It is best to communicate with me via email. I will be available on Thursdays in my office before and after class. Best to make an appointment with me via email.

“The history of Latin America has been written on and by the land.” Eric Van Young.

Until the middle of the 20th century the vast majority of all peoples who lived and worked in the region we refer to as Latin America and the Caribbean lived in the countryside. Their lives were defined by agricultural or pastoral production and their varied ‘relationships’ to land, whether as owners, renters, workers, and a multiplicity of other possibilities.

In large part their histories are virtually unknown as the historiography of the region has focused on urban areas, political themes, or more recently something that has been referred to as ‘cultural’ although this has not generally included agriculture.

Overarching terminologies and labels such as ‘peasants’ ‘haciendas’ ‘plantations’ ‘estancias’ have been used as references to rural life when in most cases there is little analytical or intellectual content associated with the use of these terms from the vantage point of rural peoples themselves who have used an entirely different vocabulary to define themselves. Their histories have been written by urban intellectuals who have little understanding of the complexities of rural life, class formation, or even the very basic elements of production.

This course will consider various themes in the history of rural Latin America by examining a selection of secondary literature in the field.

Students have the following responsibilities. Each week student(s) will present about 10-minute oral summaries of the week's readings to the class. Volunteers or draftees for the entire semester will be accepted on the first day of class. Discussion will follow.

Students will choose a topic on which a paper based on secondary literature will be presented at the end of the term. These topics can be thematic, such as an examination of the slave-based plantation in Latin American history, or they may focus upon the agrarian history of a particular country or region. All topics must be submitted to me and approved by September 19.
All students will present a bibliography to me on which your papers will be based on October 8 (electronic copy to my email address); a rough outline of your paper on November 7 (electronic copy to my email address); a discussion rough draft copy for the class to consider (maybe) on December 5; and the final version at the end of the term. These papers will discuss the major literature on your topic, and should be written as “state of the research” papers. This will be further clarified in class.

Copies of many of the readings are available on BlackBoard, indicated in the syllabus below. I have requested that all of the other books be placed on reserve in the library.

ASSIGNMENTS

August 29 Course Introduction

September 5 Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks


September 12 Mexican Rural History (Part One)

This is the paperback. This selection is also available in the hardback version. (Available on BlackBoard).


September 19 Mexican Rural History (Part Two)


Recommended

September 26 Andean Rural History – Peru/Ecuador


October 3 Andean Rural History – Bolivia


October 10 Colombia


October 17 Argentina


October 24 Brazil (Part One)


Recommended


October 31 Brazil (Part Two)


Herbert S. Klein and Francisco Vidal Luna, Feeding the World: Brazil’s Transformation into a Modern Agricultural Economy (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019). HD1872 K54 2019

Recommended

November 7 Chile


November 14 Central America


**Recommended**

HD1471 C82 G84 1992

**November 21**  **No Class — Thanksgiving**

**November 28**  **Cuba**


**December 5**  **Puerto Rico**


**December 12**  **Finish the Unfinished**