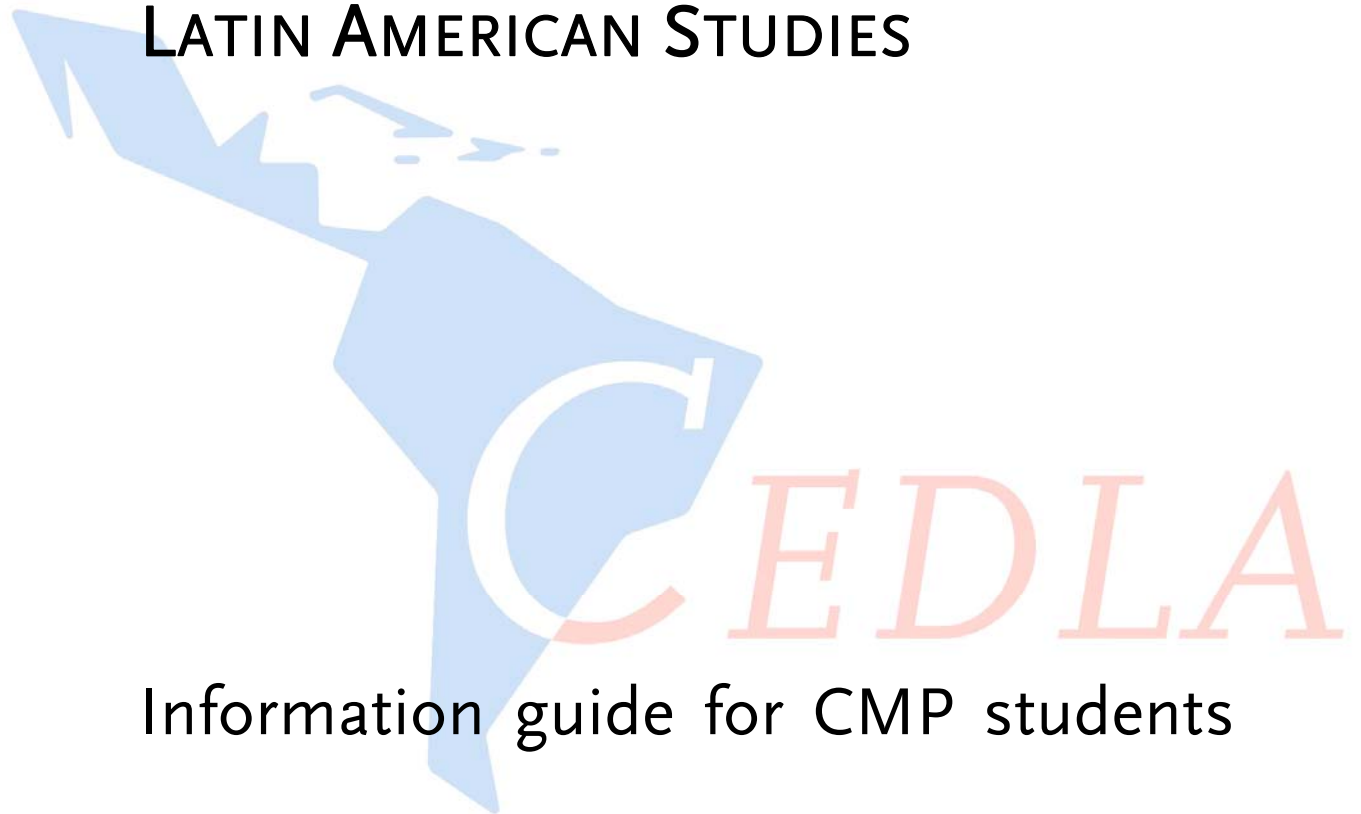


CEDLA MASTER'S PROGRAMME LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES



Information guide for CMP students

C E D L A – Centrum voor Studie en Documentatie van Latijns Amerika ~ Centro de Estudios y Documentación Latinoamericanos ~ Centro de Estudos e Documentação Latino-Americanos ~ Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation

CEDLA
Keizersgracht 395-397
1016 EK Amsterdam
020 525 3498
www.cedla.uva.nl

August 2011

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INTRODUCTION

The CMP focuses on the changes in Latin American societies as a result of the fundamental adjustments that, since the 1980s in particular, have taken place in their political and economic systems. These changes have been the result of a deeper integration of the respective countries in international markets, the new international economic and political contexts, as well as the political and social processes that have taken place in these societies, partly in reaction to these changes and partly as independent processes at the local, regional or national level.

Even though the countries of Latin America have strong differences in geographic, historic, economic, ethnic, cultural and political terms, almost all have experienced transformation since the 1980s, of which the general characteristics are:

- o Liberalization of domestic and foreign markets for goods, services, capital, labour and land;
- o Growing social inequality and poverty that goes together with improved quality of life and rising consumption;
- o Reduced influence of the state upon society and fragmentation of political processes;
- o Revaluation of democratic political procedures and the reduction of the role of the military in politics;
- o Decentralization of decision-making to provincial, regional and local governments;
- o Emergence of new social and political movements that attempt to influence society from either within or outside the official system;
- o Cultural transformations that generate uniformity and new social, ethnic and religious identities at the same time;
- o Growth of crime, violence and feelings of insecurity;
- o Spatial reorientation and large-scale national and transnational flows of migration whereby the population is increasingly concentrated in cities and/or takes over ecologically vulnerable areas.

These changes in Latin American society are taking place in a context of international developments that are being felt, even in relatively isolated regions, in nearly all levels of society. Increasing globalization is putting ever more pressure on traditional societal institutions such as family life, the church, and village community and their concomitant norms and values. The traditional distinctiveness of the continent, such as 'lo andino' in the Andes region or the regional cultures of Mexico, is thus subject to change. In the fields of politics and economics as well, developments can no longer be studied without giving sufficient attention to external events and actors.

The decreasing capacity to regulate trends on a national level has led to new discussions about the economic and political developments of Latin America, and about the meaning of social and cultural identities. These developments put new demands on the functioning of governments, the private sector, political and social movements and civil society in general. The collective interactions among people in Latin America should be analysed in the context of international developments. On the other hand, understanding the effects of international measures and globalization trends requires considering the dynamics and reactions of local societies and their various actors. The CEDLA Masters Programme focuses on these areas of stress.

CEDLA

CEDLA has operated as a national inter-university centre since 1971, with the University of Amsterdam as its administrative host. As such, the CEDLA is pivotal in Latin American Studies research, documentation, and education in the Netherlands.

The institute's multidisciplinary nature is conveyed by the education and research, as well by the CEDLA library collection and the classes, lecture series and seminars organized at the institute.

CEDLA's inter-university position is a collaborative association comprising the following universities: University of Amsterdam, Free University Amsterdam, Leiden University, Groningen University, Utrecht University, Brabant Catholic University, the Erasmus University with the Institute of Social Studies (ISS), and the Radboud University. These institutions are represented on the General Board of the CEDLA.

CEDLA is dedicated to promoting research on Latin American Studies through the following activities:

- o Conducting and promoting academic research about developments and the current situation in Latin America.
- o Disseminating the results of such research through academic education and publications.
- o Applying the results of this research by promoting debate among different social groups and presenting scholarship of general interest.

The research is coordinated through five-year research programmes. The programme for the 2009-2013 period is 'Urbanization and Natural Resource Use in Contemporary Latin America.'

