

GEOG 571, EVRN 420, LAA 302
Topics: Environmental Issues of Latin America
Fall, 2007
228 Lindley Hall, Tue Thu, 2:30 pm - 3:45 pm

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Overview

This seminar will introduce you to some of the pressing environmental issues of the region known as Latin America. After developing a framework for understanding human environment relationships in general, we will spend several weeks examining the issues facing tropical forests of the region. They may be seen as a source of riches, but their development has always been extremely contradictory and rarely sustainable, by most measures. In the globalized economy, tropical forests are ever more undergoing significant transformation, and the pace of their destruction continues. Any discussion of tropical forests must deal with profound social stresses reflected in resistance movements, violence, and misunderstandings between people. While the course focuses most on tropical deforestation, the framework developed early in the seminar will then be applied to a series of issues from a number of different countries in the region. **WARNING:** this is a seminar. That means there are no in-class exams you'll be cramming for the night before. But there is a good amount of reading that you will have to keep up with each week, and you'll have to write on a regular basis. All work for the class will be turned in using blackboard. As a seminar, you will also be expected to contribute regularly to seminar discussions.

Required Texts: There are three required texts for the class that you must get your hands on:

- 1) TROPICAL RAINFORESTS, by Susan Place, updated edition ISBN: 0842029087 and
- 2) SAVAGES, by Joe Kane – **Bookstore did not order this. Order it on your own.** There are plenty of used copies out there for a really cheap price. ISBN 0-679-74019-8.
- 3) GREEN GUERRILLAS, Edited by Collinson. ISBN 155164066X
- 4) Other readings will be available either as handouts in class or as files located on the blackboard site for this class.

Grading: Grades will be assessed according to your performance on the following:

- Portfolio – worth 45 points. Portfolios will be turned in 4 times during the semester. These contain regularly updated reflections on the class, collections/analyses of relevant academic or news articles, links and analyses of resources on the web, etc.
- A final take-home assignment – worth 15 points (required)
- Reactions to readings – each worth 2.5 points (top 10 of 13 graded). For each week of reading, you will write at least a 600-word summary of the readings. For top grades, the summaries must contain questions you come up with while reading that can help spark class discussion, and convinces me you considered the material seriously. These are designed to help you prepare for taking part in class discussions and to give you material to reflect upon for your portfolios. More specific criteria for the reactions will be given in class and will be contained in the prompts for the reactions posted on blackboard.
- Attendance and class participation – 15 points. You earn these points by being in class and actively participating. Attendance will be taken. Earn participation points by asking questions that help facilitate discussion, bringing in relevant outside material to class, engaging fellow students in discussions.
- There is no final exam in the class.
- **Grading scale:** set as follows: 90-100 (A), 80-89 (B), 70-79 (C), 60-69 (D), below 60 (F).

Blackboard: If you have no clue what blackboard is, or you have no idea how to use a computer, either be prepared to learn quickly, or drop this course. All readings other than the texts will be posted on blackboard or will be available only in digital form; all work for the course will be turned in using the blackboard site for this class. For blackboard info, go to <http://www.ku.edu/~ids/> and point your mouse to “Blackboard” on the left, then “Student’s Guide to Blackboard”. Make sure you have an updated e-mail registered with Blackboard so you get announcements like “class is cancelled”. If you decide to drop the class, please let me know so that I may take you off the blackboard site for this class.

Students with disabilities: Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunities.

Intellectual property: Anyone receiving this syllabus understands that anyone performing note-taking services or sound recordings of the seminar must advise me of their presence and their activities in the room.

Schedule - This is subject to change. Changes will be announced in class and on blackboard!

Week	Dates	Readings (must be read by date listed)	Weekly writing and paper due dates
0	8/16	Intro	
1	8/21	Reading packet including the writings of Yi-Fu Tuan, David Pepper, and Robert Sack, handed out first day of class.	Reaction 1
	8/23	Disc of reading packet continued	
2	8/28		
	8/30		Turn in portfolio on Friday
3	9/4	Place: Perception of the Rainforest: read Place, xi-46; GG: intro and part 1	Reaction 2
	9/6		
4	9/11	Explanations for deforestation in Latin America: Place, 47-136.	Reaction 3
	9/13		
5	9/18	Why save the rainforest?: Place, 137-172.	Reaction 4
	9/20		
6	9/25	Prospects for development: Place, 173-238. GG: Part 2	Reaction 5
	9/27		Turn in portfolio on Friday
7	10/2	GG: Part 3	Reaction 6
	10/4		
8	10/9	GG: Part 4	
	10/11	Fall Break. No class.	
9	10/16	More on development: case studies from Chris's research	Reaction 7
	10/18		
10	10/23	Mega-cities. GG: Part 5	Reaction 8
	10/25		Turn in portfolio on Friday
11	10/30	Borderlands and the environment	Reaction 9
	11/1		
12	11/6	Water provision, quality and privatization	Reaction 10
	11/8		
13	11/10	Intellectual property and the environment	Reaction 11
	11/15		
14	11/20	No class, work on portfolios	
	11/22	No class, T-giving break	
15	11/27	Petro-violence	Reaction 12
	11/29		
16	12/4	Coca-violence	Reaction 13
	12/6		Turn in portfolio, Final paper due 12/14