

**Latin American Environmental History**  
HIST/LATI 294-02 & ENVI 294-03  
MWF – 3:30-4:30pm, Old Main 111  
Office Hours: Wed. 10:30am - 1pm, or by appointment

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Course Description

This course approaches the environmental history of Latin America by exploring how human actions were intimately tied to their interactions with the natural world from the 1400s to the present. We will look at these interactions from many different angles to show how environment has shaped the direction of Latin American history, such as natural disasters, labor, slavery, war and conquest, disease, science, cartography, and environmental justice movements. We will also consider many actors: indigenous communities, European empires, nation states, corporations, and slaves. In other words, we will not treat the natural world as a series of natural resources to be dominated by humans.

Required Textbooks

All assigned books are available for purchase in the Highlander as well as online (Amazon, etc.). E-books are also acceptable. All other readings (essays, articles, individual book chapters) are available on the course Moodle. <https://moodle.macalester.edu/>

- Buckley, Eve. *Technocrats and the Politics of Drought and Development in Twentieth-Century Brazil*. Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2017. ISBN-13: 978-1469634302
- Klein, Naomi. *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. New York: Picador, 2008. ISBN-13: 978-0312427993
- Miller, Shawn William. *An Environmental History of Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. ISBN-13: 978-0521612982
- Pratt, Mary Louise. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: Routledge, 2007. ISBN-13: 978-0415438179

Background Information

For those not familiar with Latin American history, please consult the *Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture* (Second edition). It provides detailed entries on people, events, places, and other crucial background information that can help in the search for your research topic and with day-to-day reading. You have access to this through the library in both paper and electronic formats. The Encyclopedia is hosted at <https://macalester-on-worldcat-org.ezproxy.macalester.edu/oclc/886885092>

Anyone interested in a brief overview of Latin American history should consult the textbooks by James Lockhart and Stuart B. Schwartz, *Early Latin America* (1983), Mark A. Burkholder and Lyman L. Johnson, *Colonial Latin America*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (2010), or John Charles

Chasteen, *Born of Blood and Fire*, 1st ed. (2001). The essays in *The Cambridge History of Latin America*, ed. Leslie Bethell (Volumes 1 and 2) can also provide general background. Historiographic surveys of key periods and regions can be found in José Moya, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Latin American History* (2010).

### Assignments

Participation	(15%)
Weekly one paragraph response and two questions for discussion	(10%)
Discussion Facilitation	(5%)
Environmental News Journal	(10%)
Travel Writing Paper 5-7 page paper on readings and primary sources	(30%)
Deep Dive Paper	(30%)

**Participation:** Class sessions will include lectures, film viewings, discussion, debate, group activities, and in-class writing. Attendance is crucial for a full understanding of the course materials, and for a collaborative working environment for you and your peers. For this reason, participation is worth **15%** of your final grade. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to obtain notes and handouts from a classmate. To earn full credit for a class period, you must:

- Arrive on time
- Come to class prepared (e.g. have completed the assigned readings before class and with a copy of the readings, electronic or hard copy)
- Actively participate for the duration of class sessions: take notes, ask and answer questions during lecture, and contribute to small-group exercises.

I hope to create opportunities to engage in written and verbal historical inquiry where we can share ideas classmates about how to interpret the past. If you disagree with another's conclusions—a common, healthy practice among historians—we will learn how to respond respectfully, and accurately, by learning to cite the evidence that led you to your interpretation. I ask that you listen to one another's ideas and questions, and remain courteous and respectful of your fellow classmates.

**Weekly Response and Questions:** Each week you will be expected to submit to Moodle a one to two paragraph reflection and two discussion questions based on the weekly readings page **by Monday at 2:29pm**. The reflections can respond to the readings' argument, the historical debates in which it participates, its relationship to our understanding of revolution history, general reactions, the sources used by the author, and any questions you had.

**Discussion Facilitation:** In Week 1 you will select a topic for which you will lead a Wednesday discussion with me. **You will meet with the professor no later than the Tuesday before your presentation to discuss a game plan.** Facilitation will begin by responding to the weekly questions submitted by the class. You will then lead a discussion by offering activities and insights to guide our analysis.

**Current Events journal:** You will keep an eye on environmental issues related to Latin America in the news. Each week, you will find an article or story, correctly cite it using the Chicago Manual of Style, and write a brief analysis of how the article discusses the environment in relation to Worster's three levels of studying the topic. This journal will be checked periodically on Fridays.

**Travel Writing paper:** you will write a 5- to 7-page paper analyzing a travel account of a foreigner visiting Latin America through the tool kit provided us by Pratt and Worster. You will select a digitized account from Brown University (<https://library.brown.edu/cds/travelogues/index.html> and <http://libguides.brown.edu/c.php?g=294016&p=1957852>) and you will be expected to turn in an outline (2/14) and a full draft for a peer review exercise (2/28).

