

# Bolivia

## Multiculturalism, Globalization, and Social Change

Explore how concepts of development and cultural identity are being creatively redefined in Bolivia, a country with 36 ethnic groups and the first indigenous president in South America.

## Coursework

### Multiculturalism, Globalization, and Social Change Seminar

LACB 3000 / 5 credits / 75 class hours

An interdisciplinary course conducted in Spanish with required readings and relevant educational excursions. The course examines Bolivia's history and current economic, political, and cultural processes. Students consider the country's contemporary challenges to economic development, particularly among Bolivia's large indigenous populations, and under the leadership of the first indigenous president to be elected in South America. Lecturers are drawn from institutions such as The Democracy Center, Centro de Estudios Superiores Universitarios at the Universidad Mayor de San Simón, Mujeres Creando, the Andean Information Network, and Water for People.

Seminar topics typically include:

#### Historical Foundations

Features and contributions of major indigenous groups (Quechua and Aymara); historical development of Bolivian political systems; roots of the current economic situation.

#### Andean and Amazonian Culture and Cosmovision

Analysis of contemporary sociocultural landscapes; the meaning and construction of culture in the Bolivian context; indigenous and feminist issues; the role of cosmovision in art and music; roles of cultural identity and cosmovision in the formation of social movements.

#### Development Models and Practice

History of development approaches; roles of private/public sectors, including transnational corporations, nongovernmental organizations, and social movements; resistance to globalization and neoliberal reform; women and development; urbanization; informal economy; sustainable participatory development; natural resource management; regional development processes and proposals for autonomy; coca/cocaine economy, alternative development, and the US "drug war"; critique of development.

#### Educational Excursions

Students spend extensive time outside Cocha-

bamba, including traveling to the tropical lowlands, the Andes altiplano, and El Alto, the largest indigenous city in Latin America. Locations include La Paz, Lake Titicaca, Tiwanaku, and Santa Cruz. Alternate locations in the tropical lowlands, Potosí, Sucre, and other sites are also feasible.

### Intensive Language Study: Spanish

SPAN 2000–4000 / 5 credits / 75 class hours

Emphasis on speaking, reading, and writing skills through classroom and field instruction. Based on in-country evaluation, including oral proficiency testing, students are placed in intensive intermediate or advanced classes, with further language practice in homestays, lectures, and field visits. Students already fluent in Spanish may study Quechua in lieu of Spanish for an additional fee.

### Field Study Seminar

ANTH 3500 / 2 credits / 30 class hours

A course in the concepts of learning across cultures and from field experience. Introduction to the Independent Study Project. Material includes cross-cultural adaptation and skills building; project selection and refinement; appropriate methodologies; field study ethics and the World Learning/SIT Human Subjects Review Policy; developing contacts and finding resources; developing skills in observation and interviewing; gathering, organizing, and communicating data; maintaining a work journal.

### Independent Study Project

ISPR 3000 / 4 credits / 120 class hours

Conducted in Cochabamba, La Paz, or in another approved location in Bolivia appropriate to the project. Students have the unique option of producing a documentary film or writing and publishing a children's book on their selected topic. Sample topic areas: film and social change; migration and family survival strategies; impact of the neoliberal development model; role of women in civil society; legacy of liberation theology today; globalization and water politics in Cochabamba; the struggle between indigenous and multinational companies over environmental rights and the nationalization of natural resources; the struggle over land rights in indigenous communities; the



Credits 16

Program Base Cochabamba

Language Study Spanish

Homestay Cochabamba, 6 weeks

Rural Visit/Homestay 5 days with either Aymara families on the shores of Lake Titicaca or with Quechua families in the Cochabamba Valley

Other Accommodations Hostels, private homes, or small hotels

Independent Study Project 4 weeks

Prerequisites Three recent semesters of college-level Spanish or equivalent and the ability to follow coursework in Spanish, as assessed by SIT.

effect of urban violence on women in marginalized communities; the integration of traditional and Western medicine; ethno-development and cultural change; application of educational reform; the effects of global warming on glaciers in the Andes.

Students have the opportunity to **engage in creative** and non-traditional **research projects** in support of local Bolivian communities and social change. Learn more at [www.sit.edu/BLR](http://www.sit.edu/BLR).