## ENVI426-001 – LATIN AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTS
Fall 2013

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Office Hours: *Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:15 – 12:15pm, 2pm – 2:30pm*

General Class Schedule & Location
Online course – with the exception of the textbook, all material will be available on Blackboard.

Course Texts & Readings
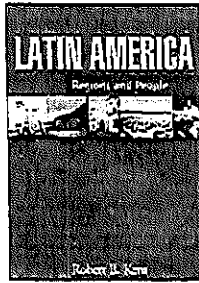
Textbook (required, pictured right): Kent, R.B. 2006. *Latin America: Regions and People*. New York: Guilford Press.

In addition, we will have brief assigned readings during some weeks, generally only one or perhaps two, (and often none at all), which will be made available for download as PDF documents on Blackboard. *Unless otherwise indicated on the class schedule on Blackboard (check the "Start Here" button).* all readings should be completed by the Thursday of the week they are assigned. at the latest.

Course Description
This course is intended to introduce students to Latin America and the Caribbean through the region's diverse environments and environmental problems stemming from human-environment interactions. In other words, by taking this course you will gain a broad knowledge of the physical, cultural, social, and economic factors that have shaped, and continue to shape, the environments in this amazing world region. The subject matter in this course will be addressed from a geographic perspective frequently referred to as Human-Environment geography, which means online material, readings, and activities will tend to emphasize the social/cultural and physical processes that have helped form the landscapes of Latin America and the Caribbean. This human-environment focus means that in this course, even when we focus on the physical landscape, humans will not be ignored.

Furthermore, we will understand the linkages between human systems, including culture, economics, and politics, and physical systems, including ecological systems and biogeochemical cycles, through a variety of opportunities and assignments, including:

(1) historically-based study of the ongoing, and almost completely uninterrupted, influence of colonialism in Latin America and its environments (to show the influence of the past

on the present and future, and also define the dominant political and religious approaches and ideologies prevalent in Latin America);

(2) explorations of quantitative data and graphing using Microsoft Excel (to illustrate how we can understand the environment and environmental change quantitatively);

(3) multimedia explorations using the *new media* technologies of youtube, pandora, flickr, and other websites to link Latin American culture – its music, art, and short-form writing where possible – and environment/environmental change;

(4) story maps, where the teleconnections (long-distance, disconnected relationships) in politics, economics, culture, and environmental change will become clear;

(5) group writing assignments focusing on an interdisciplinary (physical, biological, human, and social aspects) approach to the environment and which take advantage of the *wiki* to improve on the material available to people using Wikipedia; and

(6) a final paper project where each student (or working closely with a single paper-writing partner) can explore these themes in greater detail.

We will address the physical environment, historical geography, population shifts, urban issues, economic trends, agricultural systems, and globalization as they relate to the environments of Latin America and the Caribbean. *This course meets the Upper Division Integrative Elective requirement of the Foundational Studies program.*

Course Prerequisites and Requirements

Beyond taking one of the two listed prerequisites (ENVI130 or ENVI110), the assumption of this instructor is that each student in the class is willing to take responsibility for their own learning. This means that your instructor will provide you with the *opportunities* to learn, but you must take advantage of them; it would not be inaccurate to say that **the majority of the responsibility for learning is assumed by the student** in any course at the University level. If any student in the class is unfamiliar with or confused by any topic covered in the course, it is their responsibility to speak with their instructor to ask for help understanding the material. The instructor also assumes that each student in the class is aware of the location of important places throughout the world, or is willing to look them up (online mapping services such as http://maps.google.com, http://maps.bing.com, and http://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html). Please do not ignore Indiana State's online library resources, as they are typically more complete and less problematic than many widely accessible electronic resources. If you need help using these resources, please check the "course information" folder on Blackboard for video and text tutorials to help you, especially as you prepare your written work [FSSALG-2, see below].

