1. **Objectives of the course**

The objective of the course is to analyze the Economic Solidary movement, mainly some selected countries of Latin America. This term has been devised in 2001, at the First Social Global Summit held in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Anyway, the sum of economic practices in which we can include Solidarity Economy has a long origin, coming from, at least, from the beginning of the Industrial Revolution through experiences like, for example the Lauderdale Pioneers in the 19th Century.

For Solidarity Economy we can understand all types of economic enterprises based, among others, on the principle of self-management, participation in the strategic decisions of these ones, and common distribution of the financial outcomes of the business, beyond the profit-seek and capital accumulation logic. As such, this movement is characterized by its heterogeneity, including traditional cooperative companies managed by qualified workers, collective forms of production gathered around ideological principles (like cooperativism, anarchism, environmentalism, etc.) and grassroots initiatives of self-organization (with or without the logistic support of non-governmental organizations – NGOs) struggling for some economic alternatives of survival.

Although we can identify several experiences of Solidarity Economy throughout Latin American history, this movement accelerated in the 1980s after the external debt crisis and the neoliberal structural adjustment programs that worsened the
segmented labor market and the poverty rate in all Latin America. So, the Solidarity Economy movement included several social players, like dismissed workers, grassroots organizations and historically discriminated groups, like poor women or Indigenous and Afro-Descendant populations.

Since the middle of the 1990s decade, several Latin American countries elected as president politician affiliated to left wing parties as were the case of, among others, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador and Venezuela. Although the trajectory of each country has several specificities (chavism, peron-kirshnerism, lulopetism, etc.), behalf their egalitarian ideology, all of them, with several intensity levels, implemented public policies based on the principle of Solidarity Economy, stimulating cooperatives, micro-credit policies and in some way policies of local development.

Increasing the complexity level of this issue, after the 1980s, also some multilateral institutions, like the World Bank (WB) or the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), recognized the Solidarity Economy as a way to reduce informality in the labor market as well as poverty in the whole Latin American (among other regions of the planet) society. Coherently, micocredit initiatives and solidarity lending – as exemplified by the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh – showed to be a possible way to disseminate access of the poorest to financial system. At the same time, this kind of strategy also receives several critics in terms of its scope and effective capability to get the expected outcomes.

Nevertheless, what we now call Solidarity Economy includes a huge range of players, conceptions and even ideologies: workers' self-managed companies, grassroots cooperatives, complementary currencies systems, international fair trade movements, local development initiatives, leftist governments, microlending, solidarity finance, and so on.

What is the origin of Solidarity Economy in the world? How to understand this movement? Which is the reach of Solidarity Economy movement? Is it a simple mechanism of market failure compensation? Or may it be understood as an alternative way of production? Or even of society? How this conception dialogues with the strategies of empowerment adopted by historically discriminated group in Latin America and in other parts of the planet?

These questions, among others, will be debated in the course “Solidarity Economy in Latin America”.

2. Course Schedule

The course will have 15 Seminars. In the first one the Professor and the students will introduce themselves. We will debate the Syllabus and the students will choose the Seminars in which they will be leading discussants.
All Seminars will include one or more requested books and texts, all of them in English. In some Seminars the Professor will suggest additional readings. In those cases the optional texts may also be in Spanish, Portuguese or French.

Some articles or books will be available in electronic format on Canvas. Other indicated bibliographic references will need to be purchased by the students through University Co-op, or through similar way.

The course will be divided into two sections. In the first one we will debate Solidarity Economy in its conceptual and historical aspects. In the second part, we will see recent trajectories/experiences of Solidarity Economy in selected Latin American countries.

1st Seminar. Presentation of the course, Professor and students (Jan, 17th)

Requested

Syllabus of “Solidarity Economy in Latin America”. To be downloaded at the course Canvas.

Part 1. Solidarity Economy: among heroes and myths

2nd Seminar. What is Solidarity Economy? (Jan, 24th)

Requested


Optional


3rd Seminar. Issues of Solidarity Economy today (Jan, 31st)
Requested


Optional


4th Seminar. Concept of social capital (Feb, 7th) -

Requested


Optional

Lang, R; Hornburg, S. – What is social capital and why it is important to the social policy? Housing Policy Debate (9:1), 1998, pp. 1-16

5th Seminar. Black cooperativism in the US: history and challenges (Feb, 14th)

Requested


Optional

Du Bois, W. – Economic co-operation among Negro Americans. The Atlanta University Press, Atlanta, Georgia, 1907

6th Seminar. Alternative forms of production around the world (Feb 21st)

Requested


Optional


7th Seminar. The Greenman Bank: proposal, solutions and limits (Feb, 28th)

Requested

Yunnus, M. - Banker to the poor: micro-lending and the battle against world poverty. New York: Public Affairs, 1999

Optional

Aitken, R. - The financialization of micro-credit. Development and Change 44(3), 2013, pp. 473-499
2nd Part. Experiences of Solidarity Economy in Latin America countries

