

CRN#80092
HIS5385: A Seminar on the History of Latin American Commodities
Section 01; Credit Hours: 3; Fall 2017
Distance Learning
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Office Hours: MWF, 1-4PM, or by appointment
Tentative and subject to revision



At the first glance, a commodity seems a commonplace sort of thing...[but] it is a very queer thing indeed, full of metaphysical subtleties and theological whimsies.

- - Marx, *Capital*

Course Description: This course explores the economic, political, social, cultural, and environmental history of Latin America through the study of commodities either originating or produced in the region and consumed globally. Domestication and evolution of the products are traced, as are their evolutions from traditional goods to expensive luxuries, to commonplace and inexpensive items.

Learning Outcomes

- To gain factual knowledge
- To develop skill in written expression
- To learn to analyze and critically evaluate ideas
- To finish the course with a well-crafted set of essays to utilize in preparation for comprehensive exams

Writing: This is a graduate-level, writing-intensive course. 100% of your course grade will derive from written assignments based upon the rigorous graduate-level readings designed to help you master course objectives. Writing in this course is one of the tools your instructor will use to help you learn course material. All work must be carefully organized, edited, grammatically correct, and clearly argued. **YOU MUST EMPLOY TURABIAN!**

Five Required Books:

1. Marcy Norton, *Sacred Gifts, Profane Pleasures: A History of Tobacco and Chocolate in the Atlantic World*
2. Nicholas A. Robins, *Mercury, Mining, and Empire: The Human and Ecological Cost of Colonial Silver Mining in the Andes. Available as E-Book via NGL.**
3. John Soluri, *Banana Cultures: Agriculture, Consumption, and Environmental Change in Honduras and the United States. Available as E-Book via NGL.**
4. Paul Gootenberg, *Andean Cocaine: The Making of a Global Drug. Available as E-Book via NGL.**
5. Gabriela Soto Laveaga, *Jungle Laboratories: Mexican Peasants, National Projects and the Making of the Pill. Available as E-Book via NGL.**
6. **You must have available a copy of *The Chicago Manual of Style* or Turabian's *A Manual for Writers***

* Please see instructions for E-Book usage on Blackboard. Follow instructions, please.

Class Requirements: This course is a graduate seminar. Each student is expected to fully participate and carefully prepare. Read each assignment and take notes, thinking about the author's work.

Assignments: Book reviews: You will read five (5) books. You will write reviews (5-pages each) for each of them. Each review is worth 20% of your grade for a total of 100% of your final grade. The length of the review is what you would be asked to do if you were actually writing a review for a historical journal. Writing reviews of this length is actually far more challenging than writing a longer review: every word counts in terms of effectively communicating helpful information to your reader about a book you assume they have not read. The books to be reviewed are assigned, required reading for the course. In other words, you do not need to do any extra reading to write these reviews. The book reviews should offer critical analyses of the books. Your reviews should have a thesis (positive or negative) that takes into account the arguments and evidence presented by the authors. No late work shall be accepted, nor will make up opportunities be provided.

SHSU Writing Center: What can the Writing Center do for you? The Sam Houston Writing Center helps students become better writers and to develop more confidence in their writing abilities. Online tutoring via Skype is available for graduate students in our online MA program. Writing Center tutors provide one-on-one writing instruction. We help students learn prewriting, revising, and editing skills by working with them on the writing tasks they bring in.

- Organize your paper
 - Improve your writing style
 - Identify and correct grammatical errors
 - Interpret an instructor's comments on graded papers and make suggestions on how to avoid specific problems
 - Teach you proofreading techniques
 - [Online tutoring is available via Skype](#)
 - 936-294-3680
 - WCTR@SHSU.EDU
- Appointments recommended!*

Grading:

A 90-100	B 80-89	C 70-79	D 60-69
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Tentative Course Outline

Week 1	Reading: The first week you should be engaging all Tools & Resources. You will send a photograph of yourself at your workstation with your manual of style clearly and proudly displayed.	Book Review Due Dates
Weeks 2&3	Marcy Norton, <i>Sacred Gifts, Profane Pleasures: A History of Tobacco and Chocolate in the Atlantic World</i>	
Week 4	Norton Review Due	Saturday 9/16 7:59 AM
Weeks 5&6	Nicholas A. Robins, <i>Mercury, Mining, and Empire: The Human and Ecological Cost of Colonial Silver Mining in the Andes</i>	
Week 7	Robins Review Due	Saturday 10/7 7:59 AM
Weeks 8&9	John Soluri, <i>Banana Cultures: Agriculture, Consumption, and Environmental Change in Honduras and the United States</i>	
Week 10	Soluri Review Due	Saturday 10/28 7:59 AM
Weeks 11&12	Paul Gootenberg, <i>Andean Cocaine: The Making of a Global Drug</i>	
Week 13	Gootenberg Review Due	Saturday 11/18 7:59 AM

Week 14&15	Gabriela Soto Laveaga: <i>Jungle Laboratories: Mexican Peasants, National Projects and the Making of the Pill</i>	
Week 16	Laveaga Review Due	Saturday 12/9 7:59 AM

Academic Dishonesty: All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

University Code of Conduct and Discipline: <https://netreg.shsu.edu/mirror/codeofconduct.html>

Students with Disabilities Policy: It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Lee Drain Annex (telephone 936-294-3512, TDD 936-294-3786, and e-mail disability@shsu.edu). They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired. SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Services for Students with Disabilities.

Religious Holidays: Section 51.911 (b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. "Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.

Visitors in the Classroom: Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the professor. In all cases, visitors must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar's Office.

Academic and Student Support Services: A full range of services is available through the University to assist you with developing strategies for a successful academic career. They include, but are not limited to reading and writing centers, and services for students with disabilities. The [SAM Center](#) is dedicated to helping students adjust to academic life at Sam Houston State University. Services available include career testing, aid with time management, and study skills. Other student support services may be found at: <http://www.shsu.edu/gradcat/07-09/studsuppserv.html>