

Latin American Philosophy

Spring 2024



Instructor

Miguel José Paley

Email

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Hours

Tuesday & Friday 10:00-11:15 am

Room: Salice 3 -125

Office Hours: Tuesday 4-6 @ Collins 119

General Information

Description

This course will introduce students to select texts in Latin American and Caribbean Philosophy. Central themes will include the (persistent) effects of the colonial period, the inheritance of various European philosophies, and the possibility of a distinctive Latin American Philosophy. Currents and thinkers may include Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, Simon Bolivar's influence, Leopoldo Zea and Positivism, the Negritude Movement in Martinique, and Liberation theology and philosophy.

Expectations and Goals

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Attain familiarity with some of the main thinkers and issues marking Latin American Philosophy
- Critically evaluate and understand themes, arguments, and developments in Latin American Philosophy as well as their context: historical, social, political, etc.
- Write a series of essays on the philosophical issues in Latin American Thought.
- Articulate and productively discuss themes in Latin American thought with your peers.
- Reflect on your own position as a student and thinker of philosophy in general and Latin American philosophy in particular.

Course Materials

Required Materials

There is one required text for this course. All other readings will be provided to the class on Blackboard:

Latin American Philosophy for the 21st Century eds. Garcia and Milán-Zaibert. ISBN: 978-1-57392-978-3

Assignments & Grade Breakdown

Oral and Written Participation 15%

Participation will be graded as follows: **A (90-100)**: Attends class consistently, is prepared and has done the reading. Contributes positively to class discussion. Does not merely state opinions, but instead uses the texts to interrogate opinions and struggles honestly with the texts. **B (89-80)**: Attends class consistently, is prepared and has done the reading. Contributes to class discussion with some regularity. Sometimes unprepared or not participatory. **C (79-70)**: Attends class with some kind of regularity. Often prepared, though unencumbered by reading and thinking. **D (69-60)**: Attends class occasionally, without having prepared, and usually unencumbered by reading and thinking. **F (59-0)**: Does not attend class regularly or participate in discussions or show any preparation to engage with course material.

Moderating Discussion 15%

During the semester, you will be charged with moderating one of our class discussions. Your moderation can be as guided or loose as you choose, so long as it keeps the discussion going. On your moderation day, you are welcome to prepare questions, activities, bring hand-outs, or simply have a series of comments and themes ready for the class. A perfect moderator would be one who manages to incite an inclusive, critical, and productive conversation with the entirety of the class.

Essays 40% (20% each)

You will write two short essays (1500-2500 words) this semester. Essay 1 will focus on a concept or argument of your choosing from one of our class readings. This essay should identify a problem or argument, provide the necessary philosophical context, and then develop a philosophical position with regards to that argument or concept. Essay 2 will be somewhat broader in scope. It will consider multiple thinkers from our reading list and will answer the question "What is Philosophy?" For this essay, you are welcome and encouraged to place Latin American thinkers in conversation with other philosophers you might know. However you answer this question, your paper should reflect on how our class readings stand with regard to your conception of philosophy.

Open Format Final Project 30%

At the end of the semester, you will develop a final project in the format of your choosing. You could make a short film, write a piece of music, choreograph a dance, write a short story, or do whatever else you might think appropriate. Whatever you chose to do, your project should deal with a topic from our class and develop it philosophically. Your project will include a **project proposal** (5%), a **presentation**, (12%), and a **written component** (13%) of at least 1000 words where you explain the reasoning behind your project and the argument or idea you are expressing. Your written component *must* directly engage with a primary text. Presentations will take the form of an in-class conference where you and your peers will discuss your work.

Class Policies

Attendance

This course is heavily discussion-oriented, so your attendance is absolutely imperative. Regular and **punctual** attendance at every session is expected. If you do have to miss a class, you are expected to get the material from a classmate, however, you are encouraged to come by and talk to me about the material afterwards. Excessive absence (more than 3-4 sessions) may result in failure of the course. **Repeated tardiness counts as absence. Using electronic devices in class counts as absence.**

Electronics

Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class and refrain from eating or other activities that cause any kind of disturbing noise in the classroom. **The use of cell phones or any other digital devices during class will count as an absence for that session.** If your cell phone is in your lap or on the desk, it is assumed you are using it. Please put them away for the duration of the class session. The use of laptops is not permitted. Either print texts or take very careful notes for discussion.