8th Seminar. Dependency Theory in Latin America (Mar, 7th)

Requested


Caruana, M.; Srnec, C. - Public policies addressed to the social and Solidarity Economy in South America: toward a new model? Voluntas n° 24, 2013, pp. 713–732

Optional


Coraggio, JL. – La sustentabilidad de los empreendimientos de la economía social y solidaria. Otra Economía - Volumen II - n° 3 – (2ª semestre, 2008), pp. 8-11


9th Seminar. Solidarity Economy in Argentina and Chile (Mar, 21st)

Requested

Adams, L. - Making other economies possible: inequality, consciousness-raising and the Solidarity Economy in Chile. The University of Texas at Austin, Faculty of Graduate School (Master of Arts Thesis), 2010, 134 p.


Optional


10th Seminar. Solidarity Economy in Brazil (Mar, 28th)

Requested

Esteves, M. - Grassroots mobilization, co-production of public policy and the promotion of participatory democracy by the Brazilian Solidarity Economy movement. Brown University, Department of Sociology (PhD Thesis), 2010, 390 p. (selected chapters)


Optional

Hoinle, B.; Rothfuss, R.; Gotto, D. - Empoderamiento espacial de las mujeres mediante la Economía Solidaria. Cuadernos de Desarrollo Rural, 10 (72), 2013, pp. 17-139.


11th Seminar. Solidarity Economy in Colombia (Apr, 4th)

Requested

Gray, V. - Nonviolence and sustainable resource use with external support: a survival strategy in rural Colombia. Latin American Perspectives, Vol. 39, n° 1, Colombia’s Left: its power, influence and challenges (Jan. 2012), pp. 43-60


Optional


12th Seminar. Solidarity Economy in Bolivia and Ecuador (Apr, 11th)

Requested


Cunha Filho, C.; Gonçalves, R.; Déa, A. - The National Development Plan as a political economic strategy in Evo Morales’s Bolivia: accomplishments and

Optional

Quispe, J. - La economía comunitaria de reciprocidad en el nuevo contexto de la Economía Social y Solidaria: una mirada desde Bolivia. *Otra Economía*, 6(11), (jul.-dic 2012), pp. 159-170


13th Seminar. Solidarity Economy in Cuba and Venezuela (Apr, 18th)

Requested


Novkovic, S. – How to manage cooperative difference in a socialist economy: Cuba’s descentralization of decision-making (working paper), 2013, 21 p.


Optional


14th Seminar. Solidarity Economy in Mexico (Apr 25th)

Requested

Bruhn, K. - Social spending and political support: the "lessons" of the National Solidarity Program in Mexico. *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 28, nº 2 (Jan., 1996), pp. 151-177


Optional


15th Seminar. Balance of the course and new steps(May 2nd)

3. Rights and obligations of Professor and Students

As we could notice from the objectives, issues e and bibliography, our course is multidisciplinary and comprehend several levels of theoretical and historical approaches, some of them in part or completely divergent. So, first of all, it is expected that the students, and the Professor as well, attend the Seminars bearing a high spirit of tolerance, understanding and openness to hear divergent opinions about the several issues in debate.

The Professor is committed to create a class environment framed on the student participation, critical thinking and respect and mutual understanding. As well, the Professor will attempt to guarantee a respectful and cheerful space of work and discussion.

Once based on these principles, the Professor encourages all the students to participate in the debate exposing honestly their ideas and opinions regarding
each debated issue. Actually, participation and questioning will be positively evaluated.

The Professor will not accept any kind of derogatory and inappropriate behavior directed to classmates. As well, it is strictly forbidden in the classroom all forms of discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, ethnic, color, race, nationality or all other kinds of intolerance or mistreatment.

It is strictly forbidden the use of electronic devices that can produce noises, divert attention or disturb in anyway the lectures. If the students wanted to take note using notebook, tablets, etc., the Professor would like be notified in advance.

The Professor also asks to avoid napping or dozing off during the sessions.

If students have any restriction to attend class or deliver the works on the appropriate deadline due to religious, civil, or political reasons, please inform the Professor by January 26th.

According to UT Austin rules on academic honesty, we will not accept any kind of fraud, cheating or plagiarism. If we identify any kind of academic dishonesty, the student will be awarded a failing grade. Please, pay attention to this rule.

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice), 232-2937 (video phone) or [http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd](http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd).

4. Method of evaluation and grading

Final Work: 50%
Leading Seminar: 25%
Weekly Summary: 15%
Active Class Participation: 10%

4.1. What is the Final Work?

The Final Work is the paper the student, individually, needs to prepare by the end of the seminar.

By March 7th the students must upload a proposal of final work on the Canvas. Each proposal needs to have between 1-2 pages. In this one the student will expose his or her main objective of study, methodology and a previous bibliography.