CEDLA RESEARCH PROGRAMME 2009-2013: NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCE USE IN CONTEMPORARY LATIN AMERICA

Since the turn of the century, Latin America has been changing rapidly. In less than a decade Latin American societies have transformed as the result of a complex interaction between initiatives and responses of actors at different levels, both international and domestic. This interaction between market forces, government interventions and individual and collective initiatives in civil society continuously produces processes of transformation that differ in time and across countries in the continent. Nevertheless, we can detect some similarities in longer-term change in the Latin American region.

With respect to processes of social change, urbanization and migration have radically changed the lives of numerous Latin Americans, both of those who moved and those who stayed behind. Remittances have become a major source of income; modern communication technologies have greatly facilitated contact among transnationalized families. Within Latin America, urbanization has continued and smaller cities are emerging as the new poles of economic growth and social and cultural change. The ways in which Latin American citizens are affected by and react to globalization encompass many dimensions: inequality, lifestyles, cultures and identity formation, problems of social cohesion and social conflict, economic opportunity and survival strategies. Everyday struggles to improve livelihoods and to adapt to changing circumstances, have given new meanings to local politics and social life. Politically, the region's experiences with democratization and neoliberalization in the 1980s and 1990s initially gave way to depolitization. However, a wave of new mobilization arose with indigenous peoples' organizations and anti-neoliberal protests. Through democratic elections these changing political attitudes in civil society have translated into leftist governments in almost the whole region.

The rule by the (new) Left in Latin America involves a rise of non-elite politicians (indigenous, working class and women), bottom-up democratization, a rearticulation of the role of the state, and sovereign economic policy-making. These governments also effectively stepped away from the powerful grip of the Washington Consensus, thereby contributing to its demise. While the end of this consensus allows for more redistributive policies, the new crisis puts a brake on many plans and intensifies social conflict, thus showing that Latin America may take more lead in its development course but cannot escape from being deeply integrated in the global system.

Economically, regionalization and especially globalization produce profound changes in Latin America. Whereas its northern countries are part of global production chains through maquiladorization, the countries in the southern part have specialized in the supply of commodities. Yet neither of these strategies of insertion in global markets has solved the overriding shortcomings of the prevailing development pattern of Latin American societies: volatile and low overall economic growth, a skewed income and wealth distribution, and marginalization of large sections of society. As weak infrastructure is limiting foreign investment and regional integration, the new regional initiatives in this area can produce significant benefits. It remains to be seen how the current financial crisis will affect the Latin American economies, but even more so the models of economic development chosen by Latin American governments. On the other hand, the impact of new infrastructural works and increased economic activity on the region's natural areas and their inhabitants, especially in Amazonia, is cause for serious concern.

The relationship between the local and the global remains an important research theme within Latin America studies today. Globalization should not solely be interpreted as a top down causal model that impacts and disturbs the local scale. Rather, the role of local agents in globalizations processes will be a focal point. This theoretical standpoint becomes especially urgent in the light of the recent developments in Latin America where cultural, economic, social and political dynamics at the local scale have profoundly changed the Latin America reality and redirected processes of globalization. The CEDLA research programme 2009-2013 focuses on transformations within Latin America that have occurred in the context of global developments. The programme intends to bring together a multidisciplinary analytical framework that will allow for the analysis of the relationships between the global and the local. Its purpose is to analyse the specific characteristics of Latin American developments in relation to worldwide, regional and local processes. The programme has two research lines.

The first research line deals with resource use patterns from a multi-scale analytical approach. It focuses on the new political and economic processes driving resource use patterns in Latin America and their consequences. Following neoliberalization and democratization, three recent processes have direct influence on the pattern of natural resource use in Latin America. First, the combination of increased demand and fluctuating real prices for natural resource to supply the international market for raw material (hydrocarbons, minerals, wood), food, and, more recently, green energy has been leading to new initiatives for regional integration (e.g., infrastructure and energy) with a direct influence on patterns of natural resource use. Second, there has been an increasingly powerful call for policies aiming at economic justice throughout the region. Questions about control over natural resources, distribution of their revenues, and their role in a new development strategy are back on the political agenda. Third, the international pressure for conservation measures to mitigate the impact of global warming influence decisions on where, what, and how natural resource should be used.

The second research line deals with different forms of cultural resource use patterns and understands the agency and pursuits of individuals, groups and networks as simultaneously incorporating and imposing global reconfigurations. It focuses on the re-knitting of the social fabric, the reshaping of meaning, and the emergence of identities that occur in the context of everyday globalization. Four tendencies can be recognized. First, the neoliberal reforms led to both a restructuring of labour markets and the increase of the costs of basic needs. Where poverty expanded and decreased possibilities to make a living at home, large flows of labour migration to the US and Europe were initiated and were accompanied by the inflow of remittances. Second, migration, poverty and changing livelihood possibilities have made the reconstruction and recomposition of families, households and social networks urgent as well as the way social life is organized. Third, intensive contacts with Latin American and non-Latin American outsiders through migration, tourism, the Internet and the traditional media, there has been an increasingly clear movement away from traditional locally bound identities, organizations and networks. Fourth, the way individuals deal with these transformations is not gender neutral. Based on gender notions and practices, women and men develop different ways of dealing with their daily challenges. People are urgently reformulating their sense of belonging, thereby mining old and new, local, national and global cultural resources.

CMP RESEARCH POSSIBILITIES 2011-2012

Doing research in Latin America is a mandatory requirement of the CMP. The CMP students are supervised by the CEDLA research staff during their fieldwork research and when writing their graduate thesis. Although students choose their own research themes (who their supervisor will be is decided by the research staff), it is advisable to either participate in the ongoing research of research staff or to further build on the results of past CEDLA research.

Research Michiel Baud

Michiel Baud is especially interested in the various ways that people in Latin America construct their lives, and specifically, how they build their social and political networks. Emphasis is given to the themes listed below, which CMP students could use as a basis for their research:

- a) State formation in Latin America from the end of the nineteenth century and the ways in which politicians, intellectuals, and the leaders of social movements have tried to use their ideas to form society;
- b) Discussions about democracy and participation in contemporary Latin America;
- c) Indian movements today and in the past;
- d) Social networks in modern Latin America – this also explicitly includes non-political networks such as cultural groups, brass bands, carnival groups, etc. that people participate in.

Research Fabio de Castro:

Fábio de Castro is interested in the socio-ecological processes shaping patterns of resource use and management. His research focuses on local governance of natural resource and the dilemma between conservation and development goals on local and broader scales. His interdisciplinary background is reflected in his theoretical and methodological approach, combining ethnographic, historical, socioeconomic, institutional and ecological data to understand how patterns of resource use are shaped and transformed. He is particularly interested in the connections between processes across socio-ecological scales, and how partnerships between users, government and private sectors influence resource conservation. Fábio de Castro has conducted research in many different sites in the Amazon and Atlantic Forest in Brazil. He is currently working on two main projects:

- a) The Political Ecology of the Implementation of Agro-Extractive Reserves in the Amazonian Floodplain
 1. Analysis of the institutional arrangement of the Reserves
 2. Evaluation of the participatory and collaborative process
 3. Assessment of the social and ecological performance of the reserves
- b) The Socio-Ecological Dimension of the Biodiesel Program in Brazil
 1. Analysis of the institutional framework of the biodiesel program
 2. Social relations between farmers, biodiesel producers and the governmental agencies