To be successful in this course you must have the capability to record audio, video, and take photos – this requirement can be satisfied by most laptops or smartphones and a bit of ingenuity, but know that you should have some technology that allows you to do these things (digital camera and microphone, for example).

Workload in an Online Course [OFS Instructors – THIS is Course Pacing Statement]

Online courses require *at least* as much work as a traditional classroom-based course. This means you should expect to spend approximately 9 hours per week working on this class completing readings, assignments, discussing things with your classmates, and working on long

term projects. This is similar to well-run traditional classroom-based courses where students should expect 3 hours of homework for each hour spent in the classroom. In this class you should expect to submit materials on Thursdays by 11:59pm and Mondays by 11:59am (all times are Eastern Time, which is what we observe in Terre Haute). Please note there *are* other due days and times and you should pay close attention to the schedule and the weekly to-do lists.

Overall Foundational Studies Learning Outcomes [Abbreviated "FSLO" and referenced by number in the "Course Requirements" and "Tentative Course Schedule" sections, below]

1. Locate, critically read, and evaluate information to solve problems;
2. Critically evaluate the ideas of others;
3. Apply knowledge and skills within and across the fundamental ways of knowing (natural sciences, social and behavioral sciences, arts and humanities, mathematics, and history);
4. Demonstrate an appreciation of human expression through literature and fine and performing arts;
5. Demonstrate the skills for effective citizenship and stewardship;
6. Demonstrate an understanding of diverse cultures within and across societies;
7. Demonstrate the skills to place their current and local experience in a global, cultural, and historical context;
8. Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical implications of decisions and actions;
9. Apply principles of physical and emotional health to wellness; [Not met by this course]
10. Express themselves effectively, professionally, and persuasively both orally and in writing.

Foundational Studies Integrative and Upper Division Elective Learning Objectives [Abbreviated "FSIUDE" and referenced by number in the "Course Requirements" and "Tentative Course Schedule" sections, below]

1. Use a thematic approach to a particular topic or issue that integrates multiple ways of knowing;
2. Engage in a project or conduct research that makes use of multiple ways of knowing to address a particular topic or issue;
3. Analyze and write at an advanced level.

Foundational Studies Skill and Applied Learning Goals [Abbreviated "FSSALG" and referenced by number in the "Course Requirements" and "Tentative Course Schedule" sections, below]

1. Explicitly demonstrate how the curriculum will develop critical thinking skills.
2. Explicitly demonstrate how the curriculum will develop information literacy skills.
3. Include a graded writing component, which whenever possible is developmental
4. Must incorporate opportunities for students to critically read and analyze sophisticated, complex text, and to write intensively
5. Must include assignments that apply information from within and across various "ways of knowing"

Academic Honesty
Students at Indiana State University are expected to accept certain personal responsibilities that constitute the "standard" for behavior in a community of scholars, and this course is no

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Students with Special Considerations/Disabilities

Indiana State University seeks to provide effective services and accommodation for qualified individuals with documented disabilities. If you need an accommodation because of a documented disability, you are required to register with Disability Support Services at the beginning of the semester. Contact the Director of Student Support Services. The telephone number is 237-2300 and the office is located in Gillum Hall, on the second floor. The Director will ensure that you receive all the additional help that Indiana State offers. If you will require assistance during an emergency evacuation, notify your instructor immediately. Look for evacuation procedures posted in your classrooms if you are on campus. Students with Disabilities should know that the University supports your education: http://www.indstate.edu/sasc/programs/dss/index.htm.

