**INTERDEPARTMENTAL TRANSDISCIPLINARY**

**GRADUATE SEMINAR IN THE LATIN-AMERICAN AREA**

**Course description**

In this seminar, we will introduce a series of topics and issues that are central to an interdisciplinary understanding of the Latin American region. We will consider the region’s political systems, media systems, cultural change, economic challenges, environmental challenges, education, and habitat challenges. We will pay particular attention to the empirical observations of the emerging phenomena and to their historical grounding, shedding light on social change in the context of global dynamics.

**Course objectives**

* Familiarizing students with trends in the LACIS region.
* Highlighting UW LACIS affiliated faculty research in relevant topics
* Getting to know leading faculty beyond UW working on Latin America
* Understanding key problems and areas of research.
* Expanding knowledge of regional dynamics.
* Developing critical thinking on the social implications of global dynamics in the region.

### Final Paper

One of the major requirements for this course is an interdisciplinary paper written preferably in collaboration between two students and presented to other seminar participants (conference style) during the last class of the semester. The paper should grow out of the discussions on interdisciplinarity/trans-disciplinarity covered in the course, but it can and should include additional readings, films, and other primary and secondary materials, and an original focus. In sum, your paper should reflect an original extension of the ideas we have encountered in class, rather than a simple recapitulation of our collective work. The final paper should be approximately 20 pages double-spaced, including a cover page, a bibliography, and any relevant tables and figures. This paper should be thought of as a draft of a publishable paper. This paper will be worth 40 percent of your final grade.

Collaboration on this paper is encouraged, but not obligatory. Interdisciplinary focus is necessary.

### Response papers

You will write 5 response papers of approximately one single-spaced page in length, which should be uploaded to Canvas the day the readings are discussed. To write these, refer to the questions/prompts provided with each class. (If you feel strongly about it, you can consult with the professor for a different prompt). Notice that you only need to respond to 5 of the prompt questions in the syllabus, but you also may write more than five. If you choose to write additional papers, the best five grades will count toward your term grade. Each response paper is worth 8% of the final grade. Please be prepared to present your responses during our discussions.

Seminar Participation

The final 20% of your class grade will be based on the quality and quantity of your contributions to the seminar discussions. Students are expected to go beyond giving their own opinions and must be able to critically engage with readings and explain their findings. At the same time, each student must contribute to a classroom environment in which ideas are debated in a respectful way.

**W1 - Sept. 14:** Course introductions.

Personal Introductions.

**Our Context: COVID…**

**Response Prompt:** How can we take advantage of the crisis for a better future?

[“Brutes: Meditation on the Myth of Voiceless”](https://orionmagazine.org/article/brutes/) Amitav Ghosh

[“The future begins today”](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JjPOgxd2KrQ) Boaventura de Sousa Santos

+*[Alerta global:Políticas, movimientos sociales y futuros en disputa en los tiempos de la pandemia.Ed. Breno Ringel and Geoffrey Pleyers.](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=14303614)*

(in particular) Arturo Escobar [“Transiciones post-pandemia en clave civilizatoria” por Arturo Escobar](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/257892/files?preview=21565470)

+ Alberto Acosta et al. [“Puede el corona virus salvar el planeta”](https://www.opendemocracy.net/es/puede-el-coronavirus-salvar-el-planeta/)

**…AND PERU (short readings).**

Mitra Taj [“Virus Exposes Weak Links in Peru’s success Story.”](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/12/world/americas/coronavirus-peru-inequality-corruption.html)

[**Peru has a new president, its fifth in five years – who is Pedro Castillo?**](https://theconversation.com/peru-has-a-new-president-its-fifth-in-five-years-who-is-pedro-castillo-165157)*Conversation.*

[*Pedro Castillo, Leftist Political Outsider, Wins Peru Presidency*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/19/world/americas/peru-election-pedro-castillo.html)*.* ***New York Times.***