**Final Deep Dive paper:** You will select a topic covered in class and write a 7 to 10-page paper going into more depth than the assigned class readings. You will identify and analyze 4-6 secondary sources.

#### *Written Work Specifications*

- All written work should be typed. All written work should be polished and should be edited for typographical errors. Each page should be numbered.
- **Margins:** one-inch margins
- **Font size:** twelve
- **Font Type:** Times New Roman
- **Spacing:** Double-spaced
- **Style Guide:** For this course, all work must conform to the Chicago Manual of Style. Citations must follow the Notes-Bibliography form discussed and illustrated in Chapters 16 and 17.
- Failure to meet any one of these specifications will result in a penalty.

I highly recommend you take advantage of Macalester's many writing resources [online and on campus](#), including the [MAX Center Writing Support Services](#) and "Write Well" [Vides Series](#).

#### *Plagiarism and Academic Integrity*

Plagiarism is the presentation of others' thoughts, ideas, or words as your own. Plagiarism can be blatant, such as directly copying other's words, or it can be subtle, such as failing to properly cite another's ideas. Either way, plagiarism violates Macalester College's expectation that all members of the community act with academic integrity. If you are unsure about citations, wording, or similarity of structure, please meet with me to discuss these issues, and I can help you make sure that you are citing and paraphrasing appropriately. If I have any reason to suspect your integrity in this class, I will contact you. After that meeting, I will determine what further steps are appropriate (e.g., a score of 0 on the assignment), and I may refer you to the Director of Academic Programs, who will determine additional consequences. If you have questions, please contact me or refer to the webpage below (Gillen-O'Neel, PSYC 101, Spring 2016).

[www.macalester.edu/academicprograms/academicpolicies/academicintegrity/](http://www.macalester.edu/academicprograms/academicpolicies/academicintegrity/)

### Accessibility Commitment

I am committed to creating an environment that supports the learning of all students in my class. If you are encountering barriers to your learning that I can mitigate, please bring them to my attention. If you need disability related accommodations please contact the Disability Services Office, 651-696-6874 to schedule an appointment and discuss your individual circumstances. It is important to meet as early in the semester as possible; this will ensure that your accommodations can be implemented early on.

<https://www.macalester.edu/studentaffairs/disabilityservices/facultyandstaff/>

### Grading

Students earn grades based on their performance on the assignments listed above.

The grading scale for this course is as follows:

A- (90-92)	A (93+)	
B- (80-82)	B (83-86)	B+ (87-89)
C- (70-72)	C (73-76)	C+ (77-79)
D- (60-62)	D (63-66)	D+ (67-69)
F (59 and lower)		

### Late Assignments

Because this is a fast-paced seminar, you are strongly encouraged to turn in all assignments on time. Assignments turned in late will be marked off 1/3 letter grade for each day they are late (1 second – 24 hours). For example, a B+ grade becomes a B if an assignment is one day late. Assignments will not be accepted more than a week after the due date. *Your submission times are defined by Moodle's timestamps, not the paper copy you bring to class; it is up to you to submit in correct and timely manner.* Note: This does not apply to the final paper. You must turn in the final paper by the date and time assigned.

### Absences

Regular attendance and participation in this class is the best way to grasp the concepts and principles being discussed. However, in the event that a class must be missed due to an illness, or an emergency, the policy in this class is as follows:

- For every necessary absence, a reasonable effort should be made to notify the instructor in advance of the class. Weekly participation cannot be made up, but classmates can provide you with notes and handouts.
- If you are absent more than 2 times, you **must** arrange a meeting with me to discuss your progress in the class. In extreme cases, alternate accommodations can be discussed with me.
- If you are absent on days when tests are scheduled or papers are due, you are

required to notify the instructor in advance, and upon returning to class, bring documentation of the illness, signed by a university or healthcare professional.

For approved religious observances see:

<https://www.macalester.edu/religiouslife/programs/Final%20Religious%20holiday%20calendar%202017-2018.pdf>

Inclement weather and official University closures may require modification of course expectations and requirements.

### Grade Dispute Policy

I have a twenty-four hour waiting period for grade disputes on all written work. Since I will provide extensive written feedback on all essays and exams in the spirit of helping you to improve your writing and argumentation, I expect you to take the time to read my comments before contacting me. Following 24 hours, you can email me to make an appointment. In that email, please outline **the specific areas** of your work and grade that you would like to discuss.