Laptop Required for Course: Regular Usage

For the purposes of this course it will be assumed that you are in compliance with the mandatory laptop policy of the University. You will be expected to be ready to use your. Usage of the laptop must conform to the provisions of this course as laid out in this syllabus as well as the Code of Student Conduct. *If your laptop is not ready to be used at the appropriate time you will not be offered a makeup opportunity.*

Course Management

We will be using Blackboard, Indiana State's online course management system, in this course. When you enroll for the course you are automatically granted access to the ENVI 426 Blackboard page. To login to the page, please go to https://blackboard.indstate.edu, and login with your Sycamore-ID login and password. All emails from me to you will use ISU's e-mail system and will be sent to your ISU e-mail account. If you use a different email system, be sure to forward your ISU account to that other address. *I apologize in advance, but I will not be able to honor requests to use other e-mail systems, such as hotmail, directly.* All assignments, handouts, assignment scores, and lecture outlines will be available through Blackboard. I will take pains to place material on Blackboard well ahead of due dates, and materials will remain posted throughout the semester. Specific tasks, readings, assignments, etc. which you must complete will be listed in the schedule (check the "Start Here" button on the left-hand side of the Blackboard course site) and also detailed in weekly to-do lists posted in each module. *Be sure to check Blackboard daily.*

Technology Help

In the unlikely event that you encounter computer or Blackboard difficulties you are not on your own! Check the "Start Here" folder in the course site on Blackboard if you have a problem with Blackboard, but know that Indiana State University has a computer *help desk* which should be able to assist you with any computer hardware or operating system issues you may encounter. In addition, if you have a problem with Blackboard, there is a *Blackboard Support* line as well. The contact info is:

- ISU OIT Help Desk: *Computer Hardware and Software Support*
  - Local: 812-237-2910
  - Toll-free: 888-818-5465
  - E-mail: it-help@indstate.edu

- Blackboard Support Line: *Blackboard/Course Learning Technology Support*
  - Local: 812-237-7000
  - Toll-free: 888-818-5465 (make sure to be clear you need Blackboard help)
  - E-mail: isu-blackboard-support@mail.indstate.edu

Phone calls are usually the most expeditious way to resolve a technology problem!

Academic Freedom

Indiana State University and the American Association of University Professors define academic freedom in a wide-ranging statement which can be accessed at: http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/policydocs/contents/1940statement.htm. Independent of the topic matter of any content or homework/laboratory exercise, this course will be conducted in a manner which will meet the learning objectives and skills as set forth in the Foundational Studies Program requirements for Upper Division Integrative Elective courses, and your instructor will make every possible attempt to ensure that controversial subject matter unrelated to the course goals will not be introduced.

Course Requirements

Your performance in this course will be evaluated by weekly quizzes, collaborative "wiki" writing assignments, discussion forums, and a final essay exam OR final paper.

A) Weekly Quizzes: [FSLO-1, FSLO-2, FSLO-3, FSLO-6, FSLO-8; FSIUDE-1]

The focus of the weekly quizzes will be on the material in the assigned readings and class activities, including multimedia material. The quizzes will open on Monday evenings by 7pm (though typically earlier) and will be available until the following Monday morning at 11:59am. Questions on the quizzes will be multiple-choice, true/false, and fill-in-the-blank questions and will be between 12 and 20 questions in length. You will have approximately one minute per question, which means these quizzes should be completed *after* you feel comfortable with the material. These quizzes are *individual assignments*, meaning you cannot complete them in collaboration with a classmate or friend.

> A note on academic honesty: I consider cheating to be the copying of other student's answers and/or assisting others when an assignment should be completed individually. I do NOT tolerate cheating. Cheating will result in decisive action according to the Academic Honesty policies of Indiana State University (see: http://www.indstate.edu/academicintegrity/docs/2012-StudentGuide-AcademicIntegrity.pdf)

> Quiz make-up policy: Make-up quizzes are offered ONLY to those who have made previous arrangements with me. Should a life circumstance occur at exam time, you need to contact me by email or telephone to let me know you will require a make-up. THIS NOTIFICATION NEEDS TO OCCUR AS SOON AS YOU CAN BUT NO LATER THAN 24 hrs AFTER THE EXAM WAS ADMINISTERED, and preferably should be before the exam. Also, though circumstance may be traumatic, do not be surprised if I ask

for official confirmation of the event before excusing your absence. Sleeping-in or forgetting (or 'forgetting') a quiz are not excuses for which make-ups are offered.

