



# CITY AS LANDSCAPE IN LATIN AMERICA

LAA 6905

Spring Semester 2020

3 credit hours

Tim Murtha [tmurtha@ufl.edu](mailto:tmurtha@ufl.edu)

Center for Latin American Studies

Office (Catalyst Building and 456 ARC) Hours: Wednesdays 10:00 to 12:00pm and by appointment

## **Course Overview:**

---

Relying on the lens of landscape urbanism, this graduate seminar examines the past, present and future of cities and their landscape context in Latin America. We will review processes of urbanization and their ecological settings, studying cities and settlements as complex socio-ecological systems. Home to some of the world's earliest cities and dense settlements, we will survey early urban forms in order to provide a spatial and temporal foundation for the rapid changes occurring today. Relying on readings drawn from anthropology, architecture, design and planning, students will have the opportunity to explore emerging ecological urbanism in Latin America along with the challenges facing communities in the context of complex issues like climate change and population pressure. Over the course of the semester each student will have the opportunity to explore spatially and temporally a specific city or region in depth creatively documenting the issues and opportunities facing communities. These explorations can be presented in a variety of media, e.g., design, print, video, or cartography. The core purpose of the seminar is to critically review the past and present as a means to think creatively about the future of city and landscape in Latin America.

## Course Goals/Objectives:

---

- Understand fundamental concepts about urbanism, urbanization, and urban society.
- Explore theoretical perspectives on cities, especially those related to settlement ecology and landscape urbanism.
- Apply the ideas of landscape urbanism and urban design to examine, investigate, and evaluate Latin American cities in the ecological and social contexts.
- Critique contemporary urban design theory and especially its application beyond design disciplines.
- Survey emerging patterns of urbanism in Latin America in order to relate these patterns to global discussions of sustainability and resilience.

## Assignments and Grading:

---

Weekly Discussion Questions:	10
Seminar Lead:	15
Interim Papers:	30
Final Research Paper/Capstone Project:	45
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100</b>

### Weekly Discussion and Discussion Questions (10)

As an ongoing element of the course, students must submit at least two thoughtful and detailed discussion questions for assigned weekly readings by 9:00AM each Monday. Discussion questions are a graded element of the course and should be complex multi-tiered questions. They should provoke discussion, while demonstrating comprehension of the weeks' readings.

### Seminar Lead (15)

During the ~4th week of the semester, each student (or groups) will select a weekly topic during the semester and lead the discussion for the readings.

### Interim Papers (30)

Three interim papers (1000 to 1500 words) will be prepared and submitted by students. The papers respond to specific topics in the course, but provide a foundation for the final research paper/capstone project. Simply, well considered interim papers can be edited and integrated into the final research paper/capstone project.

### Final Research Paper/Project (45)

A manuscript length research paper (~7500 words) on the general topic of City and Landscape in Latin America is due April 23, 2018. The paper should be based on original research and describe the results of an empirical study or creative inquiry. Alternative media for submissions are possible with discussion. For example a student may identify a design competition or a poster session that they wish to prepare for that directly relates with the seminar. All effort will be made to accommodate student interests, please keep an open line of communication if you are deviating from a paper and be sure to get approval early in the semester.

### ***Course Structure/Topics/Schedule:***

---

The course, like all graduate seminars, will benefit greatly from your participation and peer interaction throughout the semester. Several weekly assignments require you to formally participate through responses to readings, facilitating discussions, and brief presentations, but please try to find ways to consistently engage seminar topics. This will not only benefit your own progression in the seminar, but all of us as we work on our individual and commonly multidisciplinary studies of cities in Latin America.

A weekly reading list will be provided at the beginning of the semester. Slight alterations may be necessary throughout the semester. A weekly outline of course material is located below.

<b>Theory and History</b>	<b>Week 1:</b>	Introduction to the course. What is a city?
	<b>Week 2:</b>	Urbanism, Urbanization and Latin America
	<b>Week 3:</b>	Early Cities and Urbanization in Latin America
<b>Analysis and Design</b>	<b>Week 4:</b>	The Natural History of Cities in Latin America
	<b>Weeks 5 and 6:</b>	Settlement Patterns and Settlement Ecology
	<b>Weeks 7 and 8:</b>	Cities and Landscapes as Socio-Ecological Systems
	<b>Weeks 9 and 10:</b>	Urban Design and Landscape Urbanism
	<b>Week 11:</b>	High Density Landscapes and Informal Settlements
<b>Future of Cities</b>	<b>Week 12:</b>	Climate, Climate Change, and Disasters
	<b>Week 13:</b>	Emerging Ecological Urbanism, Sustainability, and Resilience in Latin American Cities
	<b>Week 14:</b>	The future of cities in Latin America

### ***Writing***

---

Writing and developing good habits as related to writing and editing is a challenge. There are opportunities at UF to help students develop these skills. Please take advantage of these opportunities. See <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> for more information.

### ***Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution:***

---

It is important for students, especially in graduate seminars to feel safe discussing and describing their ideas as they relate to seminar topics and readings. While discussions may challenge students to think in new ways, we all must be thoughtful about the way we discuss our ideas and listen to each other. Seminars are my favorite setting as a teacher. They offer opportunities for creative thinking through discussion and listening. Students should be aware of the student conduct and conflict resolution resources available at UF: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu>

A quick thought about ideas, originality, and plagiarism. Work hard and be creative in this seminar. But also, be thorough and detailed as you conduct research so that you can properly and appropriately document original ideas. Simply, plagiarism of any kind is unacceptable. Any evidence of plagiarism will be documented using the appropriate mechanisms at UF. Again, please see: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu> if you have any questions.