3. Assessment of the economic and ecological performance of the feedstock production (oil seeds) by small farmers.

Research Pitou van Dijck

- a) The probable impact of globalization on Amazonia; analysis of the effects of increases in demand and increases in world market prices for natural resources such as wood, soybeans, biofuels and mining products; special attention for the impact on the future of Amazonia because of large-scale construction of infrastructure such as roads and water reservoirs; further consideration for economic, social, cultural and ecological aspects. Students can participate in the ongoing research project;
- b) Research on the development of the interior of Suriname and plans for large-scale bauxite and gold mining, and for small-scale, unchecked and environmentally devastating gold mining; attention for the consequences of developing new infrastructure, including a major road and railway from the coastal plains to the border of Brazil, construction of dams to increase the supply of hydro energy. This study is carried out within the framework of a long-term project with support of CORDAID.;
- c) Research of the possible effects of the agenda of the World Trade Organization for development of countries in Latin America in the sectors of agriculture, services and industry, linking up with: Pitou van Dijck and Gerrit Fabers (eds), *Developing Countries and the Doha Development Agenda of the WTO*, Routledge, London en New York, 2006;
- d) The perspectives on economic, political, and military cooperation among groups of countries in Latin America within the framework of UNASUR;
- e) The options for future development of Cuba: economic, social and political aspects;
- f) The transition of Panama into a future hub in the world trade and transport system.

Research Barbara Hogenboom

- a) The politics of mineral extraction – an analysis of national policy reforms and/or local protests in regard to oil, gas and metal extraction, old and new conflicts between the state and transnational companies, and forms of new regional cooperation and development based on minerals (and related to my current research project);
- b) Latin American politics of regionalization and South-South relations – what are the new policies regarding economic and political relations of countries in the region and the Global South, such as China? And which perceptions and power relations are influencing them? (related to my research for *Latin American Facing China: South-South Relations beyond the Washington Consensus*);
- c) Political changes by New Left regimes – the effects on policy, political relations and the relations between civil society, the state and market factors (related to *Miraculous Metamorphoses. The Neoliberalization of Latin American Populism and Good Governance in the Era of Neoliberal Globalization*);
- d) Transnational activism and transnational politics regarding development and economic policy, as well as their environmental effects (related to the ENGOV project and to my book *Mexico and the NAFTA Environment Debate. The Transnational Politics of Economic Integration*).

Research Christien Klaufus

- a) Research on the developments in cities and towns related to increasing globalization, for example, the construction of gated communities for the urban middle class as a response to feelings of insecurity; of towns that, as a consequence of massive migration, are largely depopulated; research could be about social contacts (how are local or transnational communities kept intact?) or in contrast, about social segregation;
- b) Research on the use and meaning of the Latin American inner cities for inhabitants and users – current policy attention to the revitalization of historical inner cities has transformed many city centres, with a role often played by UNESCO; all kinds of social and spatial issues could be dealt with in this research, varying from questions on policy and the interests of involved parties, to more historically oriented research issues, for example, the questions regarding the everyday functioning of a plaza, as in *On The Plaza* (Austin: Texas University Press, 2000);
- c) Research on housing (urban or rural) from a development perspective – how do weaker groups get access to a house and what possibilities do they have to climb the housing ladder? Is there a governmental programme, or do the citizens find their own housing, and if so, how do they go about it? The meaning of *remesas* (remittances) from transnational migrants for solutions to housing can offer an interesting line of approach because of the new products that banks and building contractors are developing especially for this group;
- d) Research on housing (urban or rural) from a cultural perspective – the house and its surroundings can be used as an object of study to make statements about the habits and customs of a society, or about developing an identity. The routines of daily household life or the symbolic meaning of certain household objects can be chosen as an approach. Students can join in on anthropological studies on material culture.
http://www.cedla.uva.nl/30_courses/cmp/research.html

Research Arij Ouweneel

- a) Research on the use of film, television and new media in Latin America as a means of discussing contemporary social problems; analysis of these cultural products from production to consumption, leading to a contextual analysis of the Latin American identity; preference given to movies and television series with teenagers or young women in the leading roles (coming of age films); use of a theory from cultural psychology found in the study of Ouweneel, *Terug naar Macondo. Het spook van Hondert jaar eenzaamheid en het inheemse innerlijk van de Mesties* (Amsterdam 2007);
- b) The history of culture transfer in the past, especially through the so-called *microstoria*; examination of the constants and differences; use of a case (individual or group), such as in Ouweneel's *The Flight of the Shepherd. Microhistory and the Psychology of Cultural Resilience in Bourbon Central Mexico* (Amsterdam, 2005);
- c) Contemporary forms of culture transfer within a specifically chosen area or location, for example, a rural town or city neighbourhood having a specific target population, preferably children and adolescents; use of theories from cultural psychology and developmental psychology.

Research Annelou Ypeij

- a) Tourism and its effects on local inhabitants, and the importance of the concept sustainability, including the theoretical debate on sustainable tourism (see for example,

Mowforth & Munt *Tourism and Sustainability. Development and New Tourism in the Third World*, Second Edition, London & New York: Routledge, 2003). Students can do research in a tourist location, concentrating on themes such as poverty reduction alleviation (pro-poor tourism), social justice, local ownership, political control, nature management and cultural integrity; placing a location on the world heritage list of UNESCO leads to the questions: did the local inhabitants have control over this, and what effects did they experience?

- b) The daily life of the urban poor – the urban poor have been the subject of debate and research for thirty years; their survival techniques, 'culture', integration into the economy, chances in the labour market, livelihood strategies and grassroots organizations have been problematized; current research oriented toward specific groups (single mothers, youths, children, migrants, religious groups, receivers of micro-credit) and exploration of specific problems (violence, criminality, supplying micro-credit, migration patterns, transnational networks); research could also focus on mapping the specific history of a neighbourhood and the role that grassroots organizations have played there in the present and in past;
- c) Single mothers – the number of single mothers is increasing worldwide; reasons to be found in global developments such as the feminization of migration flows, the emancipation of women, their increasing chances in the labour market and – under the influence of neoliberal policies – their increasing poverty. The growing number of single mothers is often seen as a social problem; nevertheless, single mothers – in spite of being stigmatized and often poor – may prefer to remain single because their freedom and autonomy as single women are greater than that of married women. Research could focus on their experiences, how they manage their finances, the social acceptance or rejection they experience and the emancipatory facets of single motherhood;
- d) Matrifocality in the Caribbean – researchers have shown interest in women raising children alone, their autonomy and role as the pivot of the family since the 1930s. The position of men in the family system remains analytically underexposed; it is questionable if men really take up such a marginal position as has been thought. An innovative research topic could focus on men, their experiences, their opinions of women, fatherhood and the raising of children, and their roles as fathers, brothers, grandfathers, nephews and uncles;
- e) Construction of masculinity (in an urban context) – gender studies in Latin America were initially oriented toward the question of the position of women (women's studies); attention then shifted toward power relationships between women and men and the concomitant constructions of femininity and masculinity, with the growing importance of the concept of machismo. In the past ten years awareness has grown to realize that masculinity has many more meanings than solely that of machismo; research possibly oriented toward could focus on the constructions of masculinity in relation to, for example, old age, alcoholism, illness, religion, fatherhood, and entrepreneurship.

CEDLA MASTER'S PROGRAMME IN LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

Latin American Studies is a field of scholarship that addresses a broad spectrum of developments in the region. As in other regional studies programmes, in Latin American Studies knowledge, analyses and research methods from different disciplines converge in a multidisciplinary and in some cases an interdisciplinary approach to the region and to how the region relates to the rest of the world. At the CEDLA, research and education have traditionally been based primarily on a combination of anthropology, political science, history, economics, social geography, and sociology. Insights and debates from the different disciplines and those from the *area studies* figure in this course of study. By highlighting two thematic areas of interest (use of natural resources and urbanization), the CMP is very compatible with the CEDLA research programme.