B) Collaborative "Wiki" Writing Assignments: [FSLO-1, FSLO-2, FSLO-3, FSLO-6, FSLO-7, FSLO-8, FSLO-10; FSIUDE-1, FSIUDE-2, FSIUDE-3; FSSALG-1, FSSALG-2, FSSALG-3, FSSALG-4, FSSALG-5]
A "Wiki" is a website which allows users to collaborative add and edit content – just like the world's (probably) most famous Wiki, Wikipedia (which, by the way, is NOT a suitable source for information in this class). In this class, students will work in groups to produce a collaboratively edited multimedia (photos, videos, audio, etc.) exploration of a number of Latin American Environments, addressing the characteristics, problems, and consequences of human-environment interaction in each one. There will be two group writing assignments which take place over the course of the semester, and each student will earn *their own* grade (although a portion of each student's grade will come from being a good "group citizen") on the assignments (Wikis have the interesting and useful capability of tracking exactly who did what to each page). Wiki Writing Assignments will involve a three-part process whereby a *writing team* (weeks 1 and 2 of each assignment) collaboratively assembles a complete fact-based narrative exploration of the assigned environment or issue, complete with properly formatted citations [FSLO-1, FSLO-2, FSLO-3, FSLO-6 in the case of Wiki Writing Assignment 2, FSLO-8 in the case of Wiki Writing Assignment 3, FSLO-10; FSIUDE-1, FSIUDE-2, FSIUDE-3; FSSALG-2, FSSALG-3, FSSALG-4, FSSALG-5]. After this is close to complete, an *editing team* will work to clean up any formatting, writing mechanics, and citation issues (week 3 of each assignment) [FSLO-1, FSLO2, FSLO10; FSIUDE-1; FSIUDE-2; FSSALG-1, FSSALG-2, FSSALG-4, FSSALG-5]. Finally, a *"fact-checking" team* will evaluate the quality of source information used by the writing team to complete the assignment (week 4 of each assignment), offering *better* sources if needed [FSLO-1, FSLO-2, FSLO-3, FSLO-6, FSLO-7, FSLO-8, FSLO-10; FSIUDE-1, FSIUDE-2, FSIUDE-3; FSSALG-1, FSSALG-2, FSSALG-4, FSSALG-5]. Each student will take a turn on each of these teams over the course of the semester, and though the bulk of the work of each team will take place during the periods described above each team will be involved in the process over the course of each of the assignments.

> A note on academic honesty: I consider cheating to be the copying of other student's answers and/or assisting others when an assignment should be completed individually. **It also includes failure to properly cite the work of others,** which is particularly important for these writing assignments. I do NOT tolerate cheating. Cheating will result in decisive action according to the Academic Honesty policies of Indiana State University (see: http://www.indstate.edu/academicintegrity/docs/2012-StudentGuide-AcademicIntegrity.pdf)

C) Discussion Forums [FSLO-1, FSLO-3, FSLO-3, FSLO-4, FSLO-6, FSLO-7, FSLO-8, FSLO-10; FSIUDE-1, FSIUDE-2; FSSALG-1, FSSALG-2, FSSALG-3; FSSALG-4; FSSALG-5]
Each Monday a discussion question related to the week's readings will be posted. Students will have until Thursday at 11:59pm to post an initial answer/reaction to the question (generally 3-5 sentences long, often involving personal reflection), and then must respond to at least two of their peers in a substantive fashion (more than "I agree" or "yeah") before 11:59am on Mondays (*please note AM vs PM deadline times!*). Note that many of these discussion forums will require

that you post audio and/or video responses [FSLO-10; FSIUDE-1, FSIUDE-2; FSSALG-1, FSSALG-2, FSSALG-5], and occasionally images you take or find in digital collections (with appropriate permissions and copyright issues resolved before posting) [FSLO-1, FSLO-3, FSLO-3, FSLO-4, FSLO-6, FSLO-7, FSLO-8, FSLO-10; FSIUDE-1, FSIUDE-2; FSSALG-1; FSSALG-2; FSSALG-5]

