This class surveys art and especially architecture across Latin America from around 1500 to around 1945, focusing on the colonial era. From Mexico to Peru and from the Caribbean Sea to the Río de la Plata, we will explore churches, public buildings, and works of art in a variety of media—including wood and stone sculpture, feather and mural painting, prints and books—as expressions of the complex societies that emerged in the Americas after 1492. Along the way, we will study the output of artisans, artists, and architects whose names have been forgotten by history and the work of others whose biographies have become better known in recent years such as the indigenous Andean painter Andrés Sánchez Galque. Additionally, the class will consider familiar figures such as Guaman Poma de Ayala, Cristóbal de Villalpando, Miguel de Cabrera, Diego Quispe Tito, Frida Kahlo, Tina Modotti, Juan O’Gorman, Joaquín Torres García, and Óscar Niemeyer.

Lectures will be held twice per week, and students must also enroll in a discussion section led by a teaching assistant on Fridays. Depending on pandemic-related restrictions, the course hopes to make use of art collections in Chicago — the Art Institute of Chicago and the National Museum of Mexican Art, primarily — for introductory-level research projects. Please note that the textbook can be ordered in print or as an e-book; the edition is the same.