

**George Mason University, Syllabus**  
**Economics 361, Economic Development of Latin America** (3hrs credit)  
Spring 2021, Online asynchronous course  
Dr. Carrie Meyer, [cmeyer@gmu.edu](mailto:cmeyer@gmu.edu) Office Hours, online M&Th 4-5:30pm

**Course Description:** Economic development, institutions, and problems of Latin America.

**Course Objectives & Goals:**

By the end of the course, students should be familiar with the economic history and institutions of Latin America and key development issues such as the legacy of colonialism, import-substitution-industrialization problems, free-market reforms, and the role of the agricultural sector. The course will approach topics from the perspectives of economic history, current events, and development theory, with an eye toward the institutions and cultural norms specific to Latin America. The course will help students see the world from multiple perspectives, reflect upon their positions in a global society, and be prepared for future engagement as global citizens.

**Skill requirements, technology, and prerequisites:**

Economics 103 and 104 are prerequisites to the course, but economics majors are advised to complete Econ 306 and Econ 310 before taking this course.

Students must have an email account. Email is the best way to contact your instructor. You must have access to a computer and access to a reliable broadband internet connection. Blackboard 9.1 will be used for this course. You can access the course at (<http://mymason.gmu.edu>) Login and click on the “courses” tab. The course is asynchronous, face-to-face sessions will not be required.

**Course Methodology:**

The class format will emphasize readings, powerpoint lectures, individual research, Blackboard discussion boards, and eight papers where you will synthesize and apply the concepts covered in the readings and lectures. Students will choose a country, keep up with current events, and do research throughout the course on that country that will be incorporated in the papers.

**Required Texts:**

Cardoso, Eliana and Ann Helwege. *Latin America's Economy: Diversity, Trends, and Conflicts*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1995. (paper) ISBN-10: 0262531259

Franko, Patrice. *The Puzzle of Latin American Economic Development*. (4th ed) Rowman and Littlefield, 2019. (paper) ISBN-10: 1442212160

Meyer, Carrie. *Days on the Family Farm: From the Golden Age through the Great Depression*. University of Minnesota Press, 2007. (paper or kindle) ISBN-10: 0816650330

Sweig, Julia E. *Cuba: What Everyone Needs to Know*, 3rd Ed, Oxford University press, 2012. (paper) ISBN 10: 0190620374

**This is a “Global Understanding” Core Course:** The goal of the global understanding category is to help students see the world from multiple perspectives, reflect upon their positions in a global society, and be prepared for future engagement as global citizens. While it may include historical perspective, global understanding courses focus primarily on contemporary understanding of one's place in a global society.

By developing a thorough grounding in the economic history, institutions, and cultural norms of Latin America, and making comparisons to economic history of the United States, students gain a better understanding of their place in a global society.

**Global Understanding Learning Outcomes for this Course:**

1. Students will demonstrate understanding of how economic globalization has enhanced both interconnections and differences among and within contemporary global societies.
2. Demonstrate the development of expertise in at least one country in Latin America, and also master the map of the region.
3. Use the analytical approaches in the field of economics to explore how Latin American governments have taken responsibility for economic development within the region.

**Honor Code:** Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the Office for Academic Integrity (<http://oai.gmu.edu/>) for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. Academic integrity is taken seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? When you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form.

**Disability Accommodations:** Students with documented disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services 703-993-2474 to learn more about accommodations that may be available to them.

**Academic Integrity, Inclusivity and Privacy:** We all have differing perspectives and ideas and each deserve the opportunity to share our thoughts. Mason values diversity. We will conduct discussions with respect for those differences. (<http://oai.gmu.edu/>) Please adhere to the rules of “netiquette” <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>. Mason adheres to student privacy and student rights under FERPA. See <https://registrar.gmu.edu/ferpa/>.

**Religious holidays:** If you will expect to miss a due date because of a religious holiday, please notify your instructor. <https://ulife.gmu.edu/religious-holiday-calendar/>

**Student Services:** You may find the following services useful: the Writing Center ([writingcenter.gmu.edu](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu)); Online Education Services, University Libraries ([library.gmu.edu/for/online](http://library.gmu.edu/for/online)); Counseling and Psychological Services ([caps.gmu.edu](http://caps.gmu.edu)).

