

## **CRIME AND VIOLENCE IN LATIN AMERICA**

LAS 4935 - LAS 6938 - ANT4930 - ANG6930

Spring 2015

Mondays 6-8 periods (12:50–3:50pm)  
Rinker Hall 210



Dr. Ieva Jusionyte  
Grinter Hall 368

Office Hrs: Thursdays, 1:30-3:30pm and by appt

Email: [ijusionyte@latam.ufl.edu](mailto:ijusionyte@latam.ufl.edu)

Drawing on political and legal anthropology this course examines crime and violence in contemporary Latin America. Throughout the semester we will analyze discourses, practices and experiences of state terror; address the rise of delinquency and insecurity from urban centers to rural peripheries; and explore the conditions and consequences of organized crime in the region. In particular, we will focus on drug production and drug trafficking, the origins and operations of transnational gangs, government corruption and impunity, and the multifaceted violence on the U.S. – Mexico border. Beyond offering an overview of these topics, however, the course invites you to discuss the politics of the legal and 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? 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? The course is based on the idea that societies of the Western hemisphere are profoundly and inseparably interconnected as part of a single region, the Americas. An ethnographic, bottom-up approach to issues of crime, violence, and insecurity will illuminate crucial connections between countries in Latin America and the United States.

**Required books:** (in the order they are assigned)

Jacobo Timerman, *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2002)

Richard Kernaghan, *Coca's Gone: Of Might and Right in the Huallaga Post-Boom* (Stanford University Press, 2009).

Ben Penglase, *Living with Insecurity in a Brazilian Favela: Urban Violence and Daily Life* (Rutgers University Press, 2014).

Elana Zilberg, *Space of Detention: The Making of a Transnational Gang Crisis Between Los Angeles and San Salvador* (Duke University Press, 2011).

David Spener, *Clandestine Crossings: Migrants and Coyotes on the Texas-Mexico Border* (Cornell University Press, 2009)

**Recommended books:**

If you have not previously taken courses in Latin American Studies, it is highly recommended that you read John Charles Chasteen's book *Born in Blood & Fire: A Concise History of Latin America* (Norton, 2011) before the start of the semester. The book will give you a general overview of the region's history and will enable you to better understand contemporary issues addressed in the class.

The books are available for 2-hour loan at Reserve Desk at UF Library West. All remaining class readings can be downloaded from the course's Canvas site.

**Assignments and Grading:**

Student grades will be based on 100 points divided as follows: preparation for and active participation in class discussions (20 points); film review (15 points), research project (50 points), and commentary (15 points).

Attendance: Absence for reasons of illness, religious holiday or official university business is excused. Please inform me as early as possible and provide appropriate documentation. You are responsible to contact a classmate to obtain notes on the materials covered. For each unexcused absence your final grade will be reduced a full letter (A to B, A- to B-, etc). *Students with four or more unexcused absences will automatically fail the course.*

**Preparation and Active Participation (20 points)**

This is a discussion-based class. Careful preparation for each of the seminars and informed contribution is expected. Always bring an electronic or hard copy of that day's readings to class, and come to the seminar with questions and ideas. By midnight before the seminar post your questions about the assigned readings on Canvas. Throughout the semester you should follow news about crime and violence in Latin America and be prepared to talk about the most significant events of the week at the beginning of each class. You are encouraged to share news stories of interest to the class by posting them on Twitter (use hashtag #UFcrimeviolence). To receive full credit, your comments during the seminar should not be speculative and must demonstrate that you have done the assigned readings.

### Film Review (15 points)

For this assignment you will watch a feature film or TV series dealing with the topic of crime or violence in Latin America and write a 3-page review analyzing the film using the anthropological concepts discussed in class. A list of suggested films will be available on Canvas.

Graduate students, instead of writing a film review, can opt for an alternative assignment. With the instructor's approval, you can prepare to give a 30-min lecture on one of the course's themes.