Academic Education Requirements

The CMP applies the criteria for university education. First, course content and programme structure consistently accommodate coordinating education with research, so that intellectual enrichment of students figures within the interaction between education and academic research.

Second, the programme addresses changes in the relevant fields of scholarship by relating them to current academic theories, as visible in the thematic content of the CMP and the literature examined in the different courses. This aspect also figures prominently in the supervision and evaluation of CMP theses.

Third, the fieldwork course, research, and thesis by the students deal extensively with academic research skills. In addition, students in the introduction and master courses are trained in such skills, for example by seeking and interpreting information from different sources, delivering oral and written presentations of their own ideas and analyses and those of others and formulating conclusions and recommendations. These skills are useful in several research and policy-based positions in different sectors.

STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

The CMP has a study load of 75 European credits (ECs) and lasts 15 months. The programme is split into two parts. The first part of the programme earns 40 ECs and is made up of course work. You take courses, complete various assignments, and write papers. The introductory course and preparatory fieldwork course are mandatory; in addition you have a choice of various other master's courses. The second part is given to your research project, which earns 35 ECs. This period will be spent doing fieldwork in Latin America and writing a master's thesis. The structure of the programme is as follows:

Sep-Oct	Nov-Dec-Jan	Feb-Mar-Apr	May through Nov
Intro course 10 ECs	Courses 15 (or 10) ECs	Courses 10 (or 15) ECs	Research project, Fieldwork, Post- fieldwork Seminar and thesis: 35 ECs
	Preparatory fieldwork course + Research Proposal: 5 ECs		

CMP students should start their orientation for fieldwork and research as soon as possible to avoid running out of time. They should participate in the current research themes of the CEDLA research staff, which are components of the CEDLA Research Programme 2009-2013.

The course 'Democracy, Identity and Sustainable Development in Latin America' offers an introduction to the CMP themes. It is taught by all the research staff members of CEDLA. This introduction serves two aims: first, to build an analytical and cognitive foundation as preparation for the more specialized courses that will follow; and second, to create common terms of reference. The knowledge and skills of students will also be tested so that potential deficiencies can be caught at an early stage.

During the introductory course and in consultation with the teachers, you will decide which other courses you will take. In the period from November to April, and in addition to the preparatory fieldwork course, you will take two or three courses. These are master's courses that provide an in-depth study of one of the CMP research themes. It is also possible to replace one course for the *lecturas guiadas* at CEDLA, a master's course outside CEDLA, or an internship.

You will begin preparing your research project during the first part of the CMP. All CEDLA research staff members are involved, and research methods from various disciplines are dealt with. During classes, attention will be given to theoretical points of departure, a methodological approach to research issues, and the operational aspects of doing research in Latin America. Your research ideas will also be discussed, and you will be supervised in defining and elaborating your research theme. You will present your research plan at the end of the course.

During the second half of the programme from May to November, you will carry out your fieldwork in Latin America and write your master's thesis. Doing research in Latin America is a mandatory part of the CMP. You can choose your own theme, or participate in ongoing research (research themes) of the CEDLA research staff. You will be supervised by a CEDLA research staff member during your fieldwork and while writing your thesis.

Please note: The duration of 15 months can only be modified under exceptional circumstances and following written permission due to illness, family emergencies or pregnancy.

Introduction course – 10 ECs

CMP students start attending the introduction course in early September. This intensive, multidisciplinary course offers a substantive and analytical introduction to the CMP themes. The course is intended to provide all CMP students with equivalent foundation knowledge and skills, as well as to review the knowledge and skills of incoming students and to identify possible gaps early on.

The course is based on the assumption that students are already somewhat familiar with Latin American society and aims to review some essential themes and debates in the course of studying the continent. The two guiding themes around which the CMP revolves will receive special consideration. Assessment is based on assignments, discussion of the literature, and a written take-home exam.

Master courses – 25 ECs

In the two or three master courses, students focus more extensively on themes and disciplines that interest them personally. Throughout the introduction course, students talk with the research staff to determine which courses they will attend (see also Supervision). Courses generally comprise a combination of lectures and seminars, critical study and review of academic literature, student presentations, one or more written assignments, and/or a lengthy paper. The course catalogue contains descriptions of the master courses offered this year.

Although most courses are worth 10 ECs, CMP students may also take the course for 5 ECs, obviously following consultation with the research staff member concerned.

Five ECs may be earned through activities other than attending a master course at the CEDLA. The options include *lecturas guiadas* (supervised reading) at the CEDLA or attending a course pertaining to a different master's programme. Brief internships and field research may yield 5 ECs as well.

CMP Research Project – 40 ECs

The CMP research project is the core of the CMP programme. Launched following the introduction course, the research project lasts thirteen months and comprises three stages. Stage 1 consists of the fieldwork course and writing the research proposal. Stage 2 entails conducting fieldwork and writing two fieldwork reports. Stage 3 is a post-fieldwork course and includes writing the master's thesis. Performance in stages 1 and 2 is evaluated based on assignments submitted. In Stage 3 the thesis receives a mark. The overall research project covers 40 ECs. The sections are composed and divided into credits in the three stages as follows:

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	
Nov-Apr	May – Aug	Sept – Oct	Nov
Fieldwork course Draft research proposal 5 ECs	Fieldwork (incl. 2 reports) 5 ECs	Post-fieldwork course 5 ECs	Thesis 25 ECs

STAGE 1: FIELDWORK COURSE AND RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Stage 1, consisting of the course ‘Fieldwork course and research proposal,’ is intended to prepare students for the fieldwork project in Latin America. During classes we review the theoretical principles, methodological elaboration of research questions, and operational aspects of conducting research in Latin America. The various research methods applied in different disciplines are addressed. Students attend seminars to explore the social-science aspects of their research field. Research structure is discussed, and the different components are elaborated in a multidisciplinary context.

Chronologically, the course follows the CMP Introduction Course. This intensive course is intended to help circumscribe the graduation subject and to designate a supervisor in December. January to April is a period dedicated to individual supervision or working in small groups with a supervisor. Progress is assessed in several prescheduled classes, and any problems encountered may be discussed.

CMP students are given the opportunity to participate in ongoing research by staff members and may form groups to work with supervisors accordingly.

Research proposal guidelines

The proposal spans about eight to ten pages (3,000 words) and shall comprise:

- o a working title
- o a description of the subject and the purpose of the thesis (including a justification, identification of scholarly and social relevance, and why the research may yield innovative insights)
- o a problem statement or research question
- o a description of definitions and theory or theories to be applied and how they will figure in the analysis (analytical framework)
- o structure of the research to be conducted, including the nature of the data to be gathered, method(s) used and operationalization(s), and contacts established with persons and institutions on site
- o a detailed and substantiated (provisional) table of contents (chapters and possible sections)
- o a provisional list of sources (references)
- o a schedule for conducting fieldwork research and writing the thesis

Research proposal evaluation criteria

- o the academic and social relevance of the research subject needs to be duly substantiated

- o the research question is clearly formulated and circumscribed
- o the innovative nature of the research is clearly formulated
- o theories and definitions used are operationalized in themes conducive to research
- o the research methods selected are compatible with the research question and the theoretical framework
- o the research is feasible on schedule, at the site chosen, and with the funds available

STAGE 2: FIELDWORK PROJECT AND REPORTS

During and after completing the fieldwork project, students write a report about the course of the research activities and the insights that have resulted.