[A tumultuous first week in office for Peru’s new president](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/8/7/a-tumultuous-first-week-in-office-for-peru-new-president) *al-Jazeera.*

**16** 4:15-5:15 Lecture by Marina Silva about the challenge of preserving the Brazilian Amazon

<https://today.wisc.edu/events/view/162347> (**Focus on Brazil)**

**W2 – Sept. 21: INTER/ TRANS-DISCIPLINARITY**

**Our framework and methodology: Latin American Studies as an Interdisciplinary Field.**

**Response prompt 1:** Problems and Promises of Inter/Trans-disciplinarity.

(very brief) Paul Robbins [“Multidisciplinary dialogues with Things.”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=13999347)

# Ortwin Renn [Transdisciplinarity: Synthesis towards a modular approach](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/257892/files?preview=21566085)

+ Simon Schaffer [“Indiscipline and Interdisciplines; Some Exotic Genealogies of Modern Knowledge.”](https://www.hse.ru/data/2011/11/13/1272007743/Schaffer.2010.Indiscipline_and_interdisciplines.pdf)

# Sally Kitch [“How Can Humanities Interventions Promote Progress in Environmental Sciences?”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=13985645)

Jussi Pakkasvirta [“Latin American Studies as an Interdisciplinary Field”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=14000921)

**W3 – Sept. 28**: **MULTI/INTERSPECIES**

Prompt 2: Problems and promises of the Interspecies framework.

Watch *Qué les pasó a las Abejas?* Dir. Adriana Otero and Robin Canul.

[https://vimeo.com/480833675 (Links to an external site.)](https://vimeo.com/480833675)

Password: **LACIS2021 (LINK WILL BE ACTIVE ON 24TH)**

Attend on Zoom if you can at noon, **Sept 28, Lacis Lunchtime Series: [Qué les pasó a las Abejas? | What happened to the Bees? in Campeche, Mexico](https://lacis.wisc.edu/event/que-les-paso-a-las-abejas-what-happened-to-the-bees-in-campeche-mexico/)**

Articles:

## ["Milpa Melipona Maya; Mayan Interspecies Alliances Facing Agribiotechnology in Yucatan”](https://www.acme-journal.org/index.php/acme/article/view/1746) Sainath Suryanarayanan and Kata Beilin

[“Interspecies”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=21566528) Julie Livingston and Jasbir Puar

Eduardo Kohn [“How Forest Thinks – Intro](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=14040776)”

+De La Cadena, M [“Indigenous Cosmopolitics”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=14043337)

**Oct 5 AMAZONIA**

**(**German Palacio, Tinker Professor in Environmental History, Universidad Nacional de Colombia-Amazonia and Kathryn Sánchez, Professor of Spanish and Portuguese)

Readings TBA

**Oct 12 DECOLONIZATION/INDIGENEITY**

**Prompt 3:** How should we decolonize or indigenize our cultures? Consider the need for multidisciplinary engagement while struggling with colonial legacies.

Tuck, Eve, and K. Wayne Yang. 2012. [“Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor.”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=13985373)*Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1 (1): 1–40.

“Reflections on Collaborative Ethnography and Decolonization in Latin America, Aotearoa, and Beyond.” Amy Kennemore and Nancy Postero

*El abrazo de la serpiente.* Dir. Ciro Guerra.

[Panel on Indigenous Studies -LACIS Fall 2019](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rb4D9TTXeMw)

[Indigenous Knowledge and Western Science: Dr. Leroy Little Bear Talk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJSJ28eEUjI%20(15%20min))

+[“Indigenous Science: Proven, Practical and Timeless”](https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/knowinghome/chapter/chapter-6/)

+Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. 1991. [“Anthropology and the Savage Slot: The Poetics and the Politics of Otherness.”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=13985372)

+Boaventura de Sousa Santos [*Epistemologies of the South.*](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=13985356)

+ Luis Iñaki Prádanos [“How to listen to Pachamama.”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=14043330)

