CRIME AND VIOLENCE IN LATIN AMERICA

LAS 4935 / LAS 6938 / ANT4930 / ANG6930

Fall 2013

Tuesdays 5-7 periods (11:45 am - 2:45 pm)
Location: NSC 225

Dr. Ieva Jusionyte
Grinter Hall 368
Office Hrs: Thursdays, 1-4pm
Email: ijusionyte@latam.ufl.edu

The seminar examines crime and violence in present-day Latin America. Throughout the course we trace the colonial legacies of violent extractions to explain current conflicts over natural resources; analyze discourses, practices and experiences of terror under authoritarian and paramilitary regimes; interrogate the rise of violent crime in urban environments; and examine the conditions and consequences of organized crime, with a strong emphasis on drug production and trafficking, international gangs and multifaceted violence on the U.S. – Mexico border; last but not least, we address the scars of violence and crime on communities throughout Latin America and the ways that residents respond to them. Beyond offering an overview of these topics, however, the course invites you to discuss the politics of the discursive constructions of crime and violence, and how these practices interrelate with processes of law, governance and transnationalism: Who, how and why classifies practices into categories of crime and law? Where does the boundary between the legal and the criminal, the legitimate and the illicit lie? How has political, economic, social and cultural development of the Latin American states shape the particular modes of violence and crime in the Western Hemisphere? And, finally, what implications do different forms of organized brutalities and illegalities have for the governance of these states?

REQUIRED BOOKS:
Taussig, Michael T.
Gootenberg, Paul  
Goldstein, Donna  

All remaining class readings can be downloaded through e-Learning website.

ASSIGNMENTS and GRADING:

Attendance. Absence for reasons of illness, religious holiday or official university business is excused. Please inform the instructor as early as possible and provide appropriate documentation. You are responsible to contact a classmate to obtain notes on the materials covered. You are allowed one unexcused absence. After the second unexcused absence your final grade will be reduced a full letter. Students with four or more unexcused absences will fail.

Participation (20%): This is a discussion-based rather than lecture-driven class; therefore, careful preparation for each seminar and informed contribution to discussions is expected. Always bring the copy of that day’s readings to class (either printed or electronic version). Students who are exceptionally active participants in discussions by consistently demonstrating both familiarity with the assigned readings and original thoughts or questions that lead beyond the texts will be excused from taking the midterm exam.

Class Blog (20%): Students will collaboratively write a themed blog. There are a number of ways you can approach this assignment: 1) the blog can serve as a virtual space to suggest or extend class discussions on readings or films, especially if you feel strongly about a particular topic; 2) you can write commentaries on news stories regarding crime and violence in Latin America; 3) or you can use the blog as an unpolished research diary for posting reflections on data related to your research interest. It is your space, so use it the way it suits you best, and expect to get feedback from your peers. Starting from the second week of class you are required to write weekly entries and post comments on at least one other student’s entry per week. In total, you will write 14 personal entries and 14 comments: one entry and one comment per week until the last day of class. To receive credit, blog entries and comments for the week must be published by midnight before that week’s class. Each student is automatically granted one extension. Additional arrangements for late work must be made prior to the due date. Unexcused late work will receive no credit.

Midterm Exam (20%): This will be a take-home exam. Exam questions will be handed out in class on October 15 and the exam is due in class on October 22. The questions for the assignment will be explicitly tied to course readings, films and discussions.

Graduate students, instead of taking the midterm exam, can opt for an alternative - teaching - assignment. In consultation with the instructor, you can choose one of the topics of the course and prepare to give a lecture, lead a discussion or a debate, or present other materials related to that day’s theme.

Research Project (40%): The final essay (10-15 pages), due by December 7, is a theoretical investigation of a research project of your choice. It should critically and creatively examine one or more of the class themes. You can adjust this assignment to make it contribute towards the development of a thesis, dissertation chapter, conference paper or publication. Specific topic should be elaborated in consultation with the instructor. All students must hand in a 250-300-
word abstract of their research essay on October 29, and a tentative bibliography on November 12. Students will make 10-minute class presentations of their research projects on November 26 and December 3.

