LAS 6398: Indigenous struggles, environmental justice, & development in Abya Yala (Latin America)
Semester: Spring 2019
Meeting Times & Location: Wednesdays 4:05-7:05PM in Grinter Hall Room 376
The University of Florida

Instructor
Joel E. Correia, PhD
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Office: Grinter Hall Room 378
Office Hours: Thurs. 1:30-3:30PM or by appointment.

Course Description
This graduate seminar investigates how environmental change, development, and extractivism intersect with indigenous struggles for justice across Abya Yala, or, Latin America. The seminar begins with a focus on environmental justice, research ethics, and decolonial politics to provide a theoretical and methodological framework for our engagement during the semester. We will read ethnographic studies from across the region that consider indigenous rights, self-determination, radical autonomies, territorial politics, and social ecology in the context of extractive development. The course will provide a critical theoretical and ethical framework for students seeking to better understand—and research—relationships between environmental change and indigenous rights in Latin America.

Course Objectives
This seminar will introduce students to key approaches in current environmental justice research regarding indigenous rights and extractive development in Latin America. The design of the seminar is based on five primary objectives:

1. Provide students with a general overview of indigenous rights laws and judicial frameworks in Latin America that can be, or are often, used to support the rights of indigenous peoples disproportionately impacted by extractive development.

2. Introduce students to key debates in critical environmental justice literature such that they can develop an understanding and analytical framework to evaluate ecological change, social conflicts, and community wellbeing in Latin America.

3. Survey and evaluate in-depth studies in, of, and from Latin America that speak to many of the major ongoing environmental justice challenges confronting the region and the different responses to those challenges.

4. Bridge theory and practice through praxis-based learning that asks students to think with the concepts learned in the seminar and evaluate environmental (in)justice issues in Gainesville or in their own research, thereby deepening learning through critical analysis, applied approaches, and peer-peer learning.

5. Help students improve their critical writing, argumentation, and facilitation skills through a number of different activities and assignments that allow students to practice these skills in a space open that provides constructive feedback.
Expected Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, students should be able to:

1. Define what environmental justice is, discuss key approaches to environmental justice research, and clearly demonstrate an understanding of the practical applications of environmental justice frameworks to support social struggles.
2. Articulate major indigenous rights legal frameworks used throughout Latin America to support indigenous struggles for justice, territory, and resource access and control.
3. Discuss the importance of indigenous methodologies and different approaches to conducting research with indigenous communities, with particular attention to the politics of representation and limits/potential of decolonialization.
4. Critically evaluate how extractivism impacts indigenous communities in uneven ways across Latin America, while also stating trends common to case studies from around the region.

What you can Expect from Joel

1. Respect for your informed opinions.
2. Timely feedback on all assignments and email communications.
3. My commitment to your learning and fostering an inclusive learning environment.
4. That I will engage you as an adult and work to help you achieve your learning goals.
5. My sincere interest in your learning and expectations for what you hope to achieve in this class.

Required Texts (**Denotes that the text is available as an e-book via the UF Libraries.)

- **Anthias, Penelope. 2018. Limits to Decolonization: Indigeneity, territory, and hydrocarbon politics in the Bolivian Chaco. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.**
- **Cepek, Michael L. 2018. Life in oil: Cofán survival in the petroleum fields of Amazonia. Austin: University of Texas Press.**
  - **Note:** the library has one hardcopy on reserve but no e-book available.
- **Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. 2017. As we have always done: Indigenous freedom through radical resistance. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.**
  - **Note:** the library has one hardcopy on reserve but no e-book available.

*Necessary PDFs (e.g., articles) will be available on the course Canvas site.*
Course Schedule

I. Theoretical Approaches: Environmental Justice, Indigenous Rights, & Ethics

1/9—Week 1: What is “the environment”? What is “justice”? What is environmental justice?
An open discussion and debate to introduce the seminar.

1/16—Week 2: Approaches to environmental justice


Pellow, David. 2018. *What is critical environmental justice?* Cambridge: Blackwell. **While I recommend you read the whole book, please be sure to focus on Chapters 1, 2, and the Conclusion.**


Optional but recommended:

http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3005BCCF9/(httpAuxPages)/5EB03FFBDD19EA90C1257664004831BD/$file/MartinezAlier.pdf

1/23—Week 3: Indigenous rights and indigeneity


**Optional:**

1/30—Week 4: Research & writing about indigenous struggles—Ethics, positionality, decolonization


**Optional:**


II. Rights-Based Approaches

2/6—Week 5: Neoliberal multiculturalism at the nexus of cultural & environmental rights


2/13—Week 6: The state & indigenous governance

*Professor Postero to visit class and deliver a public seminar on her book!

2/20—Week 7: The power of rights. The limits of rights.

III. Environmental Governance & Extractivism

2/27—Week 8: Green governance & land politics

3/6—Week 9: No class—Spring Break!