**Grades will be assigned as follows:**

A: 93.00-100%	A-: 89.50-92.99%	
B+: 87.00-89.49%	B: 83.00-86.99%	B-: 80.00-82.99%
C+: 77.00-79.99%	C: 73.00-76.99%	C-: 70.00-72.99%
D: 60.00-69.99%	F: 0-59.99%	

**Country focus and papers:** Students must choose a Latin American country to focus on by the 2nd week of class and keep up to date with news on the country, bring in news to report on weekly (13 submissions). **Please cite your source with online link.** The news reports are worth 13% of your grade.

Students will write 8 short papers for the course varying in length from 300 to 1100 words. Not all of the papers will require research beyond your textbooks and the powerpts. Nevertheless, familiarize yourself with the paper topics from the outset (See **Questions for Papers**) and begin to locate sources. In particular, find a good history of your country – a book – that covers the economic history of the country. Check out books on Amazon and then locate a likely book in the library. (See **Tips for Researching Your Country**) The papers together are worth 83% of your grade.

We have **12 Lecture Topics** with one powerpoint for each lecture – note that the Lectures do not correspond directly to our **14 weeks of the semester**. (No spring break this semester!)

### **Lectures / Topics / Readings**

1. An Overview of Latin America as a Region  
Cardoso & Helwege Ch1
2. What is Development, Sustainable Development? Measures and Theories  
Franko Ch1; Cardoso & Helwege Ch3
3. Historical Roots  
Cardoso & Helwege Ch2; Franko Ch2
4. Cuba – Its unique place in Latin America’s history  
Sweig Intro, pp. 1-34, 35-39, 44-52, 68-72, 75-89, 125-139, 214-219, 258-264
5. International Trade and Development in Latin America  
Franko Ch 3 pp 58-61; Ch7 pp. 192-198
6. Import Substitution Industrialization and State Enterprise  
Cardoso and Helwege Ch4 Sections 2-5; Franko Ch3 pp. 62-74
7. Agriculture-led Industrialization in the American Midwest -- a contrasting experience  
Meyer- Intro, Ch1 p. 13, pp. 37-45; Ch2 pp. 47-61; Ch3 pp. 81-82, pp. 101-103; Ch4 pp. 111-112, pp. 118-125  
[For kindle readers: Ch1 Intro & Signs of New Century, Ch2 Intro & up to but not including Farming in Golden Age, Ch3 Intro & Ubiquitous Model T, Ch4 Intro & Trucks, Tractors, Horses & Roads]
8. History of Agricultural Policy and Land Reform in Latin America  
Cardoso & Helwege Ch10;
9. The Debt Crisis and Muddling Through  
Cardoso & Helwege Ch5; Franko, Ch4
10. Inflation and Stabilization  
Cardoso & Helwege Chs 6-7; Franko, Ch5
11. The Liberalization of Trade and Export Promotion  
Franko Ch7
12. Privatization, Foreign Investment & Capital Flows  
Franko Ch 6

**Week 1:**

- \*Review Intro PowerPoint & Instructor Welcome Video.
- \*Review the syllabus and associated materials.
- \*Purchase the textbooks.
- \*Introduce yourself on the discussion board.
- \*Read C&H Ch 1 and study the powerpt for Lecture 1.
- \*Study C&H Fig 1.1 (Map) and learn the 20 countries of Latin America from Table 1.1 C&H

**Week 2:**

- \*Do readings and study powerpt for Lecture 2, work on Paper 1.
- \*By Tuesday, Feb 2, choose “your country” and explain briefly on the discussion board why you chose that country.
- \*By Thursday, Feb 4, complete the “quiz on your country” and submit the answers.
- \*Give your first news report on your country on the discussion board sometime this week.

**Week 3:**

- \*Submit Paper 1 (on Lecture 2 & your country) on Monday, Feb 8.
- \*Give a news report on your country on the discussion board sometime this week.
- \*Begin readings and study powerpt for Lecture 3, begin thinking about Paper 2.

**Week 4:**

- \*Give a news report on your country on the discussion board sometime this week.
- \*Submit Paper 2 (on Lectures 1&3 & your country) by Thurs, Feb 18.
- \*Begin the readings in Sweig & study powerpt for Lecture 4, prepare to write Paper 3 (on Lecture 4).

**Week 5:**

- \*Continue readings in Sweig & study powerpt for Lecture 4, write Paper 3 (on Lecture 4).
- \*Give a news report on your country on the discussion board sometime this week.
- \*Submit Paper 3 (on Lecture 4) by Thurs, Feb 25.
- \*Begin readings & study powerpt for Lecture 5, prepare to write Paper 4 (on Lectures 3&5 & your country).

