

MATERNAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH IN LATIN AMERICA

(SPAN 477/FALL 2023)

RZR 302-10:50-12:05

SYLLABUS

DRA. CLAIRE BRANIGAN

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Office:Rayzor Hall 228

Office Hours:

Wednesdays 10:00-12:00 (or appointment)



Las manos de la [partería tradicional en México](#)

This course will provide a humanities-based approach to examining maternal and reproductive health and medicine in Latin America. Special attention will be paid to the effects of colonization and the medicalization of pregnancy and birth, the intersection of authoritarian regimes, pregnancy, and birth, as well as current debates, social movements, and policy on reproductive healthcare in Latin America. This interdisciplinary course will draw on a variety of sources, including film, scholarly texts, and guest speakers.

Course Objectives:

- o Analyze the impacts of history, culture, and policy on maternal and reproductive health in Latin America.

- o Establish a working Spanish-language vocabulary around the topics of maternal and reproductive health in Latin America.
- o Assess different approaches (traditional, medical, evidence-based) to maternal and reproductive health in Latin America.
- o Present and write on topic of your choosing in Spanish.

Assignments and Assessments

Required Texts and Materials

****All readings will be available on Canvas (UNDER "FILES") or through hyperlinks on the syllabus****

● **Class participation/attendance**

- o This is a language course and therefore very important to participate in and attend class. The following two activities make up your participation grade:
- o **Leading class discussion (15%):** In pairs or on your own, students will lead one class discussion of their choice.
- o **Discussion questions (30%):** Students will submit via Canvas **one question per assigned reading or film** two hours prior to class (question will be graded complete/incomplete).
- Late discussion questions will not be accepted.
- Strong discussion questions will demonstrate that you **read and engaged** with the text (it's ok if you do not totally "get it").
- Strong discussion questions will build upon previous readings, discussions, and speakers.
- We will have several guest speakers throughout the semester. On these days, please prepare your questions for the guest speaker.

Creation of Course Blog

- Throughout the semester, we will construct a course blog featuring student writing on maternal and reproductive health in Latin America. Students will write and produce two pieces: one short and one "feature."
- Students will conduct peer review on their writing and work with the instructor on establishing topics. Students will produce two original pieces of writing that can be used as writing samples for future job or scholarship opportunities.

- To protect student privacy, the blog will not be viewable to the public. However, students will write in accessible language, as if the audience is the general public.
- Prof. Branigan will go over expectations and guidelines for the blog posts on **Thursday August 31**.
- **Short blog post (25%):** The first “post” will be a shorter piece (around 500 words). The topic can be on anything related to maternal and reproductive health in Latin America, past and/or present, however, the topic must be contextualized within a Latin American studies perspective that demonstrates the student's knowledge on the themes/topic.
- **Feature “final article” (30%):** The final “article” will be a longer piece 800-1000 words. This will allow students to explore a topic in depth.
 - Students will present their final piece to the class at the end of the semester.

CALENDARIO DE LECTURAS Y TRABAJOS

SEMANA 1: Introducción a la clase: términos principales

MARTES 22 DE AGOSTO: Introducción a la clase

JUEVES 24 DE AGOSTO: Introducción al contexto actual

Belli, Laura Florencia

2013 La violencia obstétrica: otra forma de violación a los derechos humanos. UNESCO. <https://ri.conicet.gov.ar/handle/11336/12868>.

[Lo que la Marea Verde nos ha enseñado a las mujeres latinoamericanas](#)

Opcional:

Castro, Arachu

2019 Witnessing Obstetric Violence during Fieldwork. Health and Human Rights 21(1): 103–111.

SEMANA 2: El parto precolombino y la colonización española

MARTES 29 DE AGOSTO:

DUE: FIRST DISCUSSION QUESTIONS UPLOADED TO CANVAS

Discussion leaders:

Gabrielle Vail

The Serpent Within: Birth Rituals and Midwifery Practices in Pre-Hispanic and Colonial Mesoamerican Cultures. Ethnohistory 1 October 2019; 66 (4): 689–719.

OPTIONAL:

Giasson, Patrice

2001 Tlazolteotl, deidad del abono, una propuesta. Estudios de Cultura Náhuatl 32.

JUEVES 31 DE AGOSTO: Colonización española y el impacto a la salud de las mujeres

Discussion leaders:

Vinueza, Gerardo León Guerrero

2008 El "Otro Oro" en la Conquista de América: las Mujeres Indias, el Surgimiento del Mestizaje. ESTUDIOS LATINOAMERICANOS (22–23): 9–25.

OPTIONAL:

Caballos, Esteban

2007 Terror, Violación y Pederastia En La Conquista de América: El Caso de Lázaro Fonte. Jahrbuch Für Geschichte Lateinamerikas 44.

