

Course Syllabus



Course	PHIL 4380 – 001
Course Title	Topics in Philosophy – Latin American Philosophy
Professor	Dr. Humberto González Núñez
Term	Fall 2023
Meetings	TR 1:00pm-2:15pm PHY 1.103

Professor's Contact Information

Office Location	JO 4.120
Email Address	humberto.gonzaleznunez@utdallas.edu
Office Hours	TR 2:30pm-3:30pm (in-person)/By appointment (virtual)

Pre-requisite

Any previous PHIL course.

Course Description

This course will offer a broad introduction to the tradition of Latin American philosophy. We will begin by focusing on the fundamental questions concerning the nature, existence, and possibility of a genuine Latin American philosophy. After offering a brief overview of these basic questions, we will turn to a historical survey of important trends in Latin American thought. Our historical survey will begin with the philosophical fragments found in the pre-Columbian period, proceed to the writings of both colonial and post-colonial writers, and finally to contemporary philosophers with a particular focus on the philosophy of liberation. The final portion of this course will be dedicated to the various issues that continue to provide Latin American philosophy with the enduring legacies of coloniality, racial, sexual, and gender-based discrimination and, finally, the very identity of Latin American thought.

Learning Outcomes

1. Obtain familiarity with the history of Latin American philosophy.
2. Develop proficiency in reading, debating, and interpreting crucial texts within the Latin American philosophical tradition.
3. Develop the ability to understand, interpret, and critically engage philosophical texts, ideas, and arguments.
4. Develop the ability to formulate and defend philosophical ideas and concepts in class discussions.

Required Texts

1. Jorge J. E. Gracia and Elizabeth Millán-Zaibert (eds.), *Latin American Philosophy for the 21st Century: The Human Condition, Values, and the Search for Identity* (New York: Prometheus, 2004) – ISBN: 9781573929783 [Abv.: LAP]
2. Other required materials will be distributed via eLearning. Please print out these readings and bring them to class. [Abv.: BB]

Recommended Texts

- 1) Enrique Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2003) – ISBN: 9781592444274
- 2) Santiago Castro-Gómez, *Critique of Latin American Reason* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2021) – ISBN: 9780231200073
- 3) Alberto Moreiras, *Against Abstraction: Notes from an Ex-Latin Americanist* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2020) – ISBN: 9781477319826

Assignments and Grading Policy

In-Class Discussion – 10%

Philosophy is an activity that is best carried out through dialogue and conversation. The expectation for this course is that students will come prepared to share their thoughts and questions in class as part of their ongoing contribution to our collective learning environment.

Written Interpretive Analysis – 30%

Students will be asked every 2-3 weeks to post a 500-word review of one of the readings for the semester on Blackboard. Your reviews should include the following information: 1) a summary of the main points of the reading and 2) at least 3 questions that you consider worthy of discussion. Please take care in preparing these analyses since they may be used to generate in-class discussion.

Final Paper Proposal – 20%

As preparation for the final paper, students will turn in a 1000-word proposal that includes the following information: 1) the main thesis/argument, 2) the sources you plan on discussing, and 3) the general outline/direction of your essay. Additionally, please include an annotated bibliography with a maximum 250-word description of the importance of each item for your final paper.

Final Paper – 40%

The final paper for this course will be a culmination of your reflection on the various authors/themes discussed throughout the semester. The length of your final paper should be approximately 3000-words. The purpose of this assignment is to showcase your ability to take one or more of the readings we discussed throughout the semester and demonstrate your ability to critically engage with at least two pieces of secondary literature.

A	94-100	C+	77-79.99	A = excellent and outstanding work
A-	90-93.99	C	73-76.99	B = very good work
B+	87-89.99	C-	70-72.99	C = satisfactory work
B	83-86.99	D	60-69.99	D & F = unsatisfactory work
B-	80-82.99	F	0-59.99	

Comet Creed

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

Following the commitment to honesty and integrity found in UTD’s Comet Creed, the expectation for this course is that students will engage in cordial, polite, independent, and original scholarly thought and expression. Neither disrespect for others nor plagiarism (including the use of AI-generated content) will be tolerated.

If you are concerned that your use of sources and/or AI might result in plagiarism, please come meet with me and I would be more than happy to discuss any concerns you might have.

Any student who decides to submit plagiarized work for this course will receive an F on the assignment and will be reported to the UTD Office of Community Standards and Conduct for further disciplinary sanctions. For more information on UTD's policy regarding academic dishonesty, see <https://conduct.utdallas.edu/dishonesty/>.

Academic Support Resources

Please familiarize yourself with the various resources that UT Dallas provides to ensure your academic success: <https://oisds.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies/#academic-support-resources>.

UTD is also committed to aiding students who require accommodations to succeed in this course. If you would like to discuss such matters, please contact me during the first week of class. According to UTD policy, a student must register with Student AccessAbility for an accommodation to be officially considered. For further information, please see <https://accessability.utdallas.edu>.

Course Schedule

Part 1—What is Latin American Philosophy?