**Week 6:**

- \*Continue the readings & study powerpt for Lecture 5, continue work on Paper 4,
- \*Give a news report on your country on the discussion board sometime this week.

**Week 7:**

- \*Submit Paper 4 (on Lectures 3&5) by Thurs Mar 11.
- \*Do the readings & study powerpt for Lecture 6, begin thinking about Paper 5 (on Lectures 6&7).
- \*Give a news report on your country on the discussion board sometime this week.

**Week 8:**

- \*Do the readings in Meyer & study powerpt for Lecture 7, continue with Paper 5 (on Lectures 6&7).
- \*Give a news report on your country on the discussion board sometime this week.

**Week 9:**

- \*Submit Paper 5 (on Lectures 6&7) by Tues Mar 23.
- \*Do readings & study powerpt for Lecture 8, begin thinking about Paper 6 (on Lecture 8 & your country)
- \*Give a news report on your country on the discussion board sometime this week.

**Week 10:**

- \*Submit Paper 6 (on Lecture 8 & your country) by Weds Mar 31.
- \*Begin readings & study powerpt for Lecture 9, begin thinking about Paper 7 (on Lecture 9-10 & your country)
- \*Give a news report on your country on the discussion board sometime this week.

**Week 11:**

- \*Do readings & study powerpts for Lectures 9&10, continue with Paper 7 (on Lectures 9-10 & your country)
- \*Give a news report on your country on the discussion board sometime this week.

**Week 12:**

- \*Submit Paper 7 (on Lecture 9-10 & your country) by Weds Apr 14.
- \*Give a news report on your country on the discussion board sometime this week.
- \*Begin readings & study powerpts for Lecture 11, begin working on Paper 8 (on Lectures 11-12 & your country)

**Week 13:**

- \*Continue readings & powerpts for Lecture 11, work on Paper 8 (on Lectures 11-12 & your country)
- \*Give a news report on your country on the discussion board sometime this week.

**Week 14:**

- \*Complete readings & study powerpts for Lectures 12, continue with Paper 8 (on Lectures 11-12 & your country)
- \*Give a news report on your country on the discussion board sometime this week.
- \*Submit Paper 8 (on Lectures 11-12 & your country) by Fri Apr 30.

**A few more words on grading:**

On the next page is a list of the items that will make up your grade. You will receive a letter grade on each of your papers that corresponds to points out of 100:

A+ 100; A 95; A- 90; B+ 88; B 85; B- 80; C+ 78; C 75; C- 70; D 65; F 55

If you don't turn in a paper, you receive zero credit.

Papers must be turned in before the end of the day on which they are due. Please don't turn in papers late or you will be forever running behind. **You will lose a letter grade for every day late.** If you have extenuating circumstances contact me before the deadline.

News reports should be ideally 2-3 sentences. You will need to create a thread before you can read others news reports, so if you report the same news, it's OK. You can get either 95, 75, or 0 on your report. If you miss a report one week – it's just 1% of your grade.

The table on the following page illustrates how your grade will be calculated.

Deliverables:

		weight % grade	Example Grade out of 100%	Example calculation	
Self Introduction on discussion board		0.5	95	0.475	
Choose your country and explain		0.5	85	0.425	
Complete quiz on your country		2	85	1.7	
Weekly news reports		1	95	0.95	
each report is 1% of		2	75	0.75	
your grade for a total		3	0	0	
of 13%		4	0	0	
		5	95	0.95	
		6	95	0.95	
		7	75	0.75	
		8	95	0.95	
		9	95	0.95	
		10	0	0	
		11	0	0	
		12	0	0	
		13	95	0.95	
Paper 1 / Lect 2	350 words	6	95	5.7	
Paper 2/ Lect 1&3	800 words	10	88	8.8	
Paper 3 / Lect 4	650 words	8	85	6.8	
Paper 4 / Lect 3&5	800 words	11	90	9.9	
Paper 5/ Lect 6&7	800 words	11	75	8.25	
Paper 6/ Lect 8	650 words	8	80	6.4	
Paper 7/ Lect 9&10	1100 words	15	88	13.2	
Paper 8/ Lect 11&12	1100 words	15	95	14.25	
		100		83.1	Final Grade