Description

In 1977, the authors of a book on inequality in Peru argued that "the problems of ‘race’... are of only peripheral significance in Spanish America." Today, very few analysts would agree with such statement. Recent scholarly trends, as well as current developments in the region, have combined to bring race, ethnicity, and related issues to the forefront of political as well as academic debates. The "problems of race" are far from insignificant, and any attempt to understand contemporary Latin America from a historical perspective should take into account the evolution of racial ideas and practices in the region. This seminar attempts to examine the social, cultural, and political constructions of race and ethnicity in modern Latin America and their connections with the processes of class, gender, and national formation in the region.

Requirements

Attendance, participation, and weekly discussion questions: 20%

Attendance is mandatory. More than one unjustified absence will automatically be penalized with one letter grade. Participation is evaluated on the basis of the student’s engagement with the discussions in class and the quality of the weekly written reports. These reports should include: short summaries of at least three key arguments presented by the author(s) under review, and at least three stimulating questions for discussion in class.

Oral Presentation: 20%

Every week, one or two students will be in charge of leading the discussion by offering a critical reading of the materials and presenting issues and themes to the rest of the class. These presentations will last about 10-15 minutes each. Students should avoid offering lengthy summaries of the readings and must focus, instead, on addressing theoretical, historiographical, comparative, and critical issues stemming out of the reading(s). A meeting with the instructor before the actual presentation is recommended, and an outline should be prepared for distribution in class.

Paper proposal (due on week 3): 10%

This will consist of one page describing the topic of the paper, the research question that the student seeks to address, the sources to be used, and a tentative bibliography. Although late proposals will be accepted, they will not receive any credit.
Final research paper (12-15 pages for undergraduates, 15-20 for graduates): 50%.
Students will choose a topic related to the content of the course and use the best and up-to-date bibliography available on their topic. Except in special cases, students are expected to make use of primary sources. I will be available for consultation on paper topics and bibliographical assistance.

Readings: All books are available for purchase at the UO Bookstore, and will be placed on reserve at Knight Library. Articles and book chapters will be available through Blackboard.

Schedule of Sessions and Readings

**Week 1**: Introduction / Videos and discussion: “Race: The Floating Signifier” and “Mirrors of the Heart”

**Week 2**: Indians and the Nation-State in Nineteenth-Century Andean Societies

Required Reading:

**Week 3**: Race, Nation, and Science **PAPER PROPOSALS DUE**

Required Reading:

**Week 4**: Representations of Indians and the Making of Indigenismo in Spanish America

Required reading:

**Week 5**: Deconstructing Mestizaje

Required Readings:

Week 6: Brazil and the Myth of Racial Democracy

Required Readings:


Week 7: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender

Required readings:


Week 8: Indigenous Social Movements

Required Reading:


Weeks 9 and 10: No classes. Individual meetings will be scheduled.

**FINAL PAPERS DUE: Wednesday, June 10, 5 pm.**