This course will focus on the practical sources, methods, and problems of research for Latin American and Caribbean history. The purpose of this practical emphasis is to develop students’ skills as researchers and students’ knowledge of how to do history. The class will be run as an open workshop in which students conduct their own research, work through the specific problems they encounter, and share the research process as well as their final product with their colleagues. The course should be an open-ended, collective learning opportunity, and a creative scholarly experience.

In Part One of the course, the initial set of readings will address methodological problems involving historical research and writing. We will also receive an introduction to research resources at Bobst Library. At the same time, students will be preparing their library/archival practicum.

Part Two of the course will deal with particular primary materials and the techniques that allow us to evaluate them critically and draw on them as sources of information. We will be concerned with how the materials were produced, by whom and with what interest, and what angles of perspective they entail. Students will bring in the documents they are working with in order to talk about their research procedures and the doubts or difficulties they run into.

In Part Three, students will finish up their research and writing tasks for the course and the final class meetings will be devoted to student presentations. During their assigned week, students will present the first draft of their papers and receive constructive comments and criticism from their colleagues and the instructor. Students should email their draft of the paper to all class members by 10:00 a.m. on the XX before they are scheduled to present. Based on this exchange, they will revise the draft and submit a final version of the paper.

**Written work:** The library/archival practicum is due in class on Wednesday, XX. See description on final page of syllabus. Please bring copies for all class members and be prepared to give a brief presentation to the class on your research topic and sources.

The final paper (approximately 20 pp.) will be based on students’ own research interests. The final paper must draw on primary sources that you locate, and should address a topic that you have selected with approval of the instructor. The purpose of the paper is not
only to work consciously and critically with your set of primary sources, but to develop a coherent and original historical argument based on the sources that engages with relevant secondary literature.

The final paper is due on **Wednesday, XXX**. Please leave off the paper for the instructor (st19@nyu.edu) by 5:00 pm.

**Class participation:** A productive workshop requires the active effort and involvement of all class members. Students should come to class prepared and ready to share their reflections and reactions to the material assigned for that week. **Students will bring in primary sources from their research projects to present and discuss with the class at one session during the semester.** Regular attendance and participation in discussion is required. Late assignments and unexcused absences will affect the final grade.

**Grading:** Paper = 50%. Class participation = 50%.

**Option for second-year students:** Second-year students are allowed to pursue a different objective in the seminar. If they prefer, their goal can be to produce a coherent ten-page draft of a research proposal that they can subsequently revise for submission to external funding agencies at the start of their third year. The agenda and schedule for their tasks will be worked out with the instructor.
LIBRARY/ARCHIVAL RESEARCH PRACTICUM

The purpose of the library/archival practicum is to help you identify the main resources, both bibliographic and archival, available to you for a historical research project in your general field of interest. The exercise should help you to define the angle and scope of research through a creative combination of personal interests and available materials. The chronological and geographic parameters for the practicum are broad and should set the larger framework for the seminar paper topic.

It is advisable for students to range as widely as possible in this initial exercise. You may want to consult different repositories in the New York metropolitan area.

1. Pick a Latin American region and an extended historical period of personal interest. This should correspond to your research topic.

2. Provide a brief statement of your proposed research topic (ca. 1/2 page).

3. Identify the following:
   a) The key tools and works available to search out the *primary sources* relevant to the region and time period chosen. These might include archival catalogues, guides to published documentation, on-line data bases (ca. 1/2 page).
   b) A list of 10-20 archival or published primary sources for the region and time period (ca. 1-2 typed pages).
   c) The three or four most important such sources for your purposes, given the kinds of topics and problems you find interesting. Your practicum report should include annotations on these sources (ca. 1 page).
   d) The key tools and works available to search out the *secondary literature* relevant to the region and time period. These might include published bibliographies, dissertation abstracts, computer-assisted searches or data bases, etc. (ca. 1/2 page).
   e) The half-dozen most important secondary references for your purposes. You should include annotations on these sources (ca. 1 page).

4. Circulate copies of your practicum in class during Week 6 and be prepared to speak five to ten minutes on how you got your results.