SEMANA 3: La Partería tradicional hoy en día

MARTES 5 DE SEPTIEMBRE:

Discussion leaders:

"Stories of Giving Birth in Central America: Class Race and Politics in Women's Health"

Guest Speaker:

Miriam Vásquez—Especialista en la salud de las mujeres, Chinautla Guatemala

JUEVES 7 DE SEPTIEMBRE:

Discussion leaders:

DUE: 100-WORD PROPOSAL FOR FIRST BLOG POST TO BE E-MAILED TO PROF. BRANIGAN BY CLASS

WATCH: [Jats'uts Meyah - 2020](#)

OPTIONAL:

Berrio, Lina, and Paola Ma Sesia

2023 *Algunas Reflexiones Sobre “la Partería Tradicional”*. *Ichan Tecolotl - La Casa Del Tecolote* 34(374). <https://ichan.ciesas.edu.mx/presentacion-13/>.

Rodríguez Venegas, Viviana, Cory Duarte Hidalgo, Viviana Rodríguez Venegas, and Cory Duarte Hidalgo

2020 *SABERES ANCESTRALES Y PRÁCTICAS TRADICIONALES: EMBARAZO, PARTO Y PUERPERIO EN MUJERES COLLA DE LA REGIÓN DE ATACAMA*. *Diálogo Andino*(63). *Universidad de Tarapacá*: 113–122.

SEMANA 4: Embarazo y la construcción de “La nación”

MARTES 12 DE SEPTIEMBRE:

Discussion leaders:

Selecciones de:

Jaffary, Nora E.

2016 *Reproduction and Its Discontents in Mexico: Childbirth and Contraception from 1750 to 1905*. UNC Press Books.

JUEVES 14 DE SEPTIEMBRE:

“Parir con dignidad”

Charla con Apolonia Placido Casa de la Mujer Indígena, Nellys Palomo”, de San Luis Acatlán, Guerrero, Mexico.

SEMANA 5: El legado de la esclavitud

MARTES 19 DE SEPTIEMBRE:

Discussion leaders:

DUE: FIRST DRAFT OF 500 WORD BLOG POST, EMAIL TO WRITING PARTNER FOR PEER REVIEW/EMAIL TO PROF. BRANIGAN

Cowling, Camillia

2013 *Introduction Conceiving Freedom: Women of Color, Gender, and the Abolition of Slavery in Havana and Rio de Janeiro*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

[LA PARTERÍA Y LA RESISTENCIA DE LAS MUJERES AFROCOLOMBIANAS](#)

JUEVES 21 DE SEPTIEMBRE:

Discussion leaders:

DUE: BRING TO CLASS FEEDBACK FOR WRITING PARTNER

Introduction

Chapter Four

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy

1993 *Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*. University of California Press.

SEMANA 6: TBD

MARTES 26 DE SEPTIEMBRE:

Death Without Weeping, Chapters 7 and 8

JUEVES 28 DE SEPTIEMBRE:

MIRAR: *Ixcanul* (Kanopy)

SEMANA 7: Anticonceptivos

MARTES 3 DE OCTUBRE:

Discussion leaders:

Briggs, Laura

2012 *The Pill in Puerto Rico and Mainland United States Negotiating Discourses of Risk and Decolonization*. In *Governing the Female Body: Gender, Health, and Networks of Power*. Lori Reed and Paula Saukko, eds. Pp. 159–185. State University of New York Press.

JUEVES 5 DE OCTUBRE:

Discussion leaders:

DUE: EMAIL PROF. BRANIGAN FINAL VERSION OF FIRST BLOG POST

Felitti, Karina

2009 *Derechos Reproductivos y Políticas Demográficas En América Latina*. *Iconos. Revista de Ciencias Sociales*(núm. 35): 55–66.

SEMANA 8: El Terrorismo del Estado I (ARGENTINA)

MARTES 10 DE OCTUBRE:

NO CLASS-MIDTERM BREAK

JUEVES 12 DE OCTUBRE

Discussion leaders:

La Historia Oficial (1985) (En Kanopy)

Optional

Alvarez, Victoria, and Fabricio Laino Sanchis

2020 Maternidades En Cautiverio. Experiencias de Maternidad, Embarazo y Parto En Centros Clandestinos de Detención Durante La Última Dictadura Militar Argentina. *Mora* 26: 1–10.

SEMANA 9: El Terrorismo del Estado II (PERU)

MARTES 17 DE OCTUBRE:

Discussion leaders:

Molina Serra, Ainhoa

2017 Esterilizaciones (Forzadas) En Perú: Poder y Configuraciones Narrativas. *Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana* 12(1): 31–52.

JUEVES 19 DE OCTUBRE:

Discussion leaders:

[*La Teta Asustada \(2009\)*](#)

SEMANA 10: Adopción o apropiación?