It is essential that students record the research process and justify their choices thoroughly and systematically during the fieldwork. Additionally, the interviews, observations, and other forms of data need to be processed and labelled as much as possible.

Students are to be back in the Netherlands no later than 1 September.

Instructions for fieldwork reports:

Report 1 (± 2,000 words): at midpoint in the fieldwork

- o Description of research activities
- o Detailed chronological description of the activities week by week. Whom did you speak with and why, where did you go and why? What information did the visits generate? Have follow-ups been planned?
- o Reflection about the research activities
- o How has conducting the research progressed thus far? Are you satisfied with your role as a researcher? Have you succeeded in contacting the right informants? Are the methods selected useful? How have you operationalized the most important concepts (e.g. through lists of topics and questionnaires)? Would adjusting the implementation be helpful (if so, why and how)?
- o Describing and processing results
- o Describe the first empirical results based on the research questions. What did you find (describe examples), and how has this answered your questions?
- o How do you record and structure the information gathered? How do you apply the theory in your research?
- o Reflections about the research structure
- o Are the research questions valid and relevant? Should they be modified (and why)? Does your theoretical framework still apply?
- o Plans for the weeks ahead
- o What information will you be gathering to complete your data and how?

Report 2 (± 5,000 words): during the first week after returning

- o Introduction
- o Describe the research theme, the original research questions, and the research methods.
- o Reflection about the research structure
- o Substantiate any adjustments to the original question formulation, the methods, the operationalization of concepts, and your theoretical framework.
- o Description of research activities

- o Provide a detailed chronological description of the activities week by week (copy and insert weeks 1 through 6 from Report 1). This time describe the entire research period: whom did you speak with and why; where did you go and why?
- o Reflection about research activities
- o What went well, and what did not? How was your own role in the research? When did you mainly observe, when did you mainly participate, and how do you feel about that in retrospect? What would you do differently the next time?
- o Processing the results
- o How did you arrange the data? How do you apply the theory in your research?
- o Thesis structure
- o What will be the thrust of your thesis, and how will you arrange the chapters to convey this?

STAGE 3: POST-FIELDWORK COURSE AND THESIS

This course is conducive to writing the thesis. The course is not intended to generate additional work for the students but to structure the steps in writing the thesis.

After completing the post-fieldwork course, students have about two weeks to rewrite the chapters in consultation with the supervisor(s) and to add the correct bibliography, the summary (about 600-800 words), and any annexes. In mid-November the draft will be evaluated. Once the supervisors or the supervisor and second referee have approved the thesis, the last two weeks are used to complete the final version, which is due by 1 December.

Specific guidelines for writing the thesis appear from page 24 onward (research and thesis regulations)

EDUCATION COORDINATION AND SUPERVISION

Louise Stutterheim coordinates the education and is also the primary contact for students. Students may request all kinds of information from her and submit questions to her. She conveys general announcements about the CMP to students. In addition, she handles practical matters, such as course enrolment, absenteeism, academic performance, which staff members supervise which students, etc.

Pitou van Dijck is the CMP coordinator and addresses questions from students concerning academic content. Louise and Pitou track student progress throughout the programme. Students are required to record their progress, to keep them abreast as to whether they are on schedule. The schedule is attached on p. 18.

September - October

In the introduction course students talk to the research staff about their provisional research ideas and consult the research staff about which courses to take. Immediately after the introduction course the researchers discuss the student results. Mediocre or poor student performance will be discussed at special appointments, where students are told which aspects require improvement. The board of examiners will oversee the subsequent process.

If a student's performance is inadequate, the board of examiners may exclude this student from further participation in the CMP. The student may lodge an appeal with the appeals committee against this measure.

November - January

From November through February, students attend the preparatory fieldwork course, complete their research proposal, and attend one or two master courses they select. This enables regular contact between researchers and students. In the event of a delay or any other problems, an appointment to discuss the matter is easily arranged.

Before the Christmas break, the staff members supervising the students in their research and thesis should be known. Thesis supervisors serve as mentors as well and will therefore be in ongoing contact with the students about selections and course completion. A second supervisor may be approached in consultation with this first supervisor /mentor. This second supervisor may be a staff member / researcher at a different academic institution (usually one participating in the CEDLA), who has specific knowledge about the research theme.

February - April

From February through April (possibly mid-May) CMP students attend one or two selected courses and maintain regular contact with their thesis supervisor. This supervisor helps the student prepare the research and write the research proposal and the thesis. Once again, delays or other problems that arise will be discussed at special appointments, and after this period the student results will be reviewed by the board of examiners. Students may start their field research under the auspices of the CEDLA only after completing their coursework and obtaining approval for the research plan they submit.

May – August: fieldwork project

In the period preceding the fieldwork project, the supervisor and student reach clear agreements regarding the research approach, and about how they will remain in touch while the student is in Latin America.

In Latin America CMP students conduct empirical research. To this end, they examine documents, conduct interviews and surveys, and observe. Thus far, CMP student research internships have been organized individually by students and thesis supervisors. In some cases the research is closely connected with a research project run by the supervising staff member. In other cases, students present their own research plan. In all cases, students attending the fieldwork course draft a research proposal that focuses extensively on practical research preparation. Next, students receive assistance from their supervisor in contacting relevant local institutions and researchers, including both academic and non-academic ones (i.e. government institutions, NGOs, social movements etc.). Sometimes this leads to a formal supervision arrangement in the country where the research takes place. At any rate, the CEDLA staff member involved provides regular remote supervision by e-mail. Students who write sections of their thesis on site may submit these sections by e-mail and receive feedback.

September – 1st of December: final stage

After their return, students report orally and in writing about the research period and make arrangements for the subsequent planning and supervision during the course of completing the thesis. Generally, students send their supervisors finished chapters to be discussed afterwards.

In the final stage of the thesis, the supervisor approaches a CEDLA researcher after consulting the student to be the referee. Once the student has completed the final thesis to the supervisor's satisfaction, the referee reads the thesis as well. This is a complete review, not a superficial one (see the research and thesis regulations).

MONTHLY PROGRESS SCHEDULE

Month	Course(s)	ECs to date	Remarks
September – October 2011	Introduction course (10 ECs)		Complete in early November
November 2011	Introduction course	10	
December 2011	Fieldwork course (5 ECs)	15	Determine research subject
January 2012	Master courses + research structure		
February 2012	Master courses + research structure		
March 2012	Master courses + research structure		Late March: complete research structure
April 2012	Master courses		Late April: Complete master courses
May 2012	DEPART FOR FIELDWORK BY END MAY	40	
June 2012	Fieldwork + weekly contact with supervisor		
July 2012	Fieldwork + first fieldwork report		
August 2012	Submit final fieldwork report (5 ECs)	45	Return by 1 September to the Netherlands for first class in post-fieldwork course
September 2012	Post-fieldwork course (5 ECs) + write thesis	50	
October 2012	Write thesis		
November 2012	Write thesis	75	30 NOVEMBER THESIS DUE

'FIRM AGREEMENTS': PROGRESS, EVALUATION AND FUNDING

Progress

The CMP lasts 15 months – from early September until 1 December of the subsequent year. The CMP board of examiners assesses the progress of participants at three points in time.

First progress assessment - 1 May

On 1 May the board of examiners assesses student progress in preparing the fieldwork project.

