

Special Topics: Latin American Philosophy**PHI 3930 (03EH), 3 credits****MWF 11:45-12:35 on Zoom****Instructor: Dr. Thomas Auxter****Office hours: MW 4:00-4:50pm on Zoom****115C Griffin-Floyd**

In this course, we examine philosophical themes and concepts of Latin American philosophy in context – including historical, geographical, cultural, religious, social, and political contexts. The goal is to evaluate contributions to philosophical debates about reality, knowledge, personal identity, sensibilities, consciousness, values, and commitment.

We will read and discuss works by philosophers who reject an assumption often made in the United States and other Western countries about Latin American philosophers. The assumption is that to enter into significant debate, they must devote their research and writing to commenting on philosophies originally found in European thought.

We will focus our attention on three philosophers in particular; however, we will also read short selections from others who offer perspectives on important issues.

(1) Jose Carlos Mariategui writes *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality* (1928) to show there is a different, and more authentic, way to understand reality within and through the world of the indigenous people of Peru. He shows how reality is constructed according to indigenous values and why the result is more powerful and more profound than Westerners have historically believed or admitted.

(2) Leopoldo Zea commits himself to liberating Latin America from European cultural influences. He argues that these influences merely promote an agenda of European domination of the Latin American continent.

In *The Role of the Americas in History* (1992), he outlines the nature of “The Universalizing Influence of Western Culture” and exposes European efforts to gain hegemony over countries across the continent. (Lectures will cover this material.) We will read two articles (from other sources) that summarize his views: (a) In “The Actual Function of Philosophy in Latin America,” he recasts the mission of philosophy for a world no longer interested in either ignoring or distorting interpretations of reality that come from Latin America; (b) In “Identity: A Latin American Philosophical Problem,” he explores how identities are formed through race and culture and what this means for choices in life.

(3) Paulo Freire is a philosopher committed to advancing the interests of impoverished people in Brazil by helping them to develop a critical consciousness about their situation and

discover a path to liberation. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1968)*, he discusses ways in which philosophy, using dialogue, can lead to this radical encounter with reality. For an authentically human life, dialogue is “an existential necessity.”

All three of these philosophers, as well as others we will read, are ready for a radical break from the past. The past they reject is a past filled with a Eurocentric domination that is an effect of colonization – squeezing out independent choices and punishing every form of dissent. They are ready for authentic, pluralistic forms of development in the future – embracing the full range of different cultures in Latin America. They see diversity as a strength, not as a challenge for colonizers who aim to seize power and impose conformity.

Requirements: There will be a midterm essay test due on November 2 at 11:59pm and two essays written in a final examination due on December 18 at 11:59pm. The essays are take-home exams, with questions given to students at least ten days before essays are due. Each essay will count as one third of the grade.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Details about grading policies and scale, as well as course policy, can be found at the end of this syllabus. Students are also invited to visit the Canvas site to familiarize themselves with details concerning grading and course policies. Grades and comments on graded work will be available only on the Canvas site.

Communication requiring confidentiality is restricted to Canvas.

Required Texts:

Jose Carlos Mariategui, *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*. (ISBN 978-0-292-77611-1. Cost online: used \$16.50)

Jorge Gracia and Elizabeth Millan-Zaibert, eds., *Latin American Philosophy for the 21st Century* (ISBN 1-57392-978-6. Cost online: \$20.99 new. \$12.02 used)

Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (ISBN 1501314130. Cost online advertised as low as \$2.30). Available as an e-book in UF Library Course Reserves.

*Two recommended texts (with a total of five assigned readings) are available in e-books in Library Course Reserves):

*Mario Saenz, ed., *Latin American Perspectives on Globalization: Ethics, Politics, and Alternative Futures* (ISBN 978-0-7425-0777-7). Cost online new \$44.58; used \$6.98. Three assigned readings from this book are available as an e-book in UF Library Course Reserves.