D) Final paper: [FSLO-1, FSLO-2, FSLO-3, FSLO-4, FSLO-5, FSLO-6, FSLO-7, FSLO8, FSLO-10; FSIUDE-1, FSIUDE-2, FSIUDE-3; FSSALG-1, FSSALG-2, FSSALG-3, FSSALG-4, FSSALG-5]
The final assignment in the course depends on your selection *and* your ability to meet deadlines for paper topic and near-complete draft submission (see class schedule for due dates and times):

1) Pairs or individuals (your choice) may write a final paper (max. 10 pages) on a topic of your choice, decided by mid-semester (and approved by instructor). *The paper must integrate both natural and human approaches to environmental issues in Latin America, meaning it cannot be solely a social science or natural science treatment of an issue.* This option also requires two online meetings with the instructor while the paper is being prepared and the submission of a draft THREE weeks before the final is due (**a missed deadline for topic-choice or draft submission will result in a final paper grade reduction of 50 points, plus 2 points for each additional day your draft is late** – this means failure to submit a draft will mean even the best paper will earn only 108 points, or a 54%). [FSLO-1, FSLO-2, FSLO-3, FSLO-6, FSLO-7, FSLO-8, FSLO-10; FSIUDE-1, FSIUDE-2; FSIUDE-3, FSSALG-1, FSSALG-2, FSSALG-3, FSSALG-4, FSSALG-5]

THE FOLLOWING POINTS & POLICIES ARE VERY IMPORTANT!!!!

1) **PLEASE INFORM THE INSTRUCTOR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IF YOU WILL HAVE ANY CONFLICT WITH CLASS ACTIVITIES AND EXAM PERIODS DUE TO RELIGIOUS, ATHLETIC, OR OTHER REASONS.**

2) **IF YOU HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS, PLEASE E-MAIL ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.** In order to accommodate eligible student disability or consideration requests, I need to have confirmation from ISU of your needs before the first exam.

3) <u>Important Class policies:</u>
   - <u>What should I call you?</u> Call me Dr. Aldrich or "Dr. A" is OK, too.
   - <u>Wikipedia & Electronic Resources</u>: While Wikipedia and other online resources can be incredibly helpful, they are subject to a range of problems that printed and reviewed media (such as journal articles, newspapers, and books) are not. Therefore, in this course, Wikipedia should only be used as a springboard to more formal sources of information. If you are curious or need to know fast-facts about a subject, location, or idea in the class, by all means use Wikipedia. However, Wikipedia sources are unacceptable in papers and assignments, and should be viewed skeptically.
   - <u>Communication (especially e-mail)</u>: Electronic communication is now the standard method of rapid communication, both socially and professionally. Because we contact friends and family online all the time, online communication often becomes informal. However, because part of your education at ISU includes *professionalization,* all e-mails to me and to other students <u>must</u> include: (1) a greeting (e.g., "Dear ____," "Hello," or the person's name, BUT NOT: "Hey," "Whatup," etc.), (2) an e-mail body that clearly describes your concern, question, or problem and is free of AIM/l33tspeak, and (3) a closing (e.g., "thank you," "sincerely," or even "thanks"). **Furthermore, my title is "Dr." not "Mr.", so if you address me formally, use my correct title!** *I am not an overly formal fellow, but e-mail etiquette is something we can all benefit from.* **Because this requirement for the course is often ignored I will be instituting a "professional communication" part of your grade. These points (200 points, equal to 16 percent of your overall grade) are yours to lose, and each instance of unprofessional communication will cost you 20 points. You can lose these points in any course communication, including in communication with your student colleagues.** Though I doubt this will be a problem, it should be stated that ongoing unprofessional behavior will further negatively impact your grade.
   - <u>Citations</u>: If you use a source, including online material (on Blackboard or otherwise) and the textbook, in your work, you must insert a fully-formed citation. By this point in your academic tenure at ISU you should know how to cite the work of others, and when it is necessary to do so (which is nearly always) – if you do not please contact me and I will point you toward resources to help you learn this VITAL skill. Malformed citations or the lack of a citation when one is necessary WILL result in a significant reduction of your grade. Again, any and all questions about this are welcome! Similarly, the source of any

