**Program Name:** Pitt in Bolivia: Culture & Society

**Course Name:** SOC1503 Contemporary Issues in Bolivian Society

**Offering Course**: Connect2Bolivia

**Course Hours**: 42 Classroom Hours

**Instructor**: David Pereira Herrera

**Term**: Summer Semester 2024 (Six Week Intensive)

**Credits**: 3 Credits

**Course Description**

This course will introduce students to issues facing current Bolivian society from multiple disciplines. The focus will be on the historical, geographical, social, economic, political, and cultural contexts. Students will learn through lectures, observations, and personal communication with the local Cochabamba community about social realities, social change, and local challenges (<https://www.abroad.pitt.edu/bolivia>).

The course will be instructed by David Pereira Herrera (David Senior) and is divided into 10 sessions (3-4 hours each). In addition, Alexis Wieczorek will assist in the cultural understanding of the students’ experiences with self-investigations such as visiting local museums, field trips, and tours. Please view the given calendar with cultural experiences and scheduling.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of the course, students will have the skills and knowledge to:

1. Identify key aspects of Human Geography and Bolivian Pluri-Cultural Society by explaining the main collective contents and mechanisms of thinking, feeling, and living within the Bolivian society.
2. Discuss the interrelationship between the historical, social, political, and economic issues significant to the Bolivian culture.
3. Compare and contrast evolutionary aspects of the ancient versus traditional ways of thinking and learning within the Bolivian culture.
4. Define and use the terminology related to Bolivian life including decolonization, intercultural communication/relations, stratification, and other related terms discussed throughout the term.

**Course Requirements & Assessments**

Grades will be determined by the following components:

Class Participation & Attendance (35%)

Students must attend all class sessions, field trips, and actively participate in class discussions inside and outside the classroom setting. Any absence due to illness will be examined case by case. Please view the sliding scale below.

Each class will be based on 5 points scale: 5 points-attended, participated beyond expectations (spoke at least 3 times), respectful towards lecturer, material, and classmates; 4 points- attended, participated expectedly (spoke at least 2 times), respectful towards lecturer, material and classmates; 3 points- attended, participated standardly (spoke at least once), respectful towards lecturer, material and classmates; 2 points-attended, did not participate, respectful towards lecturer, material and classmates; 1 point-attended or excused absences (each absence will be examined case by case) and/or disrespectful towards lecturer, material, and classmates; 0 points-Unexcused absences.

Course Assignments (40%)

Students will be given three course assignments that analyze coursework, discussions, field trips, and personal insights into Bolivian daily past & present life. Each analytical assignment has a list of questions where students must investigate and support their answers with appropriate MLA or APA citing and bibliography. **These will be due on Thursday of Week 2, Week 4, and Week 6.**

All Course assignments should be sent to

[damapereirah@gmail.com](mailto:damapereirah@gmail.com) & [a.wieczorek@connect2bolivia.com](mailto:a.wieczorek@connect2bolivia.com)

Field Investigations (25%)

There will be several field trips and two excursions throughout the six-week course. Students will be expected to choose one or two of these field trips/excursions and present their experiences by relating their cultural encounters to the course readings, lecturers, and discussions. Additionally, students will include added academic materials and independent research (observations in Cochabamba or interviews with locals). The Field Investigation rubric will be provided.

**Course Grading**

The following grading scale will be used for your course:

A+ 98-100 B+ 88-89 C+ 78-79 D 60-69

A 93-97 B 83-87 C 73-77 F <60

A- 90-92 B- 80-82 C- 70-72

**Bibliography**

Boulding, Carew, et al. “The Real Story Behind the Bolivia Protest Isn’t the One You’re Hearing.” The

Washington Post, 20 Nov. 2019, <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/news/112019-Bolivia-thewashingtonpost.pdf>

“Bolivia is on the brink of an economic crisis.” The Economist, 04 April 2023,

<https://www.economist.com/the-americas/2023/04/18/bolivia-is-on-the-brink-of-an-economic-crisis>

Cecilie Hirsch (2017): *Between resistance and negotiation: indigenous organisations and the*

*Bolivian State in the case of TIPNIS,* The Journal of Peasant Studies, DOI: 10.1080/03066150.2017.1394846

Dangl, Benjamin. (2007). *The Price of Fire: Resource Wars and Social Movements in Bolivia*.

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[www.noticiasfides.com/especiales/hablar-de-bolivia-con-una-taza-de-cafe](http://www.noticiasfides.com/especiales/hablar-de-bolivia-con-una-taza-de-cafe).

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Gade, Daniel W. (1999)*. Nature and Culture in the Andes*. The University of Wisconsin Press.

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Galeano Eduardo. (1999). *Open Veins in Latin America*. La Paz.