**+ “**[Latin America’s Left-Turn and the Political Empowerment of Indigenous Women](https://academic.oup.com/sp/article/24/4/425/4775166?guestAccessKey=18b41f00-7411-4721-a10d-5823a6feb8f5)**.” (with Stéphanie Rousseau).** Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society**vol 24  no 4, 2017, pp. 425–51.**

**Oct 19 WATER (with Erica Simons, Professor of Political Science, UW-Madison)**

**October 19:** **“Rural life after urbanization: water and territory in Los Tuxtlas, Mexico”** \*This talk will be given LIVE in 206 Ingraham\* Presented by [*Antonio Azuela de la Cueva,*](https://www.iis.unam.mx/investigacion/investigadores/investigadores-de-estudios-urbanos-y-regionales/dr-azuela-de-la-cueva-antonio/) Researcher of Urban and Regional Studies, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico.

**Prompt 4:** What conceptual frameworks are needed to understand the meaning and the role of water in the human economy?

*Even the rain. Dir.* Icíar Bollain.

Erica Simmons[, “Market Reforms and Water Wars”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=21566973)

Water and Citizenship in Medellín (Colombia). [*O comemos o pagamos*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGQTLz_vFbY)Dir. Marcela López.(\*)

[“Struggling for Public, Reclaiming Citizenship: Every Day Practices of Access to Water in Medellín, Colombia”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/91863/files?preview=3431583)

<http://contestedurbanwaterscapes.net/analytical_framework/> ”.

**Oct 25 POVERTY/INEQUALITY.** (With Brent Hueth, Prof. Emeritus Dept of Agricultural Economics, UW-Madison, currently Chief Economist at USDA)

**Prompt 5:** What different conceptualizations of poverty emerge from these readings? How do these conceptualizations influence economic strategies? Make a case for a transdisciplinary research.

**Data**

US/OECD

<https://www.irp.wisc.edu/resources/how-is-poverty-measured/>

<https://data.oecd.org/inequality/poverty-rate.htm>

World Bank

<https://datatopics.worldbank.org/world-development-indicators/themes/poverty-and-inequality.html>

**Articles**

Development Review, Read p. 130 [“Open Veins of Latin America: A Re-Appraisal 50 Years On.” *Stephen McCloskey*](https://www.developmenteducationreview.com/sites/default/files/Issue%2032%20.pdf#page=133)

Arturo Escobar [“Imagining post-development…”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=14042812)

[Arturo Escobar’s talk on Pluriversal Politics](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCiDt27jZyA)

Barlow, S. (2021) [A review of ‘Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World’ by Arturo Escobar](https://routesjournal.org/2021/04/06/r2043/). *Routes* 1(3): 344-351.

Daly and Farley [*Ecological economics*](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=13985365). (Intro and first two chapters)

**Check out as well**

+Walter Pengue [*Economía ecológica*](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=13985363)*.*

+Arturo Escobar [“Transiciones…”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=14002637)

**November 2**

**W5 – HEALTH, RACE AND GENDER.** (Pablo Gómez, Associate Professor of History, UW-Madison and Lori DiPrete Brown, Global Health Institute, Director 4W Initiative)

Lori DiPrete Brown [“Feminist Leadership and 4W Initiative](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=14263931)”

**“**[The Reactive Left: Gender Equality and the Latin American Pink Tide.](https://academic.oup.com/sp/article/24/4/345/4775169?guestAccessKey=38201593-98a6-45f8-b76a-e99385def4b4)**” (with Merike Blofield and Jennifer M. Piscopo).**

TBA

**Nov 9: Energy**

**Prompt 7:** Why does an understanding of the energy flows between the city and the country and the “North” and “South” require multidisciplinary engagement?

Dominic Boyer [*Energopolitics.*](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=14042250) Chapter 5 and Conclusion. OR

[“Winds of Desire: Energy and Sovereigny in Southern Mexico” Lecure by Dominic Boyer](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYQyl6YvBj4)

*When Two Worlds Collide*: Dir. Heidi Brandenburg, Mathew Orzel.