- o the introduction course (10 ECs);
- o the fieldwork course incl. the elaborated and approved research proposal (5 ECs);
- o master courses at the CEDLA or elsewhere or – alternatively – *lecturas guiadas*, internships etc. (25 ECs).

From September to May, students obtain a total of 40 ECs. Students who have not obtained the required ECs by 1 May will receive an extension until not later than 31 May. Students who have not completed these 40 ECs on 31 May will receive a binding recommendation from the board of examiners to leave the programme. This means that such students can no longer go do Fieldwork for the CMP and lose their entitlement to the research grant.

Exceptional circumstances

Only in the event of exceptional circumstances, such as illness or family emergencies or pregnancy, may the board of examiners rule otherwise. To receive such consideration, students must submit these requests in writing to the CMP board of examiners no later than 1 May.

Second progress assessment – 1 September

In May students leave on their fieldwork project, from which they are expected to return by 15 August. Extensions are possible until no later than 1 September, which is also the date of the next assessment point by the CMP board of examiners. During the fieldwork project, and shortly after their return, students write reports about their fieldwork projects and submit them to their supervisor / mentor. In the first week of the academic year in September, the post-fieldwork course starts. This course is intended to facilitate completion of the master's thesis. Students are required to attend this course and must therefore attend the first class as well. Students who are not present or have submitted unsatisfactory fieldwork project reports without any exceptional circumstances being the case (see above), will receive a binding recommendation from the board of examiners to leave the programme.

Third progress assessment – 1 December

The thesis is to be written in September, October, and November. On 1 December the thesis is due for submission to be evaluated by the first and second referees. Once their thesis has been approved, students have a few days to enhance the appearance of the thesis until the degree certificate award ceremony in the second or third week in December. Students who submit a thesis on 1 December that is deemed inadequate shall not

receive the final degree certificate and therefore fail to complete the CMP. In such cases candidates may request that they be granted a second chance. The CMP board of examiners will rule in part based on the length and quality of the essay material disclosed on 1 December. Note: the board has the discretion to reject such requests! Candidates whose request is granted receive at most a three-month extension and are required to pay 50 per cent of the tuition to this end. Marks already obtained remain valid in this case, although no official degree certificate award ceremony will take place.

Delays in writing the thesis

There may be a delay in submitting the thesis due to exceptional circumstances, such as illness, a family emergency, or pregnancy. After receiving a request in writing with a medical certificate or other relevant document (e.g. a referral to a specialist) attached, the CMP board of examiners may grant an extension for a period corresponding with the exceptional circumstances. No additional tuition is due for this extension.

Suggestions for timely and successful completion of the CMP

- o Select your research subject and region early in the programme;
- o Relate your project to current research by CEDLA staff members;
- o Select master courses that will optimally enhance your knowledge for the thesis;
- o Circumscribe the scope of the thesis theme;
- o Plan the courses you will take and your commitments carefully;
- o Report unintentional delays to your mentor / supervisor as quickly as possible;
- o Be sure to complete all courses by 1 May;
- o Make sure that you have completed sections of your thesis as best you can before your departure, such as the chapters with the problem statement, the theoretical framework and the methodology.

QUALITY CONTROL

All CEDLA courses are evaluated in writing (and anonymously). After the introduction course, a meeting is arranged between the students, the course coordinator, and the education secretary to discuss the first stage of the CMP. Additionally, at the end of each year students have the opportunity to evaluate the entire course year in writing and/or orally and to suggest improvements. The results of these evaluations are discussed by the education committee and the board of examiners.

Education committee

The education committee is in charge of determining the programme each year. This committee consists of permanent staff members, except for the education coordinator and a representative of the CMP students. Based on experiences with the courses, supervision of student research projects, thesis evaluations by supervisors and referees, and the results of education evaluations by students, the group works jointly to improve the programme.

Board of examiners

The entire permanent CEDLA staff constitutes the CMP board of examiners. This body discusses any progress and supervision problems and discusses and determines the ultimate student results. Students who disagree with a decision by the board of examiners

may lodge an appeal with the appeals committee, which consists of two members from the General Board.

General Board

Each year the CMP is submitted for approval to the General Board (Algemeen Bestuur), which includes representatives from all participating institutions. The GB is also notified of the CEDLA Master Programme results, and possible improvements and coordination with other programmes are discussed. The General Board sets general Institute policy and meets at least twice a year. In addition to influencing the curriculum, the GB policy relates mainly to the research programme and the financial statements, i.e. the CEDLA annual report. The GB is also responsible for appointing academic staff and determining staff job descriptions. In addition, an external Advisory Council is being established, which will comprise some GB members, alumni, and representatives from areas of subsequent employment. This council is expected to meet once a year.

FUNDING

Tuition

Tuition for the entire course of study is € 2,650. Course fees for participation in the CMP should be deposited before 15 August 2011 to account 4990722, registered to CEDLA in Amsterdam, indicating 'CMP tuition/*collegegeld*.' The amount may also be paid in two instalments. According to this option, the first instalment of € 1,325 is due before 15 August 2011 and the second one before 15 December 2011. Students are responsible for the cost of purchasing textbooks and / or copying materials and additional costs associated with their stay in Latin America. Depending on their personal status, students participating in the CMP may be eligible for an *OV-studentenkaart* [valid on public transport] and/or a loan from DUO (IB-Groep). They are not eligible, however, for a performance grant.

Grants / funds

Students may apply to the CEDLA for a research grant of up to € 1,000 toward their research in Latin America, subject to the following conditions:

- o the student has met all educational requirements for the September through April period, by completing all courses successfully (totalling 40 ECs);
- o the student has submitted the research and thesis proposal to the supervising researcher, who has approved it
- o the student departs no later than 31 May
- o Seventy percent (€ 700) of the grant is paid out prior to the trip and the remaining 30 percent (€ 300) after the trip, provided that the student returns by the end of August, has submitted his / her research reports, attends the first class of the post-fieldwork course, and has his / her research reports approved by the supervising researcher. The student should apply to the CMP coordinator for both the first and the second part of the travel grant, once he / she meets the requirements.

CMP participants may apply to the Amsterdams Universiteitsfonds for grants toward their fieldwork. Below is an excerpt from the text posted on the UvA website (also posted on: <http://www.alumni.uva.nl/universiteitsfonds/subsidies.cfm/D4D6CC47-EAFA-4DC4-B149EAD683D62BFD>):

- o The amount of the travel grant depends on the destination and the duration of the stay abroad (*CMP participants generally receive about 400 Euros*).
- o Decisions about grant requests are final. The Amsterdams Universiteitsfonds does not correspond about them.
- o The Amsterdams Universiteitsfonds pays out the approved individual research travel grant afterwards, once the report on the stay abroad has been received. If this procedure clearly presents an obstacle to the research trip, this rule may be waived.
- o Protestant students are eligible for a travel allocation from a special fund, if they are able to prove their religious affiliation, for example by including a copy of their baptismal certificate with their application.
- o The application deadlines are as follows:
 departure between 1 February and 31 May: application due by 1 December
 departure between 1 June and 31 August: application due by 1 March.
- o Completed applications (including all information requested) must reach the Amsterdams Universiteitsfonds by post by the deadlines stated. The mailing address is:
 Amsterdams Universiteitsfonds
 ATTN: drs. D.D.R. Meijer
 P.O. Box 94325
 1090 GH Amsterdam

In addition, the secretariat has a binder containing information about other grants and funds for CMP students to contact at their discretion.

