

## Syllabus of Record

**Program:** CET Colombia / Spring 2023

**Course Code / Title:** (CA/CLTR 340) A Social History of Colombian Coffee

**Total Hours:** 45

**Recommended Credits:** 45

**Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings:** CLTR / ECON, GLBS, HIST, SOCI

**Language of Instruction:** English

**Prerequisites / Requirements:** None

---

### Description

Coffee is both an international commodity and a local source of identity and economic sustenance. This course examines coffee at both levels—from local production in small farms to production, trade, and consumption at a large scale and for the global market. The main objective of this course is to examine how coffee moves from “bean to cup.” Taking Colombia as a case study, the course takes an interdisciplinary approach to the socio-economic and cultural history of the Colombian coffee industry. It begins with a review of the origins of the crop in Africa followed by the history of its introduction to the Americas as part of the colonial enterprise. The remainder of the course is dedicated to studying the role of coffee in the Colombian agricultural and economic system and its consolidation as the main export crop; the relationship between coffee growing and campesinx identity; the dynamics of globalization, and issues around the environment and sustainability. In addition, the course explores the sensorial aspects of coffee consumption by including opportunities for students to touch, smell and taste coffee beans and to identify and compare flavors, textures, and quality.

Overall, this course offers students the opportunity to critically examine the supply and value chain of coffee as well as the social dynamics that have transformed this plant into one of the most valuable (economically and culturally) commodities in the world

### Objectives

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Explain the history of coffee production in Colombia.
- Describe the socio-economic aspects of the global coffee industry
- Discuss the social and economic impacts of the Colombian coffee industry on rural communities, campesinxs, ethnic groups, and the environment
- Evaluate the role of globalization in sustainable horticultural systems and sustainable business practices
- Analyze and synthesize information from multiple sources

### Course Requirements

This course consists of class lectures, film analyses, and roundtable discussions. In addition, the course includes field visits to coffee farms and community organizations that advocate for the rights

## Syllabus of Record

of farmers and environmental justice. Students are expected to actively participate in all lectures and out-of-classroom activities and to read 30 pages, on average, per week to prepare for each class. Graded assignments include:

- Short Essays, 2- Each student is required to write two 3-page analytical papers that tackle one of the issues discussed in class and/or the readings.
- Field Diary, 1- This writing assignment is an opportunity for students to relate course contents (readings, films, discussions) and their experience during one of the field visits. Paper length: 4-5 pages.
- Final Essay, 1- In consultation with the professor, students pick a topic related to a specific aspect of the coffee business (history, culture, environment, etc.) and write a 5–7-page research paper. The paper must include at least 3 bibliographic sources not discussed in class.
- Presentation- Based on the research conducted for the final paper, students prepare a 15-minute multi-media presentation.

The course also includes the following experiential components:

1. Two-day visit to the Cauca Coffee Growers Committee (Comité Departamental de Cafeteros del Cauca) during which students will have the opportunity to talk with coffee grower families and representatives of the following institutes: National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia, the Coffee Innovation Technology Park (Tecnicafé), and the Center for Research, Promotion and Social Innovation for the Development of Cauca's Coffee Growing Sector (CiCaficultura).
2. Coffee tasting: two activities during which we explore coffee growing and planting, roasting, cupping, and *barismo*. The objective of these activities is to get to know coffee using the senses.
3. One-day visit to a farm in the Cauca region to meet mestizx and Afro-Colombian small coffee farmers.

Students are expected to attend each class and field-based course components, as outlined in the CET Attendance Policy. Attendance requirements are outlined in the CET Attendance Policy.

### Grading

The final grade is determined as follows:

- 2 short analytical papers (3 pages each) = 30% (15% each)
- 1 personal essay (based on field experience) = 20%
- 1 final essay = 30%
- 1 presentation = 20%

## Syllabus of Record

### Readings

Austin, Kelly. "Brewing Unequal Exchanges in Coffee: A Qualitative Investigation into the Consequences of the Java Trade in Rural Uganda." *Journal of World-Systems Research* 23, no. 2 (2017): 326-52.

Cotter, William M. "Voicing the Supply Chain". *Signs and Society* 9, no.1 (2021): 36-60.

Echavarría, Juan J., Pilar Esguerra, Daniela Mcallister, and Carlos Robayo. *Report written by the commission on coffee competitiveness in Colombia executive summary*. Bogotá: Misión de Estudios de Café, 2015.

Farfán-Valencia, Fernando; Sánchez Arciniegas, Pedro M. *Certificación de fincas de producción de café orgánico*. *Avances Técnicos* 363. Cenicafé. Federación Nacional de Cafeteros, 2007.

Forero Álvarez, Jaime. "Colombian Family Farmers' Adaptations to New Conditions in the World Coffee Market." *Latin American Perspectives* 37, no. 2 (2010): 93–110.

Global Coffee Platform. *Gender equality analysis in Colombia's coffee sector - voices of men and women engaged in coffee growing and their organizations*, 2019.