MARTES 24 DE OCTUBRE:

Discussion leaders:

[*Dime quién soy*](#) (Radio Ambulante)

[*The incredible story of Edmond Mulet and the children he "exported" | Plaza Pública*](#)

Opcional:

Posocco, Silvia

2022 Harvesting Life, Mining Death: Adoption, Surrogacy and Forensics across Borders. *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience* 8(1). Catalyst Project: 1–19.

JUEVES 26 DE OCTUBRE:

“Laberintos Personales”

CHARLA CON: Alejandra Perdomo, directora

SEMANA 11: Derechos reproductivos

MARTES 31 DE OCTUBRE:

Discussion leaders:

Sutton, Barbara, and Nayla Luz Vacarezza

2023 Introduction: Abortion Rights Strategies in Argentina, Colombia, and Mexico.
South Atlantic Quarterly 122(2): 378–385.

JUEVES 2 DE NOVIEMBRE:

DUE: EMAIL PROF. BRANIGAN 100 WORD PROPOSAL FOR FINAL BLOG POST

CHARLA CON: Sandra Hoyos, fundadora de la Campaña Nacional por el Derecho al Aborto Legal, Seguro y Gratuito Colectivo Antirracista Identidad Marrón.

SEMANA 12: La frontera

MARTES 7 DE NOVIEMBRE:

Discussion leaders:

Carly Hayden Foster; Anchor Babies and Welfare Queens: An Essay on Political Rhetoric, Gendered Racism, and Marginalization. Women, Gender, and Families of Color 1 January 2017; 5 (1): 50–72.

JUEVES 9 DE NOVIEMBRE:

Discussion leaders:

On the Divide (2021)

SEMANA 13: TBD

MARTES 14 DE NOVIEMBRE:

DUE: FIRST DRAFT OF 800-1000 WORD BLOG POST, E-MAIL TO WRITING PARTNER FOR PEER REVIEW AND PROF. BRANIGAN

JUEVES 16 DE NOVIEMBRE:

DUE: BRING PEER-REVIEW FEEDBACK FOR WRITING PARTNER

SEMANA 14: TBD

MARTES 21 DE NOVIEMBRE: TBD

JUEVES 23 DE NOVIEMBRE: NO CLASS THANKSGIVING BREAK

SEMANA 15: TRABAJOS FINALES

MARTES 28 DE NOVIEMBRE: PRESENTACIONES DE LOS TRABAJOS FINALES

JUEVES 30 DE NOVIEMBRE: PRESENTACIONES DE LOS TRABAJOS FINALES

Course Policies

Absences

You have an allotted **three absences per semester. No questions asked.** If you exceed three absences, I will request documentation.

In Class Technology

Tablets and laptops are permitted for note taking. No phones. No recordings.

Accessibility/Accommodations

It is of utmost importance to me that this course is accessible to all Rice students, regardless of disability (physical, cognitive, emotional, invisible). For accommodations, I encourage you to contact the Disability Resource Center (Allen Center, Room 111 | adarice@rice.edu | x5841 | <https://drc.rice.edu/>). You can always talk to me about accessibility, however working with the DRC can help you to establish accommodations without disclosing your condition or diagnosis to course instructors.

Content Sensitivity

This class will address violence including genocide as well as “everyday” forms of violence, including violence that is sexual in nature. While my goal is to focus on questions of resilience, justice, and repair, these topics are nevertheless challenging. As your instructor and as an advocate for survivors, I want this to be a supportive and affirming space for collective learning. Please know that you should never feel pressure to disclose any personal experiences. In the case that personal stories are shared, please remember to keep all information confidential.

Please take some time to review the syllabus. Most of the content is not graphic in nature, but it can still be emotionally challenging. If you would prefer not to engage with a specific reading, please let me know and I will work with you to find an alternative.

Honor Code

Plagiarism is defined at honor.rice.edu, under the link “Honor System Handbook” and then the link “Academic Fraud and the Honor System.”

Honor Code and AI:

In this class, we will produce **original** (and interesting!) content that will draw from course material and topics.

- You may use Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT for brainstorming ideas for blog posts. However, I would suggest just keeping up with current events in Latin America and doing course reading.
- You **may not** use Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT for drafting and completing written assignments.

Title IX Responsible Employee Notification

Be aware that all employees of Rice University are “mandatory reporters,” which means that if you tell me about a situation involving discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, I must share that information with someone, including the University’s Title IX Coordinator (titleix@rice.edu). Although I have to make that notification, you will control how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint.

Grading scale

A (93-100)
A- (90-92.9)
B+ (87-89.9)
B (83-86.9)
B- (80-82.9)
C+ (77-79.9)
C (73-76.9)
C- (70-72.9)
D+ (67-69.9)
D (63-66.9)
D- (60-62.9)
F<60