

Latin American Studies 100: Redesigning a Core Area Studies Course

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INTRODUCTION

Latin American Studies 100 (LAST100) is UBC's key contribution to undergraduate students' understanding of Latin America.



This project redesigned the course following a blended learning approach that implements technology as a key component in the teaching process, as well as a "flipped classroom" approach that views students as producers who actively participate in the creation of course materials.

Everything we produced is open and released with a CC-BY-NC creative commons license.

This redesign is a first step in the transformation and upgrade of UBC's educational offerings regarding this vital world region.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

We employed a blended learning approach incorporating technological resources which included: a web interface, blogs, video and audio lectures and interviews.

Students were fully involved as co-creators and producers in the development and implementation of the project.

"I like the region we are learning about and from this course I now have a better conception of it."

Materials for the course were produced and gathered by the project team and included video interviews, audio recordings, podcasts and blog entries from the teaching professor, guest speakers and the students themselves.

RESULTS

So far we have produced:

- A comprehensive website, at <http://arts.last100.ubc.ca>, displaying student blogs and other material.
- 6 videos of mini-lectures by the course professor about key Latin American topics.
- 7 interview videos with Latin American Studies faculty, focusing on the primary texts under discussion during the course, on topics from the Mexican revolution to Hugo Chávez.
- 7 videos made by the students as course assignments to develop and deepen their understanding of the course texts and concepts.
- All this in addition to material produced in previous years.

We are now adding Spanish subtitles and continue to work on new videos.

There were two methods of evaluating our results: a written survey handed to the students during class, and an oral focus group held after class. Both evaluation tools revealed that the blended learning approach worked well for the student's learning experience.

"The videos were very helpful, especially after reading a chapter."

Students appreciated the resources made for them, as well as the chance to explore new ways of expressing themselves through technology. Overall, the experience was seen as very positive and was welcomed by the students.



CONCLUSIONS

The redesign of LAST100 has been a success both inside and outside the classroom. As everything is open (the videos are on YouTube, for instance), these resources are also available for anyone interested in the topic, and constitute a contribution to teaching and learning throughout UBC and beyond.

"The blogs were a good length – long enough to express an idea."

We produced sustainable benefits for students. Each time that LAST100 is taught in the future, we will draw on and further build a growing archive of learning objects.



GOOOOOL!

Overall, this redesign has:

- Enhanced the overall learning experience.
- Improved students' knowledge and ability to produce their own multimedia learning materials.
- Encouraged interdisciplinary, interdepartmental and inter-institutional collaboration.
- Opened the course up beyond UBC.
- Produced resources that can be shared in other courses and other institutions, and with the public at large (2,500+ visits on YouTube).

Finally, we have created a platform and model where further contributions are expected and encouraged. A future stage of development with more videos will take place in the near future.

These results and conclusions will be disseminated at the 2016 ACH congress at the University of Calgary, and in a peer-reviewed educational journal.

VIDEO SCREENSHOTS



**Instructional Video #1:
Where is Latin America?**



**Interview (Week #7):
A conversation with Alec Dawson**



**Student Video: Commerce, Coercion,
and America's Empire II**

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Introduction to Latin American Studies
<http://last100.arts.ubc.ca/>