***Eduardo Mendieta, ed., *Latin American Philosophy: Currents, Issues, Debates* (ISBN 0-253-34180-9). Cost online new \$22.95; used \$5.00. Two assigned readings are available in an e-book from UF Library Course Reserves.**

Also recommended:

Ofelia Schutte, *Cultural Identity and Social Liberation in Latin American Thought* (1993). This book is highly recommended. It covers and discusses several approaches to Latin American thought.

Texts are also available at UF Bookstore.

Topics:

- **What are the historical conditions that give rise to Latin American philosophy as a movement or school of thought?**
- **Who are the major thinkers receiving the attention of the literary world? Of the philosophical world?**
- **What are the main themes and approaches?**
- **How are themes developed in Latin American texts?**
- **How are Latin American values related to traditional European values?**
- **How are gender differences regarded in each type of view?**
- **How do Latin American philosophers connect issues about oppression with ideas of what freedom means?**
- **Do Latin American philosophies change as we examine them across national boundaries?**
- **In what ways do they change with time?**

Readings:

August

31 Introduction

September

2 Bartolome de las Casas, "In Defense of the Indians," *Latin American Philosophy for the 21st Century*, text hereinafter cited as 'LAP,' 33-49

4 Jose Carlos Mariategui, *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*, Introduction by Jorge Basadre, pp ix-xxxiv.

Jorge Gracia, "Jose Carlos Mariategui," LAP 257-58

7 Labor Day. No class

9 Jose Carlos Mariategui, *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*,

“Outline of the Economic Evolution,” pp 3-21

11 “ The Problem of the Indian,” pp 22-30

14 “The Problem of the Land,” pp 31-58

16 “ “ pp 58-76

18 “The Religious Factor,” pp 124-31

21 “Regionalism and Centralism,” pp 153-72

23 “ “ pp 172-81

25 Maria Herrera Lima, “On the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: The Case of Chiapas,” *Latin American Philosophy: Currents, Issues, Debates* (hereinafter cited as LAPCID and available as e-book in UF Library Course Reserves), pp 165-78

28 Simon Bolivar, “Jamaica Letter” and “Address,” LAP, pp. 61-71

30 Risieri Frondizi, “The Nature of the Self,” LAP 113-26

October

2 Discussion

5 Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, “Civilization and Barbarism,” LAP 233-44

7 Jose Marti, “Our America” and “Our Race,” LAP 245-56

9 Jose Vasconcelos, “The Cosmic Race,” LAP 267-78

12 Samuel Ramos, “The Profile of Man and Culture in Mexico,” LAP 279-85

14 Jorge Gracia, “What Makes Hispanics/Latinos Who We Are? The Key to Our Unity in Diversity,” LAP 287-310

16 Jorge Gracia, “Globalization, Philosophy, and Latin America,” LAPG 123-31 (available as e-book in UF Library course reserves)

19 Jorge Gracia, “Ethnic Labels and Philosophy: The Case of Latin American Philosophy,” LAPCID 57-67 (LAPCID is available as e-book in UF Library Course Reserves)

21 Linda Martin Alcoff, “Is Latina/o Identity a Racial Identity?,” LAP 313-334

23 Linda Martin Alcoff, “Forward,” in *Latin American Perspectives on Globalization* (hereinafter cited as LAPG) vii-xi (LAPD is available as e-book in UF Library Course Reserves)

26 Ofelia Schutte, “Negotiating Latina Identities,” LAP 335-51

28 Thomas Auxter, "The Debate over Cultural Imperialism" (visit JSTOR archive, enter UF ID and password)

30 Ofelia Schutte, "Continental Philosophy and Postcolonial Subjects," LAPCID 150-162 (LAPCID is available as an e-book in UF Library Course Reserves)

November

2 Midterm: One essay is due at 11:59pm.

4 Leopoldo Zea, "The Actual Function of Philosophy in Latin America," LAP 355-68

6 " " "Identity: A Latin American Philosophical Problem," LAP 369-78

9 "An Interview with Leopoldo Zea," by Leopoldo Zea and David R. Maciel. *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 65, No. 1 (Feb 1985), pp. 1-20.