### Research Project (50 points)

During the first few weeks of the course you will choose a research question, which will guide your individual work. It must be directly related to the themes addressed in the course, but you can adjust this assignment to make it contribute towards the development of a thesis, dissertation chapter, conference paper or publication. When choosing your research question, you are encouraged to visit the Latin American Collection and browse through the UF library resources available online. While thinking about possible topics, you are also highly encouraged to meet with the instructor early on in the semester to share your ideas. All students will write a 1-page research proposal (10 points) and an annotated bibliography (10 points) of their chosen topic. Specific instructions for preparing the proposal and the bibliography will be announced in class and posted on Canvas. Students will also give 10 min in-class presentations of their project (10 points). 10-12-page research paper (20 points) is due on the last day of class (April 20).

### Commentary (15 points)

The commentary is the final phase of your research project, which links it to the broader concepts and ideas addressed in this course. Your task is to decide what findings you want to communicate to the general public with no specialized knowledge of the topic. It is important that you demonstrate why anyone should care about the issue that you have investigated, so it might be helpful to frame it as a critique or an opinion piece on the existing or proposed policies or interventions (for example, the funding of the "war on drugs" in the U.S. or in Mexico, the increase in the number of Border Patrol agents on the U.S. Southwest border, the legalization of marijuana in Uruguay, etc.) Your commentary should be 750-1500-words in length. It is due by April 25. All commentaries will be posted on the course website and will be shared with the public.

### Extra credit (maximum 5 points)

If you attend a talk or participate in a public discussion or other event that broadly relates to the topics discussed in this class, you can write a one-page review and receive extra credit. Information about some relevant lectures and events will be announced in class, but you are encouraged to look for other opportunities. Consult with the instructor ahead of time about your plans to attend a talk or participate in an event to ensure it qualifies for extra credit.

*Note: You will be able to see your score for each assignment and your tentative grade for the course on Canvas. Be aware that Canvas will not show your final grade for the course. Your final grade will be submitted to the Office of the University Registrar and will be available at the end of the semester.*

### **Course Rules:**

Written work: Please follow these style guidelines:

- Use 12-point Times New Roman or similar font;
- Your documents should be double-spaced, with 1 inch margins;
- Include your last name and page number in the header/footer of each page;
- Cite all sources consistently, using the style of your choice.

Late Work and Extensions: If you know you will not be able to turn in the assignment on time, please notify me as early as possible. Extensions must be arranged in advance. Assignments will be marked down for each day they are late.

Grading Scale:

A = 94 and above; A- = 90-93; B+ = 87-89; B = 83-86; B- = 79-82; C+ = 76-78; C = 72-75; C- = 69-71; D+ = 66-68; D = 62-65; D- = 59-61; E = 58 and below.

Passing Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-
Grade Points	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	.67

For further information, please consult UF grading policies:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Grade Appeals: Grades will not be discussed via e-mail. If you have a question or a complaint about your grade, please contact me within 48 hours of posting to arrange a meeting time.

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. 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: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/scrr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.

Accommodations for Disabilities: Students who need classroom accommodation or other reasonable modifications to complete assignments successfully and satisfy course criteria are encouraged to meet with the instructor as early in the course as possible. You will be asked to supply a letter from the Disability Resource Center to assist in planning accommodations. Contact the Disability Resource Center at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc>.

Health and Counseling:

Health and counseling services are available for students in the event personal problems threaten to hinder academic performance. You can contact UF Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc>; 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Course Evaluations:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

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

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### Week 1: January 12

#### **Concepts**

Guillermoprieto, Alma

2014 Mexico: 'We Are Not Sheep To Be Killed,' *The New York Review of Books*.  
November 5.

Pansters, Wil

2012 Zones of State-Making: Violence, Coercion, and Hegemony in Twentieth-Century Mexico. In *Violence, Coercion, and State-Making in Twentieth-Century Mexico: The Other Half of the Centaur*. Pp. 3-42: Stanford University Press.

### Week 2: January 19

#### **No class (Martin Luther King Day)**

### Week 3: January 26

#### **Remembering**

Timerman, Jacobo

2002 *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

In-Class Documentary: *Obstinate Memory* (1999)

### Week 4: February 2

#### **Terror and Trauma**

\* Special Guest: Dr. Richard Freeman, University of Florida

Feitlowitz, Marguerite

1998 *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture*. Oxford University Press. Pp. 19-63 (chapter 1).

