

Introduction to Latin American Politics
POL 247, Spring 2009
University of Arizona
Harvill 302
T 03:30PM – 05:50PM



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Course Description

What is Latin America? How are the countries in the region similar? More importantly, how are those countries different? Are the past mistakes of societies embracing authoritarian regimes to be repeated in the future? Why does such a rich region exhibit such a high level of poverty? This class provides students with the information needed to answer these and other questions, and seeks to encourage discussion on issues such as democratization, integration in the global economy, and respect and protection of human rights and natural resources.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

The course's website is anchored in D2L (Desire to Learn) at www.d2l.arizona.edu. Please check the website DAILY for changes and updates of this syllabus and other course material. You will find links to readings and other materials in the website (copy of the syllabus, instructions on how to write your paper, etc.).

Recommended Texts

These are not required reading, just a few recommendations if you are interested in buying a textbook that could serve as a good companion to an introductory course on Latin American politics.

Blake, Charles H. 2008. *Politics in Latin America* (2nd Edition). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Hillman, Richard S. (ed.). 2001. *Understanding Contemporary Latin America* (2nd Edition). Boulder, CO: Rienner.

Kingstone, Peter R. 2006. *Readings in Latin American Politics. Challenges to Democratization*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Vanden, Harry E., and Gary Prevost. 2006. *Politics of Latin America. The Power Game* (2nd Edition). New York, NY: Oxford.

Requirements

- **Readings**

You are responsible for coming to class prepared to engage in discussion. That is difficult to do if you do not read the material. Hence, I expect you to READ the assigned material PRIOR to coming to class. I will post a number of discussion questions on D2L a few days before the class; you should read those and be prepared! Also, you'll need to read in order to deal with the quizzes, which takes to the next bullet!

- **Quizzes**

There will be a total of 10 quizzes throughout the semester. They will contain questions that cover the readings for the week. Each one of them will be worth 2 points of the final grade. Hence, the 10 quizzes account for 20% of the final grade. Quizzes will be administered at the beginning of the class. If you come to class late and are not there when I hand them out, you miss the 2 points!

- **Attendance**

This accounts for 20% of your final grade. You can miss up to 2 classes without being penalized. If you miss a third one –regardless of the reason- you lose the 20 points in your final grade. Hint: don't waste your misses at the beginning of the semester.

- **Final Exam**

There is only one exam in this class (on May 12), and it's worth 30 % of your grade.

Note: ALL THE INFORMATION EXPOSED IN CLASS, PLUS WHAT'S IN THE READINGS, ARE TESTABLE MATERIALS.

- **Research Paper**

The research paper is individual and accounts for the remaining 30% of your grade. Instructions will be posted on D2L. The paper is due March 31st at 11:59 a.m. Drop a paper copy at my office and an electronic copy in the dropbox of the course's website in D2L.

Grading System.

- A: 90 or more points.
- B: 80 to 89.9 points.
- C: 70 to 79.9 points.
- D: 60 to 69.9 points.
- F: 59.9 or less points.

Code of Academic Integrity.

Students are expected to observe the rules contained in the Code of Academic Integrity. Cheating in exams or assignments will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade for the course. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity, point a browser to <http://dos.web.arizona.edu/uapolicies/cai1.html>.

Students with Disabilities.

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations must be registered in the Disability Resources Center (DRC). If you have still not registered, please call 621-3268, or visit <http://drc.arizona.edu>. We will then work out the necessary accommodations for you in this class.

A Note on Class Manners.

I want to avoid disruptions and noise during our classes. Please do not talk during meetings, read newspapers, drift in to meetings late, or walk out early. Please turn off your cell phones before our class meetings begin. If extraordinary circumstances require you leave early, please inform me before class begins and sit by the door. If you are late, please enter the room quietly, but don't make this a habit.

Please check your email often, as I may send you information about the class that you should know (changes in the schedule, availability of reading material, etc.).

Class Schedule.

January 20

**Review of Course Goals and Requirements.
What's Latin America?**

January 27

The Birth of Latin America.

Required reading:

Rene de la Pedraja. 2005. "The Historical Context." In Hillman, Richard S. (ed.) *Understanding Contemporary Latin America* (third edition). Rienner. (Available on D2L.)

Harry E. Vanden and Gary Prevost. 2006. *Politics of Latin America. The Power Game* (2nd Edition). New York, NY: Oxford. (Chapter 7. Available on D2L).

Film:

"Conquistadors"

February 3

Foreign Intervention

Required reading:

Eaking, Marshall. *The History of Latin America. Collision of Cultures*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan (Chapter 16 available in D2L).

Phillips, Nicola. 2005. "U.S. Power and the Politics of Economic Governance in the Americas." *Latin American Politics and Society* 47(4): 1-25. Available on D2L

Frechette, Myles. 2006. "Rethinking Latin America: A New Approach in US Foreign Policy." *Harvard International Review* 28(2):28-31. Available on D2L.

Film:

"The U.S. in Latin America. Yankee Go Home"

February 10

Cuba

Required reading:

Schoultz, Lars. 2002. "Blessings of Liberty: The United States and the Promotion of Democracy in Cuba." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 34(2): 397-425. Available on D2L.

Suchlicki, Jaime. "Challenges to a Post-Castro Cuba." *Harvard International Review*. Available on D2L.