Susana Sawyer [“Subterranean Techniques: Corporate Environmentalism, Oil Operation and the Social Injustice in the Ecuadorian Rain Forest.”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=13985371)

**Check out also:**

[Crude](https://dll.lss.wisc.edu/player/player.php?item_id=1029)(2009). Dir. Joe Berlinger.

Imre Szeman. [“Crude Aesthetics; The Politics of Oil Documentaries”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=13985360)

**W9 – Nov 16:**

**Education/Pedagogy (with Kate Vieira, Associate Professor of Curriculum and Instruction, UW, Madison)**

**Prompt 6:** Your favorite points from the readings, doubts, and other ideas. Consider disciplinary divisions and education for peace, climate and equality.

Luis Iñaki Prádanos [“Pedagogy of Degrowth”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=13985357)

Shari Stenberg [“Liberation Theology and Liberatory Pedagogies”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=14322540)

Kate Vieira [“Writing, Mobility and Power”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/257892/files?preview=21582432)

**W10 Nov. 23– AGRICULTURE/PLANTATIONOCENE/RURAL/URBAN**

**Prompt 8:** The dynamics of plantations on local and global levels. How do we research them without missing important insights?

Kregg Hetherington [“Agribiopolitics](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=13985516)”

[Video of Kregg’s lecture](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLg3QfCI5WI)

Gaston Gordillo [“The Metropolis.”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=14040837)

Amy Moran Thomas [*Traveling with Sugar,* “Past is Prologue”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=14040877)

Kata Beilin and Sainath Suryanarayanan [“The War between Amaranth and Soy”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/204953/files?preview=13985358)

[Robin Canul “Perspectives of Development in Yucatan” (lecture)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2DgUl-TMt_Q&list=PLrGIUXBT8J4ZRYuz7Mx-eDrt8tngxZQaT&index=4)

**Check out also:**

[Sunu](https://dll.lss.wisc.edu/player/player.php?item_id=1354)*.* Dir. Teresa Camou

Thanksgiving.

**Nov. 30 WORK and FIELD WORK**

**Prompt 9: Labor and Work (connect to our class on Economy)**

**Prompt 10: What did not work in the American geographers’ expedition in Oaxaca?**

**Work**

[Maquilopolis](https://dll.lss.wisc.edu/player/player.php?item_id=659)(2006)Dir. Vicki Funari and Sergio de la Torre.

[Sleep Dealer](https://dll.lss.wisc.edu/player/player.php?item_id=277)(2008) Dir. Alex Rivera.

**Field work**

Paul Voosen [“The Oaxaca Incident”](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/254779/files?preview=20337993)

**Additional readings:**

Ramor Ryan “Mapping Controversy in Oaxaca” <http://upsidedownworld.org/archives/mexico/mapping-controversy-in-oaxaca-interview-with-aldo-gonzalez-indigenous-rights-officer-of-unosjo/>

Cyril Michalejo and Ramor Ryan “US Millitary Funding Project in Oaxaca”

<http://upsidedownworld.org/archives/mexico/us-military-funded-mapping-project-in-oaxaca-university-geographers-used-to-gather-intelligence/>

Peter Canby “Retreat to subsistence.”

<https://www.thenation.com/article/retreat-subsistence/>

**W7 – Dec. 8 Immigration** (With Professor Jenna Nobles, Department of Sociology, UW-Madison)

TBA

Rodrigo Domínguez-Villegas [“Central American Migrants and ‘La Bestia’”](https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/central-american-migrants-and-)

Patrick Barkham [“La Bestia, the hit song…”](https://www.theguardian.com/world/shortcuts/2014/jul/16/la-bestia-song-commissioned-us-border-control-stop-immigration)

*Sin nombre.*  Dir. Cary Joji Fukunaga

**W14 – Dec. 8 Final student presentations.**