

**University of Oslo**  
**ILOS**  
**Fall 2012 - Wednesday 14.15 – 16.00**  
[HW](#) 609 Sem.rom

**Course Syllabus: Latam 4550 – Trends in Research on Latin America**

**Marcos Fabián Mosenson**  
**m.f.mosenson@ilos.uio.no**  
**986.21.740**  
**Office Hours: by Appointment**

**Course Description:**

The purpose of this course is twofold: 1) a theoretical and a historical analysis of how Latin American Studies articulate its object, and 2) a critical reading of scholarly works and a practical inquiry on how to plan and write a Latin American based thesis proposal.

In the first section we will discuss current international research trends on Latin America, and how is performed in the UK, the US, Continental Europe, and Latin America. In doing so we will review methodological and epistemological perspectives paying attention to the political and economic tensions that dictate who is studying whom, how, and why. On the second part we will critically examine five --or more-- theses on Latin America.

**Course Objectives:**

- Problematize the notion of “Latin America” diachronically and synchronically.
- Be aware of the historical shifts in the understanding of the concept of Latin America from the discovery/invention until our days.
- Open up a space for reflection and critical thinking on contents and tools.
- Distinguish perspectives about Latin America from within, from outside, and those that are the result of an international collaboration.
- Work towards the categorization of trends and tendencies in the studies of Latin America, while acknowledging how different paradigms relate to each other.
- Thesis Workshop: Analyze the interest, structure, and internal consistency of master theses.
- Train on writing academic based research on Latin America.

**Session Dynamic and Structure:**

It is important to attend every class in time, having read and prepared to discuss the issues. This will be a seminar style course. There will be a balance between lecturing and presentation/participation. Active participation is expected, encouraged, and essential for the success of this course. On top of discussing the weekly readings and your research interests we may elaborate on the previous week news relative to your research topics and interests.

## Course Materials

The reading list with a link to their PDF files is on:

<http://www.uio.no/studier/emner/hf/ilos/LATAM4500/h10/pensumliste.xml>

Other resources will be suggested and discussed during the course and via Fronter.

## Course Schedule

All sessions will be held in [HW](#) 609 Sem.rom. Each session will run from 14.15 till 16.00.

### Session 1 -- Wednesday, September 5: Introduction, presentation, and Syllabus Review. Walter Mignolo idea of 'America'.

- Mignolo, Walter D. (2005) *The Idea of Latin America*, Malden, MA: Blackwell. 200 p. Preface

### Session 2 -- Wednesday, September 12: What's in a name? The cultural, political, and epistemological struggle for the meaning and the "Idea of Latin America." (Part 1) Modern America, Colonial America.

- Mignolo, Walter D. (2005) *The Idea of Latin America*, Malden, MA: Blackwell. Part 1. (pp. 3-50)

### Session 3 -- Wednesday, September 19: What's in a name? The cultural, political, and epistemological struggle for the meaning and the "Idea of Latin America." "Latin" America? Colonial wound and the epistemic shift. (Part 2 and 3)

- Mignolo, Walter D. (2005) *The Idea of Latin America*, Malden, MA: Blackwell. Part 2. (pp. 51-94) Part 3. (pp. 95-162)

### Session 4 -- Wednesday, September 26: The Internationalization of Latin American Studies: Norway, the UK, Finland, Denmark, Portugal, and the US.