Robben, Antonius

2005 *Political Violence and Trauma in Argentina*. Pp. 261-298.  
Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

# Research Proposals Due #

\* Gainesville Justice Week, February 2-7, 2015, <http://www.fightsextrafficking.org/-/events/c3d1> (extra credit for attendance)

### Week 5: February 9

#### **Scarred Worlds**

\* Special Guest: Dr. Richard Kernaghan, University of Florida

Kernaghan, Richard

2009 *Coca's Gone: Of Might and Right in the Huallaga Post-Boom*. Stanford University Press.

Week 6: February 16

**Urban Insecurity**

Penglase, Ben

2014 *Living with Insecurity in a Brazilian Favela: Urban Violence and Daily Life*. Rutgers University Press.

Week 7: February 23

**Drug Trafficking**

Gootenberg, Paul

2012 Cocaine's Long March North, 1900–2010, *Latin American Politics and Society* 54(1):159-180.

Cusicanqui, Silvia Rivera

2005 "Here, Even Legislators Chew Them": Coca Leaves and Identity Politics in Northern Argentina. In *Illicit Flows and Criminal Things: States, Borders, and the Other Side of Globalization*. W. van Schendel and I. Abraham, eds. Pp. 128-152. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Edberg, Mark

2004 The Narcotrafficker in Representation and Practice: A Cultural Persona from the U.S.–Mexican Border. *Ethos* 32(2):257-277.

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

# Film Reviews Due #

Week 8: March 2

**No class (Spring Break)**

Week 9: March 9

**Gangs**

Zilberg, Elana

2011 *Space of Detention: The Making of a Transnational Gang Crisis Between Los Angeles and San Salvador*. Duke University Press.

In-Class Documentary: *La Vida Loca* (2009)

Week 10: March 16

**Legality and Legitimacy**

Van Schendel, Willem, and Itty Abraham

- 2005 Introduction: The Making of Illicitness. *In Illicit Flows and Criminal Things: States, Borders, and the Other Side of Globalization*. W. van Schendel and I. Abraham, eds. Pp. 1-37. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Jusionyte, Ieva  
 2013 On and Off the Record: The Production of Legitimacy in an Argentine Border Town. *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 36(2):231-248.
- De Genova, Nicholas  
 2004 The Legal Production of Mexican Migrant "Illegality." *Latino Studies* 2(2): 160-185.

# Annotated Bibliographies Due #

### Week 11: March 23

#### **Corruption**

- Anders, Gerhard, and Monique Nuijten  
 2007 Corruption and the Secret of Law: An Introduction. In *Corruption and the Secret of Law: A Legal Anthropological Perspective*. G. Anders and M. Nuijten, eds. Pp. 1-24. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.
- Heyman, Josiah McC, and Howard Campbell  
 2007 Corruption in the US Borderlands with Mexico: The "Purity" of Society and the "Perversity" of Borders. In *Corruption and the Secret of Law: A Legal Anthropological Perspective*. G. Anders and M. Nuijten, eds. Pp. 191-217. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.
- Jusionyte, Ieva  
 2015 States of Camouflage. *Cultural Anthropology* 30(1). In Press.

\* Talk by Elaine Carey, "Doing Drugs in the Archives: Fictions, Facts, and Histories of Women Traffickers" (extra credit for attendance)

### Week 12: March 30

#### **Border Violence**

- Wright, Melissa W.  
 2011 Necropolitics, Narcopolitics, and Femicide: Gendered Violence on the Mexico-U.S. Border. *Signs* 36(3):707-731.
- De León, Jason  
 2012 "Better to Be Hot than Caught": Excavating the Conflicting Roles of Migrant Material Culture. *American Anthropologist* 114(3):477-495.
- Jimenez, Maria  
 2009 Humanitarian Crisis: Migrant Deaths at the U.S.-Mexico Border. American Civil Liberties Union of San Diego & Imperial Counties and Mexico's National Commission of Human Rights.

### Week 13: April 6

#### **Human Smuggling**

Spener, David

2009 Clandestine Crossings: Migrants and Coyotes on the Texas-Mexico Border.  
Cornell University Press.

Week 14: April 13

**Research Presentations (I)**

Week 15: April 20

**Research Presentations (II)**

# Research Papers Due #