Latin America encompasses a vast region of diverse cultures, economies, and political actors. This course is designed to introduce students to the complexities of the region—its commonalities as well as its distinctiveness. We will examine Latin America thematically with an emphasis on how history helps to understand and explain contemporary issues. Specifically, we will start with the colonial roots of Latin America and then proceed to investigate topics such as the environment, urbanization, social upheaval, economic development, and human rights. We will discuss these issues in terms of class, gender, and race. The course will reveal how choices made in the past continue to have repercussions today—a situation especially relevant in an age of increased globalization. Students are expected to attend lectures, attend discussion sections, and read all assigned materials. The lectures and assigned readings will be supplemented with videos.