### Device Policy

You are free to bring a laptop or tablet to class in order to take notes, discuss assigned readings, or access course materials. **WIFI must be turned off during class.** You should always bring a pen and paper to discussion, as I will frequently ask students to turn off all laptops in order to facilitate discussion. Cell phones and non-course related device use during class is strictly prohibited and will affect your participation grade. Please keep your phone on silent in your bag.

### Class Schedule

**All assignments, readings, and deadlines are subject to change.** If we are forced to alter the syllabus, I will inform you by email and in class.

### Course Schedule:

#### **Week 0: Course Introduction**

#### **Week 1: What is environmental history? Where do people fit in?**

Readings:

- Daniel Worster, "Appendix: Doing Environmental History"
- Shawn William Miller, *An Environmental History of Latin America*, Introduction

Monday – 1/22

Wednesday – 1/24

Friday – 1/26

## Week 2: Pre-Colombian Landscapes and Peoples

Readings:

- Miller, Chapter 1, “An Old World Before it was ‘New’”

Monday – 1/29

Wednesday – 1/31

Friday – 2/2– Choose book for first paper.

## Week 3: The Colombian Exchange

Readings:

- Miller, Chapter 2, “Nature’s Conquests”
- Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, Prefaces through “Criticism in the Contact Zone.”

Monday – 2/5

Wednesday – 2/7

Friday – 2/9

## Week 4: Colonial Economics: Sugar, Silver, and Slavery

Readings:

- Steve J. Stern, *Peru's Indian peoples and the challenge of Spanish conquest: Huamanga to 1640*, Chapter 4
- Pratt, Chapter 1, “Planetary Consciousness”
- **Primary Source: TBD**

• Monday – 2/12 – Cancelled (Writing and Reading Day)

• Wednesday – 2/14: Paper outline due.

• Friday – 2/16

## Week 5: Colonial Economics, Cont'd.

Readings:

- Miller Chapter 3, “The Colonial Balance Sheet.”
- Pratt, Chapter 2, “Narrating Anti-conquest”

• Monday – 2/19

• Wednesday – 2/21

• Friday – 2/23

## Week 6: The Tropics: Environment as Destiny, 1

Readings:

- Miller, Chapter 4, “Tropical Determinism.”
- Pratt, Chapter 6, “Alexander Von Humboldt and the Reinvention of América”
  
- Monday – 2/26
- Wednesday – 2/28 – Full draft due in class. Round Robin exercise.
- Friday – 3/1

## Week 7: Human Determination

Readings:

- Miller, Chapter 5
  
- Monday – 3/5
- Wednesday – 3/7
- Friday – 3/9: Final travel writing paper due

## Week 8: Spring Break, 3/10-3/18

## Week 9: Asphyxiated Habitats

Readings:

- Eve Buckley, *Technocrats and the Politics of Drought and Development in Twentieth-Century Brazil*, Intro-Chapter 2
- Miller, Chapter 6
  
- Monday – 3/19 – Select Deep Dive Topic.
- Wednesday – 3/21 Special guest lecture: **Professor Eric Carter: "Enemy in the Blood: Malaria, Environment, and Development in Argentina."**
- Friday – 3/23

## Week 10: Developing Environmentalism

Readings:

- Buckley, Chapters 3-5
- Miller, Chapter 7
  
- Monday – 3/26 – Library research session
- Wednesday – 3/28
- Friday – 3/30 - Annotated Bibliography Due

## Week 11: TBD

### Readings:

- Buckley, Chapter 6 and Conclusion
- Miller, Epilogue
  
- Monday – 4/2
- Wednesday – 4/4
- Friday – 4/6 – Class Cancelled.

## Week 12: Natural and Unnatural Disasters: 1

### Readings:

- Film Viewing: *Tambien la lluvia (Even the Rain)*, directed by Icíar Bollaín (2010; Spain, AXN), DVD.
- Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, Part 1
  
- Monday – 4/9 – Class Cancelled. Watch *Tambien la lluvia* (Netflix).
- Wednesday – 4/11
- Friday – 4/13

## Week 13: Natural and Unnatural Disasters: 1

### Readings:

- Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, Part 2
  
- Monday – 4/16 – Paper presentations
- Wednesday – 4/18 - Paper presentations
- Friday – 4/20 - Paper presentations

## Week 14: Environmental Justice

### Readings:

- Thomas Miller Klubock, *La Frontera: Forests and Ecological Conflict in Chile's Frontier Territory*, Chapter 9.
- Paul Nadasdy. "Transcending the Debate over the Ecologically Noble Indian: Indigenous Peoples and Environmentalism," *Ethnohistory* 52, no. 2 (2005): 291-331.
  
- Monday – 4/23
- Wednesday – 4/25
- Friday – 4/27

### Week 15:

- Monday – 4/30 – Final Paper due