. This quiz is not designed to trick you; in fact this should be an easy A for everyone. You will have two attempts at this quiz with the highest of your two scores counted toward your final grade. You will find this on Canvas in the “Quizzes” section. This must be completed by January 12th at 5pm.

Attendance and Participation. Attendance is required in this course, though all students are permitted one unexcused absence. (See the University Regulations [Section III.O] for criteria on excused absences.) In order for an absence to be excused, students must notify me via email *prior to the start of the class meeting* that will be missed. Punctuality is also expected as a sign of respect for the other students in the class. Students are also expected to regularly and actively participate in the seminar discussion. I take a broad and lenient view of participation, which can include active listening, note-taking, asking clarifying questions, responding to peers, and of course offering one’s own interpretations, critiques, or discussion questions. I sympathize with students who may not always feel comfortable speaking in class; but I strongly encourage such students to come speak with me in office hours so we can identify strategies to increase one’s contribution to the in-class discussion. Behaviors that will hurt one’s participation grade include: using one’s cell phone during class; displaying disinterest in the seminar discussion; failing to listen or follow the conversation; spending class time on websites that do not pertain to the readings for theme of the day; and of course failing to attend class. Any or all of these behaviors demonstrate a lack of engagement with the course material and hinder the quality of our discussion.

Discussion Memos. Over the course of the semester each student will submit three discussion memos of readings assigned in this course. **These memos should not contain summary.** The purpose is to critically engage with the ideas and arguments in the readings. This can include: what you found novel or insightful about the author’s argument; some empirical finding the reading introduced you to; connections you identify to other readings in this (or another) course; or simply something you disagree with or find illogical. The point is to generate some material for you (and all of us) to discuss in seminar. Memos should be written in response to a particular reading, and to count **your memo must be posted on Canvas prior to the class period in which the assigned reading is discussed.** Each student will write one memo in each of the months of February, March, and April. These should be no longer than 600 words.

Take-Home Midterm. Students will complete one take-home midterm that will consist of one question, answered in 4-5 double-spaced pages. The question will be broad and will ask students to engage with the questions and themes raised in discussion, and to draw multiple course readings in their response. Since this is a take-home exam, it will be open book. Students will have 72 hours to complete the assignment and submit it no later than 5pm on March 1st.

Film Review. For this assignment you will choose one of three films and write a 4-5 page “review” of the film drawing on concepts and theories we’ve discussed in the course. The films are *Roma* (Mexico), *City of God* (Brazil), and *Pelo Malo* (Venezuela), all of which are available to stream via Canvas with English subtitles. Specific prompts and instructions will be distributed prior to the due date. Students will be asked to analyze to what extent the events of the films are driven by race/ethnicity, and how/if the film sheds light on the “class vs. race” debate in the study of inequality in Latin America. This assignment is due no later than 5pm on April 5th.

Final Exam. Like the midterm, the final exam will be take-home and consist of one question. The question posed, however, will be larger in scope and students will be expected to draw on material from any/all of the course readings. Answers should be 6-7 pages. Students will have 72 hours to complete the exam. Following the university exam schedule, final exams must be submitted no later than 3pm on April 30th.

COURSE SCHEDULE

8 January **Course Introduction**

CONCEPTS AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

10 January **Colonialism, Independence, and Post-Independence (Lecture)**

Skidmore, Smith, and Green, “The Colonial Foundations” in *Modern Latin America*, pp. 14-41

15 January **NO CLASS (MLK Day)**

17 January **Amerindian, European, and African Encounters in the Americas (Lecture)**

Van Cott, “Latin America’s Indigenous Peoples”

Andrews, *Afro-Latin America: Black Lives*, pp. 18-44

22 January **Tools for Analysis: “Race,” “Ethnicity,” and Identity Concepts (Lecture)**

Chandra, “Cumulative Findings in the Study of Ethnic Politics,” pp. 7-11

Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States* (3rd ed.), pp. 105-115, and 124-130

