

Subject overview

This subject is divided into three sections: Latin American Society in the 20th Century; The Economies of Latin America; and The Political Systems of Latin America. We begin each module by framing it in a theoretical perspective and then we will apply those theories to analyze a particular country or countries in the region. Throughout each of these sections, we will also concentrate on the following broad themes: (1) social structure and its consequences for social groups; (2) the diversity of individual's experiences; and (3) how individuals and social groups challenge existing structures and engage in social change.

Learning Outcomes

By the completion of this subject, students will be able to:

- Identify Latin American social structures, including the economic systems, the political systems, social class, gender, race, ethnicity, kinship, and religion.
- Critically interpret how Latin American social structures organize social life and have diverse consequences for different social groups.
- Compare the diversity of individual's experiences because of different social characteristics, such as class, race, ethnicity, and gender.
- Analyze how individuals and social groups challenge existing Latin American social structures and engage in social change in the region throughout the past century.

Assessment overview

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| • Class Participation | 10% of total assessment |
| • Critical Analysis Papers (1 individually-authored, 2 group-authored) | 30% of total assessment |
| • Notes preparation/Reflections | 20% of total assessment |
| • Examination | 10% of total assessment |
| • Debate simulations | 20% of total assessment |
| • Country Profile | 10% of total assessment |

Subject modules

- Latin American Society: Colonial roots and social forces; Social structures and forms of inequality/stratification; Understanding race and ethnicity; Gender, machismo, and power
- Economies of Latin America: Economic development; Dilemmas of urbanization; the debt crisis and economic restructuring (again); Neoliberalism
- Political Systems of Latin America: Political regimes; Oligarchy to Populism; Bureaucratic authoritarianism; New ways of doing politics; The role of religion and politics; Social revolutions in Central America; Democratic transitions & Democracy; Future challenges for the region

Required readings

- Lancaster, R. (1992). *Life is hard: Machismo, danger, and intimacy of power in Nicaragua*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Sawyer, S. (2004). *Crude chronicles: Indigenous politics, Multinational oil, and neoliberalism in Ecuador*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Winn, P. (1999). *Americas: The changing face of Latin America and the Caribbean*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Students will also read a variety of journal articles assigned by Academic Teaching Staff.

Questions?

If you have any questions about any of the subject summaries, please contact us.