U.S. State Department. 2006. *Compact with the People of Cuba*. Available on D2L.

Film:

Fidel. The Untold Story.

Other films on the subject:

Nobody Listened (this is a film that showcases stories of human rights violations by the Cuban government narrated by Cubans in the U.S. exile).

Series *The Houses are Full of Smoke*. Documentaries on political repression in Central America (available in the Center for Latin American Studies at the University of Arizona).

February 17

The Military and the “Desaparecidos”

Required reading:

Lowy, Michael, Eder Sader, and Stephen Gorman. 1985. “The Militarization of the State in Latin America.” *Latin American Perspectives* 12(4): 7-40. (Available in D2L)

Harry E. Vanden and Gary Prevost. 2006. *Politics of Latin America. The Power Game* (2nd Edition). New York, NY: Oxford. (Chapter 8. Available on D2L).

1976. “Argentina Today: A Reign of Terror.” *Latin American Perspectives* 3(1):157-168.

Film:

Botin de Guerra (Argentina 2000)

February 24

The Third Wave of Democratization and the Debt Crisis.

Required reading:

D’Agostino, Thomas J. 2005. “Latin American Politics.” In Richard S. Hillman (ed.) *Understanding Contemporary Latin America*. (read pages 95-115. Available on D2L).

Guillen, Arturo, and Ross Gandy. 1989. “Crisis, the Burden of Foreign Debt, and Structural Dependence.” *Latin American Perspectives* 16 (1): 31-51. Available on D2L.

Film:

The Debt Game: Who Owes Whom?

A Short film on the IMF

March 3

Neo Liberalism and Its Consequences.

Required readings:

Huber, Evelyne, and Fred Solt. 2004. “Successes and Failures of Neoliberalism.” *Latin American Research Review* 39(3): 150-164. Available on D2L.

Weyland, Kurt. 2004. “Neoliberalism and Democracy in Latin America: A Mixed Record.” *Latin American Politics and Society* 46(1): 135-157. Available on D2L.

Film:

The Empty ATM: Inside Argentina’s Broken Economy

March 10
Poverty and Social Exclusion

Required reading:

Moser, Caroline, Ailsa Winton, and Annalise Moser. 2006. "Violence, fear and insecurity and the urban poor in Latin America" World Bank Publication. Available on D2L.

Film:

Documentary from "City of God",
Alternatives: *Bus 174; Pizza, Birra, Faso.*

March 17 (Spring Recess)

March 24
Crime and Violence

Required reading:

Pinheiro, Paulo Sergio. 1996. "Democracies Without Citizenship: Injustice for All: Crime and Impunity in Latin America" (Chapter 2 in Kingstone. Available on D2L).

Film:

Manda Bala

March 31
Drug Trade and Corruption: the Colombian Case

Required reading:

Gill, Lesley. 2009. "Colombia, what's next?" *NACLA Report on the Americas* 42(1): 30-32.

Mondragon, Hector. 2007. "Democracy and Plan Colombia." *NACLA Report on the Americas* 40(1):42-45. Available on D2L.

Tickner, Arlene. 2003. "Colombia and the United States: From Counternarcotics to Counterterrorism". Chapter 9 of *Readings in Latin American Politics* (edited by Peter R. Kingstone). Available on D2L.

Film:

An Honest Citizen: Cocaine and Corruption in Colombia.

Important: research paper due March 31st at 11:59 a.m. Drop a paper copy at my office and an electronic copy in the dropbox of the course's website in D2L.

April 7
Indigenous rights and the Postmodern Revolution

Required readings:

Yashar, Deborah J. 1996. "Indigenous Protest and Democracy in Latin America." In Peter Kingstone (ed.) *Readings in Latin American Politics*. Available on D2L.

Film:

Zapatista, or
A Place Called Chiapas, or
When the Mountains Tremble.

April 14 **Immigration to the U.S.**

Required reading:

Rosenblum, Marc R. 2004. "Moving beyond the Policy of No Policy: Emigration from Mexico and Central America." *Latin American Politics and Society* 46(4): 91-125. Available on D2L

Film:

Mojados - Through the Night, or
Wetback—The Undocumented Documentary, or
Cochise County, USA. Cries from the Border, or
Border Patrol: American's Gatekeepers

April 21 **The New Left and the Old Left?**

Required reading:

Castaneda, Jorge G. 2006. "Latin America's Left Turn." *Foreign Affairs*, May/June. Available on D2L.

Zibechi, Raul. 2008. "The new Latin American right: finding a place in the world." *NACLA Report on the Americas* 41(1):12-20. Available on D2L.

Film:

Hugo Chavez (short video clips)

April 28 **Double Feature:**

- 1) Bolivia and the "New" Latin America**
- 2) The Obama Administration and Challenges Ahead.**

Required readings:

Burbach, Roger. 2009. Treating Bolivia as a Sovereign Partner *NACLA Report on the Americas* 42(1):33-35. Available on D2L.

Qayum, Seemin, and Sinclair Thomson. 2008. "Bolivia: Reform and Reaction in the Hemisphere" *NACLA Report on the Americas* 41(6): 3. Available on D2L.

Grandin, Greg. 2009. "Obama in Latin America: How The Nation Magazine Saved the American Empire". *NACLA news section* (link to the article available on D2L).

Film:
Cocalero

May 5
Review Final Exam

May 12
Final Exam: 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.