All students can request the support of the Professor and the Teaching Assistant to develop their proposal of final work. And we encourage all of you to do this.
The students should include in his or her final work, theoretical and empirical elements that have been debate during our seminars. These ones can choose as issue of research:

- The Solidarity Economy historical experience of any Latin American country, debated or not in the seminars;

- Once emphasizing the Latin American countries, analysis of public policies or social activism in Solidarity Economy. Some examples: local development experiences, micro-credit politics, intersection with gender-ethnicity-race;

- Fieldwork with any Cooperative or popular entrepreneurship located in or around the Austin region. In this case, the proposal of final work must include the methodology of research to be adopted. Also in this case the final work must include some debates undertaken during at the long of the course;

- Theoretical debate about problems of Solidarity Economy. There are several possibilities of works based on this approach. And we can reflect about them together by March 7th.

Anyway, we encourage the students to relate the final work to the dissertation or thesis under elaboration.

The students should conclude and upload it on Canvas by May 13th (Friday).

Please pay attention to the fact that delivering the final work is a mandatory criterion to some student gets approval in the end of the course.

4.2. What is the Leading Seminar?

As we could see the course will have 15 seminars based on a specific topic.

The lectures will be divided in two parts (duration: 1h25 each). At the half point of the lecture we will have a break of 10-15 minutes.

The Leading Seminar consists of the presentation of the texts requested for each lecture in the Syllabus. We encourage the student read and comment the optional text as well.

Although the Professor will be prepared to make several comments during the seminar, each presenter needs to be prepared to lead all activity during the class (2h50).
The presenter will make general comments on the texts and will suggest questions and problems to the classmates. The Professor will consider the quality of the presentations as main criterion of grading.

The schedule and organization of the Seminars and their discussants will be discussed during our first seminar. In this same week the seminars agenda and their main discussant will be share to all students through Canvas.

Preparation for seminar meetings (Adapted from Dylan Rodriguez, Chair of Ethnic Studies at UCR and from João C. Vargas in the course “Black Studies Theory I”, Fall 2015)

One student will facilitate and lead seminar meetings. Each student should elaborate a presentation that will initiate and structure the seminar. These presentations are a critical part of the course, and are intended to develop and sharpen students’ analytical and pedagogical skills. In order to fulfill seminar expectations, each student must thoroughly provide the following:

Problems and presentation architecture. An overview of the central concerns of the documents debated. These concerns can be analytical, theoretical, empirical, historical, political, and/or a combination of those. Thus, your first task is to define (a) which are the main questions of the texts in discussion?; (b) how the authors have developed their arguments and conclusions?; (c) what do you think about the text concern, organization and conclusions? (d) Do you agree, disagree or suggest any different way of reflection? Why?

Emerging questions. At the beggining of the seminars, all leader discussant should propose to his or her colleagues in the classroom, on its own terms, own concerns and within its own parameters, 5-10 questions that allow all participants to engage with the text. We are not concerned with outlining what the text “doesn’t do,” but rather with understanding its logic and how it attempts to fulfill its own ambitions.

Presentation method (or, the big paradox). All presenter need to take into account that every requested and optional text indicated to be read are full of limits (theoretical, logical, empirical). So, we expect that all main discussant have a great critical capacity. But, at the same time, we know that all document to be debated have their owns logic, structure and theoretical, logical and empirical kernels. And all of you should show this comprehensive approach. How to expose some text or book, in the same time, understanding it, and criticizing it? How to articulate both vectors of force…

4.3. What is the Weekly Summary?

All students should upload on Canvas a brief individual summary of the texts and books recommended by the Professor in the Syllabus. This summary needs to include a general idea of each text or article and a general synthesis among the different texts
The deadline to upload the document on Canvas is the day before each class (on Sundays) at 6:30 p.m.

Please, pay attention to the fact that all students (and not only the ones preparing the Leading Seminar) should upload the Weekly Summary. It will have about 2-3 single spaced pages. The Professor will give each summary a number grade.

4.4. What is Active Class Participation?

Class Participation corresponds to an active and lively participation of the student during the lectures. Not only it is strongly encouraged (please, do this!!!), but it will be one of the criteria of the final grading.

In the beginning of each class the Professor will open a sign-in sheet to be signed for each student. This list will be available for until 15 minutes after the class beginning. The Instructor must be informed in the beginning of the class in the case of some student needs to leave class early. If not, his/her presence will be nullified.

The limit number of unexcused absences is three (3) classes. After this, until 10 absences, the absent student will have a penalty of 5 points in his/her final grade per absence (see grading method at section E below).

Pay attention: the student with more than 10 unexcused absence (1/3 of the total classes) will fail.

The exam and “reading presentation” are mandatories. Any absence must be justified one week before followed by medical or legal documentation. Only in this case we will indicate an alternative day for replacing that missed exams.

If students have any restriction to attend class, deliver the works or make an exam on the appropriate deadline due to religious, civil, or political reasons; please inform the Instructor at least fourteen days prior the expected absence.