Week 1 – 8/22 & 8/24 [**NB: Last day to add/swap – 8/28**]

- Introduction/Syllabus
- Risieri Frondizi, “Is There an Ibero-American Philosophy?,” pp. 345-355 [BB]

Week 2 – 8/29 & 8/31

- Leopoldo Zea, “The Actual Function of Philosophy in Latin America,” *LAP*, pp. 357-368
- Augusto Salazar Bondy, “The Meaning and Problem of Hispanic American Philosophic Thought,” *LAP*, pp. 381-398

Week 3 – 9/5 & 9/7

- Jorge J. E. Gracia, “Ethnic Labels and Philosophy: The Case of Latin American Philosophy,” pp. 57-67 [BB]
- Juan Manuel Garrido Wainer, “The Desire to Think: A Note on Latin American Philosophy,” pp. 21-30 [BB]

Written Interpretive Analysis #1 due by 9/10 11:59pm

Part 2—The Historical Origins of Latin American Philosophy Pre-Columbian and Colonial America

Week 4 – 9/12 & 9/14

- Miguel León-Portilla, “The Birth of Philosophy Among the Nahuas,” pp. 8-23 [BB]
- *The Popol Vuh* (selections)

Week 5 – 9/19 & 9/21

- Bartolomé de las Casas, *In Defense of the Indians* (selections), *LAP*, pp.33-50
- Miguel León-Portilla, *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico* (selections), pp. xxv-xlix [BB]

Week 6 – 9/26 & 9/28

- Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, “Response to Sister Filotea” (selection), *LAP*, pp. 53-58
- _____, “Poem 92, Philosophical Satire,” *LAP*, pp. 59-60

Written Interpretive Analysis #2 due by 10/1 11:59pm

Age of Independence and Modernity

Week 7 – 10/3 & 10/5

- Simón Bolívar, “Jamaica Letter,” *LAP*, pp. 63-66
- _____, “Address Delivered at the Inauguration of the Second National Congress of Venezuela at Angostura,” *LAP*, pp. 67-74

Week 8 – 10/10 & 10/12

- Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, *Civilization and Barbarism* (selections), *LAP*, pp. 235-244
- José Martí, “Our America,” *LAP*, pp. 245-252

Written Interpretive Analysis #3 due by 10/15 11:59pm

Contemporary

Week 9 – 10/17 & 10/19

- José Carlos Mariátegui, *Seven Interpretative Essays on Peruvian Reality* (selections), *LAP*, pp. 259-266
- José Vasconcelos, *The Cosmic Race* (selections), *LAP*, pp. 269-278

Week 10 – 10/24 & 10/26

- Arturo Andrés Roig, “The Actual Function of Philosophy in Latin America,” *LAP*, pp. 401-414
- Enrique Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation* (selections), *LAP*, pp. 417-428

Part 3—Toward a Latin American Philosophy of Liberation and Identity

Week 11 – 10/31 & 11/2

- Enrique Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation* (selections), pp. 153-180 [BB]
- Horacio Cerutti-Guldberg, “Actual Situation and Perspectives of Latin American Philosophy for Liberation,” pp. 43-61 [BB]

Written Interpretive Analysis #4 due by 11/5 11:59pm

Part 4—The Future of Latin American Philosophy and Its Problems Feminism, Sexism, and Coloniality

Week 12 – 11/7 & 11/9

- Ofelia Schutte, “Negotiating Latina Identities,” *LAP*, pp. 337-354
- María Lugones, “Toward a Decolonial Feminism,” pp. 742-759 [BB]

Race, Racism, and Ethnicity

Week 13 – 11/14 & 11/16

- Linda Martín Alcoff, “Is Latina/o Identity a Racial Identity?,” *LAP*, pp. 313-334
- Mariana Ortega, “Photographic Representation of Racialized Bodies: Afro-Mexicans, the Visible, and the Invisible,” pp. 163-189 [BB]

Written Interpretive Analysis #5 due by 11/19 11:59pm

Week 14 – **No classes: Fall Break and Thanksgiving Holidays – 11/20-11/26**

Postmodernity and the Present

Week 15 – 11/28 & 11/30

- Santiago Castro-Gómez, “The Challenge of Postmodernity to Latin American Philosophy,” pp. 123-154 [BB]
- Ofelia Schutte, “Latin America and Postmodernity: Ruptures and Continuities in the Concept of “Our America,”” pp. 155-176 [BB]

Final Paper Proposal due by 12/3 11:59pm

Who Are We? The Interminable Question of Identity

Week 16 – 12/5 & 12/7

- Jorge J. E. Gracia, “What Makes Hispanics/Latinos Who We Are?,” *LAP*, pp. 289-310
- Leopoldo Zea, “Identity: A Latin American Philosophical Problem,” *LAP*, pp. 369-378

Final Paper due by 12/15 11:59pm

Please note: this schedule is subject to modification as the semester progresses. If there are any changes to the syllabus, I will make a note in-class and provide an updated syllabus