**Papers:** Both the midterm exam and the final research paper must:

- Use 12-point Times New Roman or similar font;
- Be double-spaced, with 1 inch margins;
- Include your last name and page number in the header/footer of each page;
- Cite all sources in Modern Language Association (MLA), American Anthropological Association (AAA), or other consistent format.

Please turn in a hard copy of all assignments and post them through e-Learning.

**Late Work and Extensions:** Assignments for the midterm exam and the research paper will be handed out well in advance of their due date. If you know you will not be able to turn in the assignment on time, please notify the instructor as early as possible. Extensions are not granted lightly and must be arranged in advance. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class and will be marked down a grade for each day they are late (i.e., a B+ paper turned in a day late will receive a B).

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** All work submitted by a student for a grade must be completed by that student and free from unauthorized assistance or deliberate misrepresentations. The penalty for plagiarism or cheating is a grade of zero points on the assignment in question; in such cases an incident form will also be sent to the Office of the Dean of Students. If you have questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please consult the UF Honor Code as well as the UF Policies on Academic Honesty, Student Rights and Responsibilities. These are available online at: [http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studenthandbook/studentrights.php#academichonestyguidelines](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studenthandbook/studentrights.php#academichonestyguidelines)

**ADA STATEMENT:** Students with disabilities, who need reasonable modifications to complete assignments successfully and otherwise satisfy course criteria, are encouraged to meet with the instructor as early in the course as possible to identify and plan specific accommodations. Students will be asked to supply a letter from the Disability Resource Center to assist in planning accommodations.

**GRADING SCALE**

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<th>Passing Grade</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>A-</th>
<th>B+</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>B-</th>
<th>C+</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>C-</th>
<th>D+</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>D-</th>
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Please consult UF grading policies at [https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx](https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx)

**HEALTH AND COUNSELING:**
The University offers the following health and counseling services for students in the event personal problems threaten to hinder academic performance:
University Counseling Center (301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575),
Student Mental Health (Student Health Care Center, 392-1171), and Sexual Assault Recovery Services (Student Health Care Center, 392-1161).

Please note: The Instructor may make minor adjustments to class readings or assignments during the course of the semester. Any and all modifications will be announced ahead of time.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week 1: August 27th
COURSE AND CLASS INTRODUCTION

Week 2: September 3rd
CONCEPTS

Coronil, Fernando, and Julie Skurski

Schneider, Jane, and Peter Schneider

Benjamin, Walter

Week 3: September 10th
EXTRACTIONS

Taussig, Michael T.

Coronil, Fernando

In-Class Documentary: Crude (2009)

Week 4: September 17th
TERROR

Feitlowitz, Marguerite

Robben, Antonius

Week 5: September 24th
PARAS
Agamben, Giorgio  
Taussig, Michael T.  

**Week 6: October 1st**  
**STORIES**

Briggs, Charles L.  
2007  Mediating Infanticide: Theorizing Relations between Narrative and Violence.  
Payne, Leigh A.  

**Week 7: October 8th**  
**SPACE**

Caldeira, Teresa  

In-Class Documentary: *Manda Bala* (2007)

**Week 8: October 15th**  
**COCAINE (I)**

Gootenberg, Paul  

**Week 9: October 22nd**  
**COCAINE (II)**

Gootenberg, Paul  

In-Class Documentary: *Cocaine Cowboys* (2006)

**Week 10: October 29th**  
**COCAINE (III)**

Kernaghan, Richard  
Keefe, Patrick Radden  

**Week 11: November 5th**  
**MARAS**
Rodgers, Dennis
Zubillaga, Verónica
Wolf, Sonja

In-Class Documentary: La Vida Loca (2009)

Week 12: November 12th
BORDER

Andreas, Peter
De Genova, Nicholas
Magaña, Rocío

Week 13: November 19th
SCARS

Goldstein, Donna

Week 14: November 26th
STUDENT RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Week 15: December 3rd
STUDENT RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS