**Syllabus**

HIST 493/708 (INTS 498) - Environment, Export Economies, and Workers in Latin America

**Professor:** Dr. Benjamin Bryce
**Term:** Fall 2014
**Time:** Tuesdays, 14:00-17:00
**Location:** 5-121
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**Office Hours:** Tuesdays, 13:00-14:00 and by appointment

**Course Description:** This course explores the relationship between workers, the environment, and capital in Latin America and with international consumers. It focuses on the emergence of agricultural export economies and the communities involved in environmental and economic change. We will examine common themes in the unique histories of many countries in Latin America, and the course will provide students with a greater understanding of environmental and labour history in the region. It situates Latin America in an international context and highlights the role of other regions of the world in social and economic changes in Latin America.

**Learning Objectives:**

1. A greater understanding of Latin American history.
2. A greater understanding of the place of Latin America in world history.
3. A greater ability to critically discuss historiography.
4. An introduction to archival research.
5. Increased experience working with primary documents.

**Course Structure:** Class time in this seminar course will be dedicated to group discussions of assigned reading, student presentations, and discussions of research projects. Written assignments will build on the topics examined in class, but they will require additional reading.

**Evaluation for HIST 493 and INTS 498:** (for MA students enrolled in HIST 708, see modified grade scheme below)

1. Participation 25%
2. In-class presentation 10%
3. Description of online archival sources, 500 words, September 30 10%
4. Primary document analysis, 1500-1800 words, October 28 20%
5. Essay, 3000-4000 words, November 25 35%

1. **Participation.** As a fourth-year seminar, discussion is an important part of this course, and students will learn from one another. Students are expected to attend class every week and actively participate in the discussion of the readings. Students will be required to read approximately 110 pages per week, and they should demonstrate a mastery of the readings and share some critical thoughts about the arguments presented. Contributions to the discussion should be based on the readings and be respectful to classmates.
2. **In-class presentation.** Dates to be chosen in the first week of class. Each student will have to make one presentation to the group (between 5 and 7 minutes) on the main themes that appear in the week’s assigned readings. Students should be able to identify the main arguments of the readings and connect the readings to the general themes of the course.

3. **Description of online archival sources.** 500 words. Students are asked to locate and describe the contents of at least one online archive that could be used to carry out in-depth research on one of the course themes.

4. **Primary document analysis.** 1500-1800 words. Students are asked to write a short research paper based on at least five separate primary documents (each document should range in length from 1 to 15 pages) and citing the assigned course readings where appropriate. Students are encouraged to draw their sources from the online archive that they described for assignment 3. If this proves too difficult, students can instead find primary documents in any of the following three books: *The Costa Rica Reader, The Brazil Reader*, and *The Cuba Reader* (Duke University Press). They are on reserve in the library and contain hundreds of primary documents about these three countries.

5. **Essay.** 3000-4000 words. Students will be asked to write a historiographic research essay. Students must identify and analyze a historiographic debate found in at least ten publications (books or articles). Outside research is required, and at least ten books or articles not assigned in this course must be examined. Students can analyze research assigned in class in addition to ten other publications. The topic is open but it must relate to one of the main themes of the course. A list of possible topics will be circulated in class, but students are free to pick their own topic after discussing it with Dr. Bryce.

**Evaluation for HIST 708:** The due dates for HIST 708 differ because there is an extra written assignment. Assignments are weighted differently and are more challenging than for undergraduate students.

1. Participation 20%
2. In-class presentation, dates assigned in first class 10%
3. Archival description, 800 words, September 30 10%
4. Primary document analysis, 1800 words, October 28 20%
5. Book review, 600-800 words, November 18 10%
6. Essay, 3500-4500 words, December 16 or earlier 30%

1. **Participation.** As a graduate seminar, discussion is extremely important, and students will learn from one another. Students are expected to attend class every week and actively participate in the discussion of the readings. Students will be required to read approximately 110 pages per week, and they should demonstrate a mastery of the readings and engage critically with the arguments presented. Contributions to the discussion should be based on the readings and be respectful to classmates.

2. **In-class presentation.** Dates to be chosen in the first week of class. Graduate students will have to make one presentation to the group (between 6 and 8 minutes) on the main themes that appear in the week’s assigned readings. Students should be able to identify the main arguments of the readings and connect the readings to the general topics of the course.
3. **Archival description.** 800 words. Students are asked to locate and describe the contents of at least one archive that could be used to carry out research on one of the course themes. This archive can be online or in a physical location. For a physical archive (located anywhere in the world), students will have to consult the archive’s finding aids.

4. **Primary document analysis.** 1800 words. Students will be asked to write a short research paper based on at least eight separate primary documents (each document should range in length from 1 to 15 pages) and citing the assigned course readings where appropriate. If you described an online archive for assignment 3, your sources can come from that online archive. Students can find primary documents in any of the following three books: *The Costa Rica Reader*, *The Brazil Reader*, and *The Cuba Reader* (Duke University Press). They are on reserve at the library and contain hundreds of primary documents about these three countries.

5. **Book review.** 600-800 words. Students will be asked to write a review of an academic book, following examples of other book reviews. Students can search for reviews of the five assigned monographs used in this course in journals such as the *American Historical Review*, the *Hispanic American Historical Review*, or *The Americas*. Students are advised to review a book published since 1990 and one that they will use in assignment 6. If students choose a book published after 2012, they can consult with Dr. Bryce about submitting a revised version of their review to an academic journal.

6. **Essay.** 3500-4500 words. Students will be asked to write a historiographic research essay. Students must identify and analyze a historiographic debate found in at least fourteen publications (books or articles). Outside research is required, and at least fourteen books or articles not assigned in this course must be examined. Students can also analyze the assigned course readings when appropriate, but this must be in addition to fourteen new publications. The topic is open but it must relate to one of the main themes of the course. A list of possible topics will be circulated in class, but students are free to pick their own topic after discussing it with Dr. Bryce.

**Readings:**

All readings are mandatory. Journal articles can be downloaded from Blackboard or accessed via the library’s catalogue. The following books are on sale at the UNBC bookstore and are on reserve at the library.


Course Overview:

September 9
- Introduction
- Readings:
  - You are expected to have a general understanding of the political geography of Latin America.
    - Play this game at home: http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/country_SoAmCA_G4_name_input.html

September 16
- Commodities and Science
- Readings:

September 23
- Environmental Change in Brazil
- Readings:
  - Dean. *Brazil and the Struggle for Rubber*. Chapters 5-Conclusion (pp. 67-168)

September 30
- Sugar and Workers in Brazil
- Readings:

**HIST 493: Description of online archival source. Due September 30**

October 7
- Labour and Race in Brazil
- Readings:
  - Rogers. *The Deepest Wounds*. Chapters 5-Conclusion (pp. 125-218)

October 14
- Race and Gender in the Caribbean
• Readings:

**Last day to withdraw without academic penalty. October 16**

October 21
• Labour Migration in the Caribbean
• Readings:
  o Putnam. *The Company They Kept*. Chapters: 4-Conclusion (pp. 112-217).

October 28
• Fruit in the Caribbean
• Readings:

**HIST 493: Primary document analysis. Due October 28**

November 4
• Landscapes and Science
• Readings:
  o Soluri. *Banana Cultures*. Chapters 3-6 (pp. 75-192)

November 11 - Remembrance Day
• No class

November 18
• Northern Consumption
• Readings:

**HIST 493: Essay. Due November 25**

November 25
• South-North Connections
• Readings:
  o Tinsman. *Buying into the Regime*. Chapters 3-5 (pp. 103-254).
**Blackboard:** This course uses Blackboard. Detailed descriptions of the assignments will be posted on Blackboard at least two weeks before the due date. Students should check this site regularly. Grades will not be posted to the Grade Centre in Blackboard.

**Definition of Grades:** Papers for this course will be marked according to the scale set by the History Department. An “A” essay is an excellent piece of work, which argues a clearly developed and challenging thesis, the proof of which is grounded in an exceptional usage of relevant primary and/or secondary literature. The research should demonstrate both critical evaluation and creativity while the writing should be sophisticated, coherent, and grammatically sound. In order to receive a final grade in the range of A- to A+, students will be expected to demonstrate consistently: independence of thought; subtle and complex analysis; the ability to grasp, articulate, and respond to arguments offered by others; and an exceptional understanding of the interpretations and information contained in assigned readings and lectures or considered in classroom discussions.

A “B” essay demonstrates good research skills, a clearly stated thesis, and a generally successful attempt to develop it logically, based upon secondary literature. The research should reflect an above-average development of ideas and criticism, while the writing should be clear and demonstrate a basic competence in organizational skills and grammar. As such, there should be few grammatical or structural errors. In order to receive a final grade in the range of B- to B+, students will be expected to demonstrate: the potential to engage in independent thought; an appreciation of the complexity of the issues under consideration; and a good understanding of the interpretations and information contained in assigned readings and lectures or considered in classroom discussions.

A “C” essay demonstrates that the author possesses a basic understanding of the material and some of the secondary literature, but has unsuccessfully endeavoured to articulate a thesis. While revealing knowledge, comprehension, and some application of information, usually the work also contains grammatical, structural, and organizational errors or flaws. Overall, the essay is adequate but uninspired. In order to receive a final grade in the range of C- to C+, students will be expected to demonstrate some awareness of the complexity of the issues under consideration and a satisfactory understanding of the interpretations and information contained in assigned readings and lectures or considered in classroom discussions.

A “D” essay fails to make its case or articulate a thesis. It is marked by a combination of illogical thinking, grammatical errors, flawed research, or a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of the assignment. There is little application, analysis, or integration of ideas, and the essay generally fails to demonstrate a working knowledge of the topic at hand. In order to receive a final grade of D, students will be expected to demonstrate minimal competence. Although there may be evidence of an understanding of certain aspects of the interpretations and information contained in assigned readings and lectures or considered in classroom discussion, there is also evidence of difficulty in applying or communicating this understanding.

An “F” essay is inadequate in that it demonstrates fragmentary and often undigested information. It tends towards compiling rather than analyzing information and reveals a weakness in critical or analytical skills. The use of literature is often severely limited if not inappropriate or irrelevant. Overall, the essay is marked by a profound absence of thinking about the topic or the assignment. In order to receive a final grade of F, students will have failed to give evidence of being intellectually engaged in the subject matter of the course and will have failed to demonstrate even a minimal
understanding of the interpretations and information contained in assigned readings and lectures or considered in classroom discussions.

**Evaluation of Written Work:** Assignments will be returned accompanied by comments noting areas that need attention. Assignments will only be returned to the writer. Questions about grades cannot be answered effectively by e-mail. Please read carefully the Definition of Grades (above) before discussing your grade on an assignment with Dr. Bryce. If you ask for an assignment to be reconsidered, note that your grade could go either up or down.

**E-mail Policy:** Please use e-mail to communicate with me only for administrative matters. Please come to the scheduled office hours to address questions that you have or raise them in class. If you cannot make it to my office hours, please e-mail me to set up an alternative appointment. I will respond to e-mails within 48 hours, so please do not leave your inquiries to the last minute. Please take the time to compose a formal e-mail. Assignments will not be accepted by email. Please use your UNBC e-mail address to communicate with me, and please check this e-mail account regularly to receive updates about this course.

**Writing Centres:** Take advantage of the free services offered at the drop-in writing centre in the library (http://www.unbc.ca/academic-success-centre/library-writing-centre). The Academic Success Centre also provides helpful services to students for free (http://www.unbc.ca/academic-success-centre).

**Technology Etiquette in the Classroom:** Laptops may be used in class, but only for note taking. I advise that you print a copy of the notes that you take on the assigned readings and participate in class discussions using those notes. Please turn off your cellphones before class begins. It is inappropriate to surf the web or send text messages during any class at the University of Northern British Columbia.

**Twitter:** Feel free to follow me on Twitter (@BenjaminBryce2). I tweet articles about university affairs, graduate school, Latin America, and history. I will also use the hashtag #hist493 to tweet articles, images, and songs related to course topics. All students are welcome to use this hashtag and to tweet articles, movies, images, and songs related to Latin America as well. Please remember to compose all tweets using the professional language that is expected in the classroom at the University of Northern British Columbia. Using Twitter is not a requirement for this course. No important course content will be distributed over Twitter. The hashtag #hist493 exists only to share related materials and to create a sense of community.

**Submission of written work and lateness penalty:** Assignments are due in class on the date specified in this syllabus. Late submission of an assignment will be penalized by deducting five percentage points per day (excluding weekends). If an assignment is not handed in during class, it is considered a day late. Late assignments will not be accepted after one week without a valid medical certificate. Late assignments can be submitted to Georgia Montgomery, the administrative assistant in the Department of History (on the third floor of the Administration Building), who will date-stamp the submitted work. If you do submit an assignment to the department, inform Dr. Bryce of this with an e-mail. The Department of History will not be held responsible for any late assignments that go missing. Be sure to retain a copy of your paper and keep all your notes and drafts. If you have extenuating circumstances that will prevent you from submitting your assignment on time, discuss your situation with Dr. Bryce before the due date.
Illness and absences: Notify Dr. Bryce as soon as possible if a serious illness or other concern is affecting your ability to keep up with the course. It is also wise to contact the UNBC Wellness Centre or the Registrar’s Office if you are experiencing academic or personal difficulties.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism: Authors do not cite sources properly merely to avoid accusations of plagiarism but also to establish credibility, bring other work to the reader’s attention, and demonstrate competing viewpoints.

The University of Northern British Columbia takes academic honesty very seriously. Any suspected cases of plagiarism will be investigated. More information on the University’s procedures on academic offences can be found here: http://www.unbc.ca/calendar/undergraduate/regulations

The code of academic conduct disallows the following:

• to represent as one’s own any idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work, i.e. to commit plagiarism;
• to submit, without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study in the university or elsewhere.

Accessibility and Accommodations: Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability/health consideration that may require course format accommodation, please feel free to approach Dr. Bryce to discuss your needs. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact the Access Resource Centre for Students with Disabilities at arc@unbc.ca (http://www.unbc.ca/access-resource-centre/contact).

Student Conduct: The University of Northern British Columbia is an academic community whose purpose is to search for knowledge through teaching, research, and the free exchange of ideas. As such, UNBC is committed to developing among its members an enduring sense of community rooted in a working and learning environment which emphasizes mutual respect and tolerance and which is free from discrimination, harassment, disruptive behaviour, and violence. The members of the UNBC community include students, faculty, staff, administrators, governors, senators, and, in certain contexts, visitors. In order for the members of the university community to participate fully and effectively in the university’s purpose, certain standards of conduct must be recognized and respected. The university’s policy and procedures involving disruptive and/or harassing behaviour by students in academic situations is available on this website: http://www.unbc.ca/calendar/undergraduate/regulations