Grabs, J.; Ponte, S. "The evolution of power in the global coffee value chain and production network." *Journal of Economic Geography*. 19 (2019): 803–828.

Guhl, Andres. "Coffee Production Intensification and Landscape Change in Colombia, 1970-2002". In: *Land Change Science in the Tropics*. 2008. Springer, Boston, MA.

Gutiérrez, Juan David. "Smallholders' Agricultural Cooperatives in Colombia: Vehicles for Rural Development?" *Desarrollo y Sociedad*, 73 (2014): 219-271.

Haggar, J., Barrios, M., Bolaños, M. et al. "Coffee agroecosystem performance under full sun, shade, conventional and organic management regimes in Central America". *Agroforestry Systems* 82 (2011): 285–301.

Navarrete, Angela, Birkenberg, Athena and Birner, Regina. "Factors Influencing the Development of Rural Producer Organizations in Post-War Settings. The Case of Coffee Growers Associations in Southern Tolima, Colombia." *International Journal of the Commons*, 14(1), pp.692–713, 2020.

Raynolds, L.T., Murray, D. & Heller, A. "Regulating sustainability in the coffee sector: A comparative analysis of third-party environmental and social certification initiatives." *Agriculture and Human Values* volume 24 (2007): 147–163.

Rettberg, Angelika. "Global Markets, Local Conflict: Violence in the Colombian Coffee Region after the Breakdown of the International Coffee Agreement." *Latin American Perspectives* 37, no. 2 (2010): 111–132.

## Syllabus of Record

Tucker, Catherine, Hallie Eakin and Edwin J. Castellanos. "Perceptions of risk and adaptation: Coffee producers, market shocks, and extreme weather in Central America and Mexico." *Global Environmental Change-human and Policy Dimensions* 20 (2010): 23-32.

Van Der Vossen, H. A. M. "A critical analysis of the agronomic and economic sustainability of organic coffee production". *Experimental Agriculture* 41. 4, October 2005, pp. 449 – 473, 2005.

Vitonaz, Ezequiel. "La visión de la cafeticultura para el pueblo Nasa". In Compiler Javier Tobar *Cauca, café con raíces: caficulturas, agroecología y economía social y solidaria*, Popayán: Universidad del Cauca, Pages 135 – 140, 2019.

### Additional Resources

DW Español. "[Suiza gana más dinero con el café que Colombia ¿Cómo es posible?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WYSibknlat8)" YouTube video, 8:15, September 25, 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WYSibknlat8>

BBC Mundo. "Santuario, el inesperado refugio de indígenas trans en Colombia." YouTube video, 13:19, October 17, 2019. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZxEkMGziyDU>

Marc J. Francis and Nick Francis, dirs., *Black Gold* 68 min., 2006.

Ruiz Navia, Oscar, dir. *Coffee Defenders: a path from coca to coffee, a documentary*. 2020; Amazon Prime Video.

### Outline of Course Content

Topic 1: Coffee in world history – Out of Africa

- Coffee Origins – From Africa to South America (What did early coffee agriculture/production look like? Who were farmers, who were consumers?)
- Africa
- Ethiopia
- Varieties Arabica and Robusta

Topic 2: Coffee and colonialism in Latin America

- World trade in times of European colonization
- Brazil & Central America
- Coffee in Colombia

Topic 3: Race/ethnicity/socioeconomic class distribution and the contemporary Colombian coffee industry (Who are the predominant producers and/or coffee industry members in Colombia?)

- The environment and land use
- The rise of the Coffee Axis (Colombian coffee region or "Eje Cafetero")
- The role of coffee in the process of industrialization in Colombia

Topic 4: Race, Ethnicity and War in the Coffee Industry

## Syllabus of Record

- Coffee growing tradition in campesinx-mestizx territories.
- Coffee growing tradition in indigenous and Afro-Colombian territories.
- Sowing peace? The Role of the coffee industry in the (post)conflict
- Field visit to a community organization

Topic 5: How is coffee produced? Introduction to agronomy and sustainability

- Botanical and agronomic aspects of coffee
- Comparative study of systems of coffee production
- The gap between productivity and profitability

Topic 6: Specialty coffees and their classification

- New patterns of consumption and the rise of specialty coffee
- National vs. International patterns of consumption
- Two-day field visit

Topic 7: Women, agriculture, and coffee production

- Gender and inequality in the countryside
- Women, leadership, and peasant movements
- The role of women in agriculture and local economic development

Topic 8: Neo-Colonialism, globalization and the coffee industry

- The emergence of the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia (FEDECAFE)
- Monopolies and the management of the coffee value chain in Colombia
- Private exporters: National Association of Coffee Exporters of Colombia (Asociación Nacional de Exportadores de Café de Colombia – Asoexport)
- Grassroots and farmer cooperatives: organization and collective action from below

Topic 9: Consumption in the cities, special varieties, and elite/elitist practices

- Unevenness in access and possibilities of benefiting from special varieties.
- Challenges of the burgeoning barista industry
- Final reflections and future of the sector