- McClennen, Sophia A. (2007) "Area Studies Beyond Ontology: Notes on Latin American Studies, American Studies, and Inter-American Studies", *A Contra Corriente*, (5) 1: 173-184. 11p
- Stølen, Kristi Anne (2002) "Research on Latin America in Norway" *Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe*, (72) abril: 161-178. 17p
- Craske, Nikki and David Lehmann (2002) "Fifty Years of Research in Latin American Studies in the UK", *Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe*, (72) abril: 61-80. 19p.
- Pärssinen, Martti (2002) "Latin American Studies in Finland: Past Trends and New Perspectives" *Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe*, (72) abril: 105-113. 8p
- Wilson, Fiona (2002) "Latin Americanists of Denmark" *Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe*, (72) abril: 49-60. 11p
- Fernandes Alves, Jorge (2002) "Portugal and Latin American Studies (1980-2000)" *Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe*, (72) abril: 195-204. 9p
- Drake, Paul W. and Lisa Hilbink (2003) "Latin American Studies: Theory and Practice", *UCIAS Edited Volume 3, The Politics of Knowledge: Area Studies and the Disciplines*, pp. 1-27. 27p

### Session 5 -- Wednesday, October 3: Latin America and the US. Economy, culture and the paradoxes of representation. Critical trends and tendencies.

- Joseph, Gilbert (1998) "Close Encounters" in Gilbert, Joseph, Catherine LeGrand and Ricardo Salvatore (eds) *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations*, pp. 3-46. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 43 p.
- LeGrand, Catherine (1998) "Living in Macondo" in Gilbert, Joseph, Catherine LeGrand and Ricardo Salvatore (1998) *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations*, pp. 333-368. Durham, NC: Duke University Press 35 p.

- Salvatore, Ricardo (1998) "The Enterprise of Knowledge. Representational Machines of Informal Empire" in Gilbert, Joseph, Catherine LeGrand and Ricardo Salvatore (eds) *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations*, pp. 69-104. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 33 p.
- Stern, Steve J. (1998) "The Decentered Center and the Expansionist Periphery" in Gilbert, Joseph, Catherine LeGrand and Ricardo Salvatore (eds) *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations*, pp. 47-68. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 21p.

## **Second Part: Reading theses<sup>1</sup> writing a proposal**

Suggested methodological readings for this section: TBA in frontier and handouts in class.

### **Session 6 -- Wednesday, October 10: Thesis Workshop I (Development and Environment):**

Unzipping Zipolite: tourist-local relationship in a backpacker enclave in Southern Mexico. Submitted by Heidi Smith (\*)  
[http://www.duo.uio.no/publ/IKOS/2006/43808/thesis\\_heidi\\_smith.pdf](http://www.duo.uio.no/publ/IKOS/2006/43808/thesis_heidi_smith.pdf)

### **Session 7 -- Wednesday, October 17: Thesis Workshop II (Political Science):**

Natural Gas Politics in the Southern Cone. *A comparative study of goal attainment in the gas sector in Argentina, Bolivia and Brazil*. Submitted by Solveig Aamodt.  
<http://www.duo.uio.no/publ/statsvitenskap/2010/102834/Master-Thesis-Solveig-Aamodt.pdf>

### **Session 8 -- Wednesday, October 24: Thesis Workshop III (Social Anthropology):**

Under the rainbow. *The Civil union Law and sexual minority activism in Buenos Aires, Argentina*. Submitted by Johnny Sandsaunet.  
<http://www.duo.uio.no/publ/sai/2008/79831/MicrosoftxWordx-xThexCivilxUnionxLawxofxBuenosxAiresxFinalxpdf.pdf>

### **Session 9 -- Wednesday, October 25: Thesis Workshop IV (Political Science):**

Social Structure and Party Choice in Peru- Labor and the Left in the 1980 Elections. Submitted by Dag P. Svendsen.  
<http://www.duo.uio.no/publ/statsvitenskap/2006/38642/38642.pdf>

### **Session 10 -- Wednesday, October 31: Thesis Workshop V (History). Discussion on academic sources and journals. Presentations and conclusions.**

The attitude of the Chilean newspaper 'El Mercurio' towards the main economic policies of the Popular Unity government of Salvador Allende (1970-73). Submitted by Paul Francis Llewellyn  
<http://www.duo.uio.no/publ/historie/2002/6270/6270.pdf>

---

<sup>1</sup> All the proposed theses are subject to change. We will also select those that fit the interest of the course. See <http://www.duo.uio.no/>