Course Grading

Your grade will be calculated using the following point system:

Quizzes	250 points
Wiki Assignments	300 points
Discussion Forums	200 points
Final paper	250 points
Professionalism Points	200 points

TOTAL	1200 points

When calculating your final grade I will add up your total points, including any earned extra-credit points (available on the exams only), and divide that number by 1000, yielding your percent grade. I will then assign your grade according to the following scale:

$$93 - 100\% = 4.0 = A$$
$$88 - 92\% = 3.7 = A\text{-}$$
$$85 - 87\% = 3.3 = B\text{+}$$
$$81 - 84\% = 3.0 = B$$
$$76 - 80\% = 2.7 = B\text{-}$$
$$71 - 75\% = 2.3 = C\text{+}$$
$$67 - 70\% = 2.0 = C$$
$$62 - 66\% = 1.7 = C\text{-}$$
$$59 - 61\% = 1.3 = D\text{+}$$
$$56 - 58\% = 1.0 = D$$
$$52 - 55\% = 0.7 = D\text{-}$$
$$0 - 51\% = 0.0 = F$$

When calculating final grades, it is my policy to round up only on fractional percentages of 0.5 or more. In other words, if your final grade works out to an 80.5%, it would be rounded up to 81% and you would be assigned a final grade of B on the above scale. Similarly, if your final grade was 80.3% you would *not* receive the round up and would be assigned a grade of B-.

geographic data or other information MUST be recognized on your lab exercises and any other material you turn in. **One of the most common causes of a failing grade on an assignment is neglecting to properly cite. Note, too, that I** <u>always</u> **submit an informal report of academic dishonesty when I** *suspect* **it has occurred.** I will accept written materials assembled in *MLA Style*, which is overviewed here: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/

- <u>Spelling, Grammar, & Punctuation</u>: We all make mistakes when creating written communications – it is not an easy undertaking. Despite this, it is very important that we all strive to avoid typos, grammar mistakes, and punctuation problems as we will use these skills for the rest of our lives. Therefore, I will tolerate the occasional mechanical issue in written work provided there is no more than one error of each type on each page. Obviously, because the final exam is written during the exam period by hand or hastily on the computer, I will allow more errors; I will tolerate two errors of each type per question. More mechanical errors than these limits will result in lost points.

- <u>The "Google It" policy</u>: You should feel free to ask questions over the course of the class, or to come by my office hours and ask any class-related question you like. However, though I am available electronically via e-mail or google chat (aldrichsteve@gmail.com) quite frequently, and it is fine to contact me that way, I have a "Google It" policy. Essentially, if I can find the answer to your question in the first 20 results using a Google search built on search terms within, or related to, your question, I will respond to you with a one-line e-mail "google it." You should know that you don't have to use google, but the same policy applies no matter what internet search engine you use! *Want to be a better "googler"? Check out: https://www.dropbox.com/s/3pi09dyj2728r44/HowToGoogle.pdf, or the "Course Information" folder on Blackboard.* **Related to this: if the answer is in the syllabus or schedule, you will receive a similar one-word e-mail: "syllabus."**

- <u>Late Work:</u> Late work will not be accepted for any reason. Missed assignments cannot be "made up" through other work or late submission. The only exception to this rule is the guidelines for "make-up" quizzes described above.

Failure to abide by these policies and those outlined in the Sycamore Standard and Student Handbook will result in significant grade reduction.