3/13—Week 10: Extractivism I—social ecologies

3/20—Week 11: Extractivism II—the “Left Turn” and indigenous citizenship

3/27—Week 12: Extractivism III—resistance & resurgence

IV. Limits of Decolonization and New Forms of Justice

4/3—Week 13: No Class! Professor Correia away at a conference.
**Video discussion and your “People’s Guide” assignment due to the course Canvas site.

4/10—Week 14: Decolonization’s limits

*Professor Anthias to visit class and deliver a public seminar on her book!

4/17—Week 15: Radical autonomy and other pathways

4/24—Week 16: Reimagining indigenous environmental justice
Course Assignments

Your final course grade will be evaluated upon the satisfactory completion of the following assignments and tasks:

1. **Facilitating class discussion = 10 Points**
   - Each student will be responsible for facilitating class discussion during one week of the semester. As a facilitator, you are expected to do the following:
     a. Circulate provocative discussion questions to the class via the Canvas site no later than 12:00PM (Noon) the day of class.
     b. Provide a brief summary of the readings at the beginning of class that includes the core argument of each reading and key points (approximately 10 minutes). You do not need to prepare a PowerPoint but are welcome to do so if that is helpful to you.
     c. Read your peers’ response papers before class and incorporate their questions raised and key points into the discussion.
     d. This assignment is designed to help you learn successful strategies for facilitating group discussions and improve your public speaking skills. I am happy to meet in advance of the day you will lead the discussion to co-ordinate with you and will be available throughout the course during our collective discussion.

2. **Weekly response papers = 20 Points**
   a. You will write a total of 10 critical response papers during the course of the semester. Each paper should be a critical engagement with the week’s course readings, must be 450-550 words long, and should be well written. Papers must be uploaded as a Word or PDF document to the appropriate discussion forum on the course Canvas site.
   b. Tips for writing a good response paper: Your paper should not solely summarize the reading(s) you choose to engage with. Instead, consider dedicating 1/3 of the paper to an overview of the reading, then focusing the rest of the paper on identifying the core argument, key interventions, and questions the reading left you with. The paper should provoke conversation and demonstrate a concerted engagement with the course materials, rather than discuss other topics.
   c. Papers will be graded per the following metrics: 2 points = an excellent paper that demonstrates critical engagement and clear writing/structure; 1.5 = a sound argument but slippages in understanding, too much reliance on summary, or poor writing; 1 = unclear argument but demonstrated engagement with the readings, reliance only on summary, and/or persistent and serious errors in the writing; 1 > x = poor quality overall. Please note that papers above and below the 450-550 word range will also lose points.
   d. The papers should ultimately serve as a resource you can later draw on for your culminating projects in the MALAS, TCD, or your PhD program. The format of the papers and grading scheme is designed to help you improve writing concise, clear, and compelling arguments.
3. **Active participation = 15 points**
   a. Attendance in class meetings does not constitute participation. This seminar requires regular attendance, is based on discussion, and will thrive with each student’s active contributions to class meetings. That said, please come to class having done the readings and ready to engage in class discussion about the course materials. While active participation requires that your voice is heard, it is also necessary to leave space for others to share their voice.
   b. I understand that different people seek varied ways to participate in class; that said, if you are shy or have a hard time speaking in front of others, please contact me so that we discuss other forms of participating (e.g., online contributions, etc.).

4. **“A peoples’ guide” = 15 points**
   a. Leading scholar-activist Laura Pulido and colleagues published “A people’s guide to Los Angeles” (2012) as a sort of counter reading to the Los Angeles landscape and locations with the aim of introducing readers to people, places, and events usually ignored (or unseen) in mainstream accounts. Drawing inspiration from Pulido et al.’s work and utilizing approaches from environmental justice and decolonizing research methods, this assignment asks students to create “a people’s guide” to the work they are doing for their graduate degree. The guide can be multi-media or printed. I will provide specific assignment guidelines in class on January 30th.
   b. This assignment is designed to open a creative yet critical space for students to discuss their research or capstone projects and experiment with alternative modes of communication that centers “publics” and “people” at the heart of discussion.

5. **Final research paper = 40 points**
   a. Students will write a 6,500 to 7,500-word research paper or report for their final assignment. The paper must be in conversation with the course topics and materials but should ultimately advance each student’s individual research and work toward successful completion of the MALAS degree, TCD certificate, or other graduate degree being sought.
   b. I will provide specific guidelines for this assignment in class on January 16.
   c. This assignment is designed to help you improve your skills writing publications or technical reports.
   d. The grade for the final paper is broken into constituent parts:
      i. **5 points:** Draft a 250-300 word abstract in addition to a preliminary bibliography of at least 10 sources and meet with Professor Correia to discuss your paper idea by February 27.
      ii. **5 points:** Peer-review your final paper draft with a classmate by April 24. *Send Professor Correia your peer-review comments.
      iii. **30 points:** The completed research paper.