MAKING MESTIZAJES

24 January **“Social Race” and Racial Subjectivity**

Wagley, “On the Concept of Social Race in the Americas” in *Contemporary Cultures and Societies of Latin America*, pp. 531-543

29 January **Mexico: The Cosmic Race**

Vasconcelos, “The Cosmic Race,” pp. 3-40

OPTIONAL: da Costa, “The Myth of Racial Democracy” in *The Brazilian Empire*

31 January Nation-Making in Historical Context

Knight, "Racism, Revolution, and *Indigenismo*: Mexico, 1910-1940" in *The Idea of Race in Latin America*, pp. 71-102

OPTIONAL: Skidmore et al., *Modern Latin America*, pp. 45-58 (on Mexican Revolution)

5 February Precursors to "Racial Democracy"

Wright, *Café con Leche*, pp. 1-42 (chapters 1 and 2)

OPTIONAL: Skidmore et al., *Modern Latin America*, pp. 219-243 (history of Venezuela)

7 February Racial Democracy: A Solution to What?

Wright, *Café con Leche*, pp. 43-68 (chapter 3)

OPTIONAL: Skidmore, "Racial Ideas and Social Policy in Brazil, 1870-1940" in *The Idea of Race in Latin America*, pp. 7-28

12 February Eugenics in 20th Century Latin America I

Stepan, "*The Hour of Eugenics*," pp. 1-14, 35-62

14 February Eugenics in 20th Century Latin America II

Stepan, "*The Hour of Eugenics*," pp. 135-170

19 February NO CLASS (President's Day)

21 February How Do States "Make" Race?

Loveman, "Census Taking and Nation Making in Nineteenth-Century Latin America" in *State and Nation Making in Latin America and Spain*, pp. 329-355

INFORMAL DYNAMICS ON THE GROUND

26 February Racial Democracy Meets Reality

Trejo and Altamirano, "The Mexican Color Hierarchy: How Race and Skin Tone Still Define Life Chances 200 Years after Independence" in *The Double Bind: The Politics of Racial and Class Inequalities in the Americas*

28 February NO CLASS – Work on midterm exam

*** Midterms due Friday March 3rd by 5pm

4 March NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)

6 March **NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)**

11 March **Family Socialization: Internalizing Racial Hierarchies**

Hordge-Freeman, *The Color of Love*, pp. 33-71

13 March **Maintaining Social Boundaries**

Cerón-Anaya, *Privilege at Play*, chs. 1 and 4

18 March **Cuba: Did the Revolution End Racism?**

Cole, "Race Toward Equality: The Impact of the Cuban Revolution on Racism"

Clealand, *The Power of Race in Cuba*, pp. 101-122

20 March **Who is "Black" in "White" Argentina?**

Geler, "African Descent and Whiteness in Buenos Aires" in *Rethinking Race in Modern Argentina*, pp. 213-236.

25 March **How does National Identity Shape Ethnoracial Identification?**

Telles and Paschel, "Who is Black, White, or Mixed Race? How Skin Color, Status, and Nation Shape Racial Classification in Latin America"

CONTEMPORARY ETHNORACIAL POLITICS

27 March **Barriers to Politicization**

Young, *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism*, pp. 428-459

OPTIONAL: Hanchard, *Orpheus and Power*, pp. 3-8 and pp. 43-74

1 April **NO CLASS (Professor at Conference)**

3 April **NO CLASS (work on film review)**

*** *Film reviews due Friday by 5pm*

8 April **The Rise of Indigenous Movements**

Mattiace, *To See with Two Eyes*, pp. 1-9

Yashar, "Contesting Citizenship"

10 April **Challenges in the Electoral Arena**

Watch *Cocalero* (streaming via Canvas)

15 April From Movements to Parties: Success in the Electoral Arena?

Madrid, "The Rise of Ethnopolitism in Latin America"

17 April Claiming and Politicizing Stigmatized Identities

De Micheli, "Racial Reclassification and Political Identity Formation," read pp. 1-22 and 37-42;
skim remainder

22 April From Colorblind to Color-Conscious?

Giraut, "From Privileges to Rights"

******Final Exam due on April 30th by 3pm***