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Philipp, Jennifer. “Gender Disparity and Women’s Rights in Bolivia.” The Borgen Project, 29 Sept.

2020, borgenproject.org/womens-rights-in-bolivia.

Richards, K.J. (2009). *Culture Smart! Bolivia*. New York: Kuperard.

# Shultz, James & Draper, Melissa. (2009). *Dignity and Defiance: Stories from Bolivia’s Challenge*

# *to Globalization*. Ed. 1. University of California Press.

Werner, Robert J. (2009). *Bolivia in Focus: A guide to the People, Politics, and Culture*. Interlink

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Weatherford, Jack. (1989)*. Indian Givers*. Ballantine Books. New York

“World Report 2021: Rights Trends in Bolivia.” Human Rights Watch, 13 Jan. 2021,

[www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/bolivia](http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/bolivia).

**Course Content**

Due to excursions and other cultural activities, the sessions, reading materials, and assignments are subject to change. It is your responsibility to take note of the changes presented throughout the course.

**Session 1**

* Topic: Introduction & The Geographical and Environmental Context of Bolivia (Andean, Amazonian, and Chaco regions)
  + **Readings**:
    - 1*. Indian Givers* Chapter 1(Silver and Money Capitalism)
    - 2. *Nature and Culture in the Andes* Chapter 1 (Reflections and Trajectories)

**Session 2**

* Topic: “ A Journey to the past”
  + Field Trip: Visit to the University Archaeological Museum w/David Sr.
  + **Readings**:
    - 1. Richards, K.J. (2009). *Culture Smart! Bolivia*. New York: Kuperard.

**Session 3**

* Topic: The process of historical-cultural conformation in Bolivia. The independent and dependent phases as well as the formation of colonial society from the sixteenth century. The interdisciplinary combination: archaeology, ethnohistory, anthropology, and linguistics.
  + Field Trip**:** Cooking Class at Adelante Mujer (Optional)
  + **Readings**:
    - 1. *Indian Givers* Chapter 4 (The Food Revolution)
    - 2. *Indian Givers* Chapter 11 (The Drug Connection)

**Session 4**

* Topic: Bolivian Politics: Water War & Gas War; the rise of Evo Morales & Political Crisis of 2019; Bolivia’s current political concerns.
  + Field Trips: Visit Palacio Portales & Eat Api and Pastel (Saltenas Optional)
  + **Readings**:

1. Boulding, Carew, et al. “The Real Story Behind the Bolivia Protest Isn’t the One You’re Hearing” <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/news/112019-Bolivia-thewashingtonpost.pdf>
2. “World Report 2021: Rights Trends in Bolivia.” [www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/bolivia](http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/bolivia)
3. The Economist. “Bolivia is on the brink of an economic crisis” <https://www.economist.com/the-americas/2023/04/18/bolivia-is-on-the-brink-of-an-economic-crisis>

**Session 5**

Topic: Archaeological Inca Site Relevance in Culture and Pariumani Hacienda

* + Field Trip: Visit to Cotaphachi-Quillacollo & Pariumani w/David Sr.
  + **Readings:**

1. *Indian Givers* Chapter 4 (The Food Revolution)
2. *Indian Givers* Chapter 5 (Indian Agricultural Technology)

**Session 6**

Topic: The Mentality and Ways of being Bolivian. The intertwining of knowledge between ancestral and modern-day life: health, religiosity, and education.

* + Field Trips: Visit Universidad Mayor de San Simon w/David Sr.
  + Field Trips: La Cancha w/Alexis
  + **Readings**: TBA

**Session 7**

* Topic: Traditional Andean Medicine
  + Field Trips: Visit Kuska/Kallawaya call Pino w/David Sr.
  + Field Trips: Q’uwa/K’oa w/Alexis
  + **Readings**:

1. *Indian Givers* Chapter 10 (The Indian Healer)

**Session 8**

* Topic: Coca in Bolivia-from pre-Columbian times to globalization and the war on drugs.
  + Field Trip: Visit Calvert w/Alexis
  + Field Trip: Santa Teresa w/Alexis
  + **Readings**:

1. *Indian Givers* Chapter 11 (The Drug Connection)
2. Cecilie Hirsch. (2017). *Between resistance and negotiation: indigenous organizations and the Bolivian State in the case of TIPNIS*

**Session 9**

* Topic: Rule of Women & Frictions in Bolivia’s Political Atmosphere; Remaining topics that need to be addressed.
  + Field Trip: Visit Education Tutoring Center “Casari” w/Alexis
  + Field Trip: Make Empanadas and/or other cuisine w/Chaby
  + **Readings**:

1. Philipp, Jennifer. “Gender Disparity and Women’s Rights in Bolivia.” <https://borgenproject.org/womens-rights-in-bolivia/>

**Session 10—Field Investigation Presentation**