**Summary of assignments and their grade values:**
- **Facilitating class discussion = 10 Points**
- **Weekly response papers = 20 Points**
- **“A peoples’ guide” = 15 points**
- **Active participation = 15 points**
- **Final research paper = 40 points**

Total points possible = 100
**Evaluation of Final Grades**

Grades will be awarded as listed in the table below:

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<th>Score</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
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<td>A-</td>
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More information on grading policies is here:

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

**Class and University Policies**

**Class Attendance and Make-Up Policy**

Attendance is important and required. Because the class requires a commitment to dialogue, absences and marginal participation will have a negative impact on student grades. Students are expected to arrive prepared and on time. Being late by 10 minutes or more will be counted as an absence, unless previously arranged. Every student is allowed one unexcused absence during the semester. Students will begin to lose 10% of their participation score for the second and third unexcused absences and after the fourth unexcused absence the may be administratively dropped from the course.

There are many ways to participate in this course and students are expected to come ready to engage the course materials. That means students are responsible for the readings and need to take part in class discussions and activities. *When doing so, please try to use specific course materials to "anchor" your thoughts and provide the rest of your peers and Professor with a common reference for discussion. Also, remember that active participation requires that you give others a chance to speak and that you listen to and consider their ideas.* Student participation is assessed daily, but participation grades will not be available until the end of the semester.

**Excused absences** are consistent with university policies in the undergraduate catalog (https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx) and require appropriate documentation. Students should arrange with Professor Correia for makeup material, if circumstances allow it; the student will receive one week to prepare for any makeup assignment.
**Late Assignments:** You are expected to turn in assignments on time. All late assignments will be subject to the following reduction of points: if turned in late but within 24 hours of the posted due date and time, the assignment will be docked 25% of the total possible points; 24-48 hours late will result in 50% loss of total possible points. No assignments will be accepted beyond 48 hours past the due date. **The final paper will not be accepted late.** If an assignment deadline corresponds with a pre-approved absence in accordance with UF policy, please contact Professor Correia in advance to reschedule.

**Course Demeanor**

**Course Communications:** Dr. Correia will use University of Florida e-mail and the class Canvas site to communicate with students about the course. Therefore, students are responsible to regularly check their University of Florida e-mail accounts and the course Canvas page for updates and information. Please check the course Canvas site weekly (at a minimum) since it will be the primary means of out-of-class communication during the semester and where students will find activities and assignments.

If you would like to contact Dr. Correia, please do so at joel.correia@latam.ufl.edu.

Please begin all course-related emails with the following subject heading: **LAS 6398: (subject of email).** Professional language should be used in all communications. Dr. Correia will reply to your message/questions as quickly as possible (usually within 24 hours), though may take up to 48 hours depending upon when your email is sent (e.g., weekends).

**Cell phones:** Unless explicitly stated otherwise for a class activity, cell phones should not be used during class. Please turn off or place your phone in airplane mode while in class.

**Laptops and tablets:** While some learning styles are best served by using personal electronics such as laptops and tablets, these devices can be distracting to other learners (see: [https://tinyurl.com/y979kugo](https://tinyurl.com/y979kugo) and [https://tinyurl.com/yd336qn9](https://tinyurl.com/yd336qn9)). Please respect your fellow classmates and only use laptops/tablets for course-related activity.

**Classroom Behavior Policy:** To foster a positive learning environment, students and instructors have a shared responsibility. We want a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment where each of us feels comfortable with each other and where we can challenge ourselves to succeed. To that end, our focus is on the tasks at hand and not on extraneous activities (e.g., texting, chatting, reading a newspaper, making phone calls, web surfing, etc.). Opinions held by other students should be respected. Conversations that do not contribute to the class/discussion should be held at minimum, if at all.

Students are asked to refrain from disruptive conversations with people sitting around them during class. Students observed engaging in disruptive activity will be asked to cease this behavior. Those who continue to disrupt the class will be asked to leave lecture or discussion and may be reported to pertinent UF administrators.
Notification of Objectionable Materials: This course may occasionally contain material of a mature nature, which may include explicit language and/or depictions of violence. Some readings and videos we watch may contain images or descriptions of events that some people may find disturbing. Students are not automatically excused from interacting with such materials, but they are encouraged to speak with Dr. Correia to voice concerns and to provide feedback. Dr. Correia will try his best to let students know in advance of any objectionable material and find suitable alternatives to subject materials if necessary.

University of Florida Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

The Honor Code (https://www.dso.ufl.edu/scrc/process/student-conduct/honor-code/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with Professor Correia.

Recall that all written assignments will be evaluated using Turnitin.com originality-checking software.

Student Accommodations

Students requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to Dr. Correia when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

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/.

Dr. Correia will also request that students provide anonymous feedback about the course at different points in the semester through a UF-administered Qualtrics survey to give students opportunities to give feedback that can ensure the course meets their expectations and learning needs.

Materials and Supplies Fees

Aside from the required textbook, listed on this syllabus, all other course materials (e.g., PDFs of readings) will be provided by Dr. Correia. There are no additional fees for this course.
Counseling and Wellness Center
Please reach out to the Counseling and Wellness Center if you need their services: http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Subject to Change Statement
Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grade and absence policy may be subject to change with advance notice as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

*Your continued enrollment in this class on Wednesday, January 16, 2019 implies your agreement with the terms of this syllabus.