Terminating before completion or failing the CMP: financial consequences

Participants are required to submit the final draft of their thesis by 1 December 2011. Students whose thesis submitted on 1 December is deemed inadequate fail the CMP. In exceptional cases the CMP board of examiners may grant a three-month extension to give the candidate the opportunity to rewrite the work in the hope of receiving an adequate evaluation. The tuition payable by students is €1,325 in these cases. Students who leave the CMP after the introduction course receive a refund of tuition already paid, less € 400; those leaving after the first block and the fieldwork course receive a refund of tuition paid, less € 800.

FACILITIES

Library

The CEDLA maintains a library especially equipped for scholarship on Latin American society, economics, and politics and is considered to be one of the best in Europe. CMP participants have access to the library, books and periodicals are available for consultation. Separate study and computer areas are available in the library.

Classrooms

Courses are ordinarily taught in the two classrooms at the CEDLA. The University of Amsterdam facilities may also be used as needed.

Cafeteria

Students and visitors to the CEDLA may use the cafeteria in the basement of the CEDLA. The cafeteria has an automatic coffee and tea dispenser and opens into the garden from the rear to allow those who come to enjoy the sunshine in fine weather.

UvA collegekaart [service pass]

CMP students receive a *collegekaart*. This pass is valid at the many University of Amsterdam facilities, including libraries and online scholarly journals, reading rooms, the *mensa* dining hall, sports facilities, and the like. They are also assigned an UvA e-mail address and have access to all the university's electronic services.

CMP RESEARCH AND THESIS REGULATIONS

Research and thesis learning targets

Students completing a master's programme are expected to be capable of conducting independent and creative research and to account for their findings in scholarly reports. In the CMP, conducting fieldwork research in Latin America and writing a master's thesis about it are part of completing a course of study dedicated to acquiring or enhancing several essential skills. Generally, the learning targets are as follows (i.e. skills acquired after completing the research and the thesis):

- o formulating and circumscribing a problem statement and independently drafting a research plan, including stipulating a clear research strategy and schedule;
- o independently performing social-science research addressing a specific problem, applying sound methodological principles and research techniques to ensure that the research is reliable and valid;
- o creatively using theoretical insights relevant to this problem;
- o generating new knowledge relating to the problem raised;
- o reporting clearly, systematically, and responsibly about the research and the results it yields;
- o expressing the theoretical and practical significance of the research results.

Research and thesis subject choice

Thinking about the subject and seeking information considerably before starting the research and the thesis is essential. Some of the courses to be taken may be selected accordingly. The advantage is that candidates become thoroughly familiar with the literature and have a stronger foundation for circumscribing their scope early on. Moreover, most fieldwork research in Latin America requires extensive practical and substantive preparation. The sooner contacts are established with local persons and institutions, and the greater the knowledge and insight students have by the time they depart for their fieldwork, the greater the likelihood that the research will progress successfully and culminate in a good thesis.

The scope of potential thesis subjects is vast but subject to certain conditions. First, the subject should relate to the content of the CEDLA Master's Programme. Second, students should have an appropriate foundation (in terms of their education and / or background knowledge); in some cases additional coursework or self-study may compensate for any gaps in the foundation, if identified in time. Finally, approval of a thesis subject depends on the expertise present among the research staff. Potential research areas among CEDLA staff members are listed in the annex.

Two participants may team up to conduct research and write a thesis. Obviously, they are expected to do equivalent amounts of work, as manifested by the size of their joint study and thesis. In addition, they need to indicate who was responsible for which sections of the thesis to enable the results to be assessed individually. This division needs to be stipulated in advance, also toward the supervisor(s). The research should be structured to enable candidates to continue separately if necessary.

Supervision

The fieldwork research and thesis are supervised by a CEDLA researcher. In the final stage of the thesis, the supervisor (first referee) may arrange with the candidate to select a second referee. The third referee is a CEDLA researcher designated by the CMP coordinator. Candidates may approach a second supervisor in consultation with their first supervisor. The second supervisor is in most cases a staff member / researcher at another academic institution, who has specific knowledge about the research theme and acts as a second referee in evaluating the thesis. The CEDLA does not provide remuneration for such external supervision.

After agreeing with the supervisor(s) on the subject and circumscribing the research scope, students start writing the research and thesis proposal. The proposal is the foundation for the field research and the subsequent work on the thesis. Students agree with their supervisor(s) on the nature and frequency of the supervision. They will generally meet with them to discuss the proposal and elaboration of the research plan, separate chapters (possibly covering several chapters in a single conversation), and the draft thesis. During the fieldwork research students notify their supervisor(s) regularly about highlights in their progress and findings. They discuss any problems encountered during the research and while working on the thesis with the supervisor(s). Students should not hesitate to contact them in the event of any problems.

THESIS CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

In the post-fieldwork course students receive help in structuring the information they gather in their fieldwork research and in writing the thesis. The thesis needs to meet high standards, which students should take note of at the start of the research and thesis project.

Structure and problem statement

The thesis objective needs to be clear: which subject does it address, and what is the relevance? The problem statement or central question should be formulated clearly and should relate directly to the objective. The problem statement makes the subject more specific; it indicates the areas to be covered. In most cases, the problem statement consists of a general question, followed by a series of operational subordinate questions deriving from it. These questions should be phrased in a manner conducive to answering them in the thesis context.

Candidates should devote special attention to circumscribing the subject and problem statement, as well as to the broader framework in which they figure. To this end, they need to gather thorough information about research conducted on the theme or on a similar subject. Scholarly literature appears in the volumes of professional journals. The thesis should relate their research to findings arising from previous research.

Theory application

Students should show that they are aware of the main social-science theories applicable to the thesis subject. Theories are applied to:

- a) present the problem statement more abstractly as a foundation for formulating research hypotheses;

- b) describe the core concepts and how they relate to one another;
- c) select and structure the research material;
- d) interpret the research results;
- e) identify probable developments.

Research quality

Students base their thesis on their own empirical research in Latin America, which consists of reviewing documents, conducting interviews and surveys, observing, analysing statistical data, or using a combination of these techniques. The thesis should reflect extensive consideration for:

- a) transposition of theoretical insights and concepts into research steps (operationalizing concepts, validation issues, and reliability);
- b) the nature of the empirical material (defining and circumscribing the research population, case selection);
- c) the nature of the research techniques. All choices made in the process should be substantiated and accounted for as much as possible.

Conclusions

Description and analyses of the research results are followed by conclusions, in which research results are interpreted in relation to the problem statement and the theory applied. Explicit answers should be given to the questions raised in the problem statement. If any hypotheses have been advanced, the conclusions should indicate in what measure the research results confirm or refute them. The following questions are to be addressed as well:

- a) In what measure do the research results offer a foundation for generalizing about cases other than the research subject?
- b) What light do the research results shed on the theory?
- c) How do the research results relate to the findings and conclusions by other authors? In which respect to the results overlap, and how do they differ, and what causes these overlaps and differences?
- d) How has the research by the CMP student enhanced knowledge about the research subject?

Depending on the thesis objective, answers to one or more of the following questions may be important as well:

- a) What does the research reveal about the adequacy of the methods applied and the selection of empirical material? Does it bring to mind ideas for future research? How might the process be improved in the future?
- b) Which policy recommendations are forthcoming from the research?
- c) Verifiability is essential to ensure that a thesis meets academic standards. We need to be able to trace the research progression, as well as the questions, answers, data generated, and the like.
- d) Compare with findings from other studies to offer a general reflection.