Turning in Written Work

All written assignments must be turned in on blackboard on time. Do not send papers by e-mail. Late assignments will be reduced by a letter grade per day they are late.

Academic Honesty / Plagiarism

Plagiarism: Using any work or ideas that are not your own (this includes summarizing or quoting from a book, article, internet, or other source) without clearly indicating the author or source is considered plagiarism and will receive an automatic F for that assignment (**and possibly the course**). Generative AI tools are not permitted in this course. Students must rely on their own originality, creativity and critical thinking skills to complete assignments and engage with course material. **Use of ChatGPT or other language models will result in immediate failure of the class.** Please refer to the undergraduate standards of academic integrity and the University Code of Conduct.

Disability Statement

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all students, with or without disabilities, are entitled to equal access to the programs and activities of Fordham University. If you believe that you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, coursework, or assessment of the object of this course, you may be entitled to accommodations. Please schedule an appointment to speak with someone at the Office of Disability Services.

Class Schedule

Date	Reading / Assignment
Tuesday, January 16	N/A (Diagnostic)
Friday, January 19	Garcia and Vargas - "Latin American Philosophy" (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy online) Stehn - "Latin American Philosophy" (Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy)
Tuesday, January 23	Bartolome de las Casas - "A Short account of the destruction of the Indies" (Synopsis, Prologue, and The Province and Kingdom of Guatemala) Said – Orientalism (Selections)
Friday, January 26	Leon-Portilla - Aztec Thought and Culture (Intro and Ch 1)
Tuesday, January 30	Leon-Portilla - Aztec thought and Culture (ch 2)
Friday, February 2	De Las Casas "In defense of the Indians" (LAP pgs 25-49) Sepulveda - On the Reasons for Just war among the Indians
Tuesday February 6	Sor Juana de La Cruz – Response to Sister Filotea & Poem 92 (LAP 51-60)
Friday, February 9	Simon Bolivar – Jamaica letter and Angostura Address (LAP 61-71)
Tuesday, February 13	Sarmiento - Civilization and Barbarism (LAP 233-244)
Friday, February 16	Jose Marti – "Our America" and "My Race" (LAP 245-256)
Friday February 23 (Tue 20 th follows Monday schedule)	Linda Alcoff – Educating with a Decolonial Consciousness
Tuesday, February 27	Mariategui – Seven Interpretative Essays on Peruvian Reality (selections) Essay 1 Due
Friday, March 1	Rodo – "Ariel" pg 31-70
Tuesday, March 5	Rodo – Ariel pg 70- 103
Friday, March 8	Retamar – "Caliban"

Date	Reading / Assignment
Tuesday, March 12	Leopoldo Zea, "The Actual Function of Philosophy in Latin America" pp. 355-368 LAP
Friday, March 15	Leopoldo Zea, "Identity: A Latin American Philosophical Problem" pp. 369-378 LAP
Tuesday, March 19	Castro-Gómez, Introduction and English Prologue, <i>Zero-Point Hubris</i>
Tuesday, April 2	Castro-Gómez, "Illegitimate Knowledges: The Enlightenment as Apparatus of Epistemic Expropriation," Chapter 4 of <i>Zero-Point Hubris</i>
Friday, April 5	Enrique Dussel – Philosophy of Liberation (Chapter 2 first half)
Tuesday, April 9	Enrique Dussel – Philosophy of Liberation (Chapter 2, second half)
Friday, April 12	Santiago Castro-Gómez, "Postmodernity's Challenges to Latin American Philosophy," <i>Critique of Latin American Reason</i> , pp. 1-29 Essay 2 Due
Tuesday, April 16	Gloria Anzaldúa, <i>Borderlands/La Frontera</i> , "La Consciencia de la Mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness," pp. 77-91 Project Proposal Due
Friday, April 19	Linda Martín Alcoff, "Is Latina/o Identity a Racial Identity?" pp. 313-334 LAP Instructor away at conference, asynchronous class activity
Tuesday, April 23	Subcomandante Marcos, "The Fourth World War Has Begun" and "Fourth Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle" [PDF on Canvas]
Friday, April 26	In Class Conference Day 1
Tuesday, April 30	In Class Conference Day 2
May 7 9:30am	Final Discussion