11 No class

13 Leopoldo Zea, "Humanity and Globalization," pp 1 in LAPG, 35-52 (available as e-book in UF Library Course Reserves)

16 Augusto Salazar Bondy, "The Meaning and Problem of Hispanic American Philosophic Thought," LAP 379-98

18 Arturo Andres Roig, "Essays on Philosophy in History," LAP 399-413

20 Francisco Miro Quesada, "Man without Theory," LAP 145-58

23 Enrique Dussel, "Philosophy of Liberation," LAP 415-28

25 No class

30 Jose Ortega y Gasset, "Unity and Diversity of Europe," *History as a System*, pp 43-83 (This chapter is available as an e-book in UF Library Course Reserves)

December

2 Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, "Forward by Richard Shaull," pp 9-15, and "Preface" by Paulo Freire, pp 19-25. Readings in this book are available as an e-book in UF Library Course Reserves.

4 " " " pp 27-42

7 " " " pp 43-56

9 Conclusion

18 Final examination: Two essays are due at 11:59pm.

Note: The University asks faculty to post information about grading. Information about requirements for graded work and the criteria for evaluating graded work in this course follow. For information about the University grading scale, see below. – T.A.

Graded work and grading schema:

There will be a midterm essay test due on November 2 at 11:59pm and two essays written in a final examination due on December 18 at 11:59pm. The essays are take-home exams, with questions given to students at least ten days before essays are due. Each essay will count as one third of the grade.

CRITERIA FOR GRADING ESSAYS

CRITERIA FOR GRADING ESSAYS ARE AS FOLLOWS: CONSISTENCY, COHERENCE, COMPREHENSIVENESS IN RELATION TO SUBJECT MATTER AND UNIVERSE OF DISCOURSE, PLAUSIBILITY OF EXAMPLES AND COUNTER-EXAMPLES, AND ANTICIPATION OF OBVIOUS OBJECTIONS. AT LEAST TWO CLASS SESSIONS (ONE BEFORE THE MIDTERM AND ONE BEFORE FINAL EXAMS) WILL BE DEVOTED TO QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE MEANING OF THE CRITERIA AND WHAT COUNTS AS MEETING THE CRITERIA.

The following grade scale will be used to assign final letter grades for the course. See UF grading policies for assigning grade points at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

Grade Scale	Grade Value
100-93=A	A=4.0
92-90=A-	A-=3.67
89-86=B+	B+=3.33
85-82=B	B=3.00
81-79=B-	B-=2.67
78-75=C+	C+=2.33
75-72=C	C=2.00
71-69=C-	C-=1.67
68-66=D+	D+=1.33

65-62=D	D=1.00
61-60=D-	D-=0.67
59-0=E	E=0.00

STUDENTS CAN EXPECT MOST ESSAYS TO BE RETURNED IN SEVEN DAYS.

Course Policy:

- 1. Class attendance is required.**
- 2. Students will have an opportunity to raise questions at the beginning and end of each class.**
- 3. It is also permitted to ask questions during a lecture by raising a hand. This can be a request for clarification. It can also be to challenge a point that has been made.**
- 4. To communicate by email on most issues, contact tauxter@ufl.edu. To communicate regarding confidential issues, use Canvas.**
- 5. Policies on Academic Honesty, Assigned Work, Students with Disabilities, and Online Course Evaluation Follow:**

ACADEMIC HONESTY. UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class. Plagiarism on any assignment will automatically result in a grade of "E" for the course. Plagiarism is defined in the University of Florida's Student Honor Code as follows: "A student shall not represent as the student’s own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to): a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution. b. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student." Students found guilty of academic misconduct will be prosecuted in accordance with the procedures specified in the UF honesty policy.

ASSIGNED WORK REFLECTS THE CARNEGIE I STANDARD OF AT LEAST AT LEAST TWO HOURS OF WORK OUTSIDE OF CLASS FOR EACH CONTACT HOUR.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drp/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATION. Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester. Students will be notified about specific times when they are open.