Guidelines for writing the thesis

- a) Students should aim to structure their discourse systematically. Problem statement, theory, and empirical data should clearly relate to one another. The thesis should follow a clear line of argument, stipulating the progression of ideas and providing clear transitions between chapters and sections. The conclusions should derive from the line of argument that precedes them.
- b) Careful divisions into chapters and sections will make the line of argument clearer. All theses should comprise:
 1. a title page: title and possibly a subtitle, name and student ID number of the author(s), names of the supervisor (first referee) and the second and third referees, month and year of completion, and the listings 'Master's thesis in Latin American Studies' and 'Cedla Master's Programme'
 2. a table of contents
 3. an introduction, describing the purpose and subject of the thesis and the problem statement
 4. reflection and justification of the method applied (in the introduction or elsewhere)
 5. reflection and justification of the theory applied (in the introduction or elsewhere)
 6. one or more chapters describing and analysing the research results
 7. a conclusion summarizing and providing a theoretical interpretation of the research results, responding to the question in the problem statement and offering recommendations (optional)
 8. notes
 9. a list of sources
 10. one or more annexes (optional)
 11. a brief summary in English, Dutch, Spanish, and/or Portuguese (optional, about 2 pages).
- c) Word choice and style merit careful consideration. The thesis should be written in good Dutch or – in consultation with the supervising researcher – in good English or Spanish. Sentences should be grammatically correct (not in telegram style) and should flow well. Students should avoid superfluous repetitions and irrelevant digressions. Specialized terminology may be useful and even necessary, but only if it benefits the content. Proper paragraph arrangement enhances readability and makes the line of argument easier to follow. Students should not rely too much on other authors but should craft an independent argument, presented in their own style.
- d) External appearance format requirements include: a good layout (typeface, spacing, fairly generous margins, page numbering, consistent typography in chapter and section headings), no spelling errors or typos, correct punctuation, and functional and clear presentation of diagrams, tables, and graphs.
- e) Theses vary in length, depending on the theme and discipline but are generally around 60 standard typed pages (line spacing set at 1.5, 12-point typeface) of text (i.e. not including notes, list of sources, annexes). Exceptions may be made in agreement with the supervising researcher.

Verification

In any academic treatise, including theses, assertions need to be verifiable: authors should list the source of information. For assertions based on their own research, they should provide an adequate methodological justification. Statements deriving from written sources should be referenced accordingly.

References, notes, and list of sources

There are two accepted systems for referencing sources in the text and corresponding use of notes and source listings. One system is used, for example, in the *Latin American Research Review*, the other in the *Journal of Latin American Studies* and the *Hispanic American Historical Review*. Students should use one of these two systems consistently and accurately. Adhering to this practice from the outset saves time and averts errors and problems in the final stage. Books and manuals about writing theses include:

- o H.A.J.M. Lamers, *Hoe schrijf ik een wetenschappelijke tekst? Een handleiding om scripties, onderzoeksverslagen, dissertaties en literatuurrapporten te schrijven*, Coutinho, 1993.
- o W. Oosterbaan, *Het schrijven van een leesbare scriptie*, NRC Handelsblad, 1995.
- o U. Eco, *Hoe schrijf ik een scriptie?* Prometheus Groep, 2002.
- o B. Padmos, *De scriptiesupporter: een doeltreffende aanpak van je scriptie*, Maklu, 2003.

Evaluation

The content requirements described above serve as criteria for evaluating the thesis. The chief evaluation criteria are summarized below:

- o Problem statement: clarity and accuracy, originality, explanation, and circumscription; how is the problem statement operationalized?
- o Structured discourse: systematic elaboration of the problem statement, logical consistency, cohesive sections of the thesis, clear line of argument, duly substantiated conclusions
- o Knowledge of the thesis subject: apparent, for example, from the way and the extent that relevant sources are used
- o Scholarly understanding of the discipline: how and in what measure theories in the discipline are used
- o Research quality: manner in which material is gathered (operationalizing concepts, research techniques, choice of empirical field), methodological justification of choices, data analysis
- o Verification: accurate references and source listings, proper indication of citations, notes, list of sources, justification of calculations
- o Word choice and style: precise, clear, readable
- o External appearance: layout, spelling, punctuation, clear distribution (table of contents, etc.), chapter titles and section headings, etc.
- o Measure of independence: at above items
- o Creativity and originality.

The master's thesis is ultimately evaluated by three researchers: the supervisor (first referee) and the second and third referees.

Once both the supervisor and the first referee consider the thesis to be acceptable, the student will generate four complete copies of the final draft: for the supervisor, the second and third referees, and the CEDLA education secretariat. The copy for the third referee will be added to the thesis collection in the CEDLA library after evaluation. This is the final version of the thesis, in that in addition to the content being complete, it meets all format requirements.

Students should present the final version of their thesis to their supervisor and referees at least two weeks before the date of the final interview and at least three weeks before the date of the intended diploma award ceremony. The next step is to set the appointment for the final interview. Ordinarily, the final interview will be at least a week prior to the diploma award, but if one of the referees is absent, the final interview may take place as late as the date of the diploma award.

During the final interview, the student may provide a brief introduction or explanation, and the referees will ask questions about the research and the thesis and provide feedback. The student will respond orally to the best of his or her ability. This final interview lasts half an hour to three quarters of an hour.

After the final interview, the student leaves the room, while the supervisor and referees discuss the final thesis grade. The thesis mark shall be an integer or half integer ranging from six (6) as the lowest possible grade to ten (10) as the highest possible grade. The student is then invited to return, and the first supervisor explains the final evaluation.

In the event that the third referee finds the thesis to be unsatisfactory, he or she shall notify the other referees and the student about this before the final interview. Based on the written or oral content feedback from the referee, the supervisor and student will discuss which improvements and corrections are necessary in that case. Once this has been covered, the student shall generate an additional four complete copies, and the third referee shall have one week to review the adapted version. Conceivably, the target date for the diploma award may be missed as a result.

If the student's academic performance has been good, and the thesis is very good, the thesis supervisor may suggest to the board of examiners that the student graduate *cum laude*. This suggestion should be made well before the diploma award. The education secretariat will provide the supervising researcher with the student's list of marks for this purpose. Students may graduate *cum laude*, if they are given a mark of 8.5 for their thesis, their weighted average for all courses taken plus the thesis is 8.1 or higher, *and* no mark is lower than 7.0.

Graduation procedure

Diplomas are awarded after completion of the CMP in December. Arrangements in the final stage need to be made well in advance, as three individuals will need to read the final work, and foreign travel by evaluators may cause delays.

Participants receive the diploma after:

- o they have completed all their educational requirements,
- o they have made all payments due to the CMP,
- o they have submitted four copies of the thesis,
- o the supervisor and the referees have determined the mark for the thesis.

At the diploma award, the student will receive the certificate of completion for the CEDLA Master's Programme in Latin American Studies. At this meeting the student delivers a brief presentation (no longer than five minutes) about his or her research. The CEDLA su-

pervisor then addresses the student. If the supervisor is not present, the second or third referee may perform this task.

Delays and problems

If a disagreement arises between the student and the supervisor(s), they should try at first to solve it themselves. If such efforts are unsuccessful, the student and/or the research staff member may involve the CMP coordinator. In extreme cases, students may notify the CEDLA board of examiners and request that they offer a solution.

Plagiarism is prohibited. Copying electronic or written texts by others – except for citations that are clearly referenced – in an assignment, paper, or master’s thesis is unacceptable. In cases of proven plagiarism, the research staff will expel CMP participants from the course and shall refuse to continue supervising the thesis. The CMP board of examiners may also expel the person in violation from further participation in the CMP.