

INTS 273: GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS OF LATIN AMERICA

Fall 2009

T/TH 11 – 12:15 PM, 108 Buckman

Professor: Amy Risley

Email: risleya@rhodes.edu

Office: 115 Buckman, tel. 843-3630

Office hours: Tuesday 12:15-2:30 PM; Wednesday 3-4 PM (or by appointment)

This course introduces students to patterns of continuity and change in Latin American politics. We will analyze the origins and consequences of military rule, the process of democratization, and the dynamics of populism, as well as the politics of gender, class, and ethnicity, among other issues. We also examine the political implications of the region's persistent poverty and inequality. The overarching goal of the course is to deepen your understanding of the most urgent challenges of contemporary Latin American politics: consolidating democracy, protecting human rights, and striving toward economic development and social justice.

Although the course is organized thematically, we will explore each set of topics with reference to specific countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela. You also have the opportunity to do independent research on a country/issue of your choosing. Throughout the semester, you will become familiar with conceptual and theoretical frameworks that scholars use to interpret political realities in the region; in addition, you will be exposed to the views of diverse Latin American actors. Participation in this class should enhance your ability to critically evaluate both scholarly and non-academic sources, to build convincing arguments and support them with evidence, and to compare politics in different Latin American countries.

Requirements

You are responsible for material covered in class and in the readings. Please note that some of the material covered in class is *not* included in the readings (and vice versa).

Your final grade is based on the following components:

Research paper (& assignments)	30%	Due 12/4
Exam 1	20%	10/15
Exam 2	20%	11/19
Map quiz	5%	9/3
In-class exercises	10%	Dates vary
Participation	15%	

- *Research Paper:* You will select a contemporary issue in Latin American politics that interests you and become an expert on that theme by consulting outside sources. You are expected to research your topic throughout the semester (note the deadlines on the schedule below) and to write a final paper of approximately 12-15 pages. At the end of the semester, you will discuss your project with your classmates. More detailed instructions for this assignment will be distributed.

- *Exams*: These consist of short answer questions, to be completed during class, and a take-home essay to be completed outside of class. Exam 2 will emphasize material covered since Exam 1.
- *Map Quiz*: This short quiz will test your knowledge of the region's political boundaries. Practice maps will be provided.
- *In-class exercises*: These unannounced exercises usually consist of brief questions on readings and are designed to encourage active, engaged reading before each class. They also may cover the documentaries viewed outside of class. At the end of the semester, your lowest score is dropped. No make-ups will be scheduled for missed exercises.
- *Participation*: The format of this course is a combination of short lectures and discussions. You are expected to complete the assigned readings before class, to bring your texts to class, and to participate vigorously in discussions and activities. This grade is determined by 1) your attendance record (see policy below), and 2) your in-class contributions.

The grading scale for the course is as follows: A (100-93); A- (92-90); B+ (89-88); B (87-83); B- (82-80); C+ (79-78); C (77-73); C- (72-70); D (69-60); F (59 and below).

Class policies

- **Honor Code**: It is expected that the College's Honor Code will govern the work that you do in this course, as well as your conduct in class. Pertinent information is available at: <http://www.rhodes.edu/campuslife/1478.asp>.
- **Absences**: Students with **four** or more *unexcused* absences automatically receive a failing participation grade. *Excused* absences entail providing documentation of a personal or family emergency (e.g., illness) or prior commitment (e.g., jury duty) and are subject to the instructor's approval. Personal travel is not a valid reason for missing class; make your plans accordingly.
- **Tardiness**: Arriving late to class more than 1-2 times signals to me that this is a low-priority course for you. As a result, your participation grade will be lowered by one whole letter grade.
- I will not accept assignments submitted via email. I mark late work down one-third of a letter grade per day (for instance, an A becomes an A-, then a B+, etc.) until I receive a hard copy.
- If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services at x.3994 as soon as possible.
- I encourage you to visit me during office hours to discuss assignments, study skills, issues raised in class, current events, etc.

Texts and readings

One *required* text is available at the Rhodes Bookstore:

Peter H. Smith. *Democracy in Latin America: Political Change in Comparative Perspective* (2005).
Oxford University Press

Additional required readings are available in my public folder, where they are saved under the author's last name (unless noted otherwise). Hard copies will also be kept in a folder in the IS Department office (on the bookcase across from Kim Stevenson's desk).

I also urge you to read high-quality sources of international news on a regular basis so that we can incorporate current events into our class discussions (see the suggested websites in my public folder).

Important: You are required to watch several documentaries to supplement the readings and enrich our discussions. For your convenience, the films will be available on the streaming server (accessible through Moodle) and on reserve at Barret Library's Media Center.

Course schedule

TH, 8/27: Greetings & introduction to the course

- *Recommended:* New York Times article, "Latin America Graft and Poverty Trying Patience With Democracy." Available at:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/06/24/world/latin-america-graft-and-poverty-trying-patience-with-democracy.html>

T, 9/1: Introduction to the region and its politics

Why study Latin American politics? Can we discern any recurring patterns in the region's politics? What does Anderson mean when he characterizes Latin America as a "living museum"?

- Anderson. "Toward a Theory of Latin American Politics" (1964), p. 309-325.
- García Márquez. "The Solitude of Latin America" (Nobel prize acceptance speech). Available at:
http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1982/marquez-lecture-e.html

TH, 9/3: A "bird's-eye view" of Latin American history

How have colonial legacies and other past experiences shaped Latin American politics? When have the main cycles of democratization occurred?

- *Democracy in Latin America*, p. 7-14; Chs. 1 & 2.
- *Recommended:* Bolívar. Excerpts from "The Jamaican Letter." Available at:
<http://osx.lps.org/manila/tbayne/Jamaicanletter.doc>

Map quiz today!

T, 9/8: Dictatorship and the "Dirty War"

Case: Argentina

What explains the rise of authoritarianism in the Southern Cone in the 1960s and 1970s, and what characteristics did these regimes share?

- *Democracy in Latin America*, p. 73-90.
- Arditti. *Searching for Life: The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo and the Disappeared Children of Argentina* (1999), Ch. 1.
- Carlson. Selections from *I Remember Julia: Voices of the Disappeared* (1996) (saved in public folder as Carlson 1).

TH, 9/10: Mobilizing against military rule

How and why did groups organize protests during this period, and with what consequences?

- Arditti. *Searching for Life...*, Ch. 3.
- Carlson. Selections from *I Remember Julia...*, p. 85-91 & 103-110 (saved in public folder as Carlson 2).

T, 9/15: Authoritarian legacies

After the democratic transitions of the 1980s and 90s, how did elected leaders and citizens deal with the human rights violations committed by the security forces? What are the most important legacies of authoritarian rule?

- Arditti. *Searching for Life...*, Ch. 2.
- *Democracy in Latin America*, p. 90-106.
- News article, "Argentina: Missing Witness Awakens Dark Past."
Available at: <http://americas.irc-online.org/am/3595>

Required documentary: The Disappeared (2006, 90 min). Available on Moodle.

TH, 9/17: Economic development policies, past and present

What gave rise to neoliberal reforms in the region, and how can we gauge their "success" to date? How would you characterize the relationship between these reforms and democratization?

- Green. "State versus Market: The Rise and Fall of Import Substitution." In *Readings in Latin American Politics: Challenges to Democratization* (2006), ed. Kingstone, p. 68-83.
- Craske. "Gender, Poverty, and Social Movements." In *Gender in Latin America* (2003), ed. Chant, p. 46-70.

T, 9/22: Democratization in Central America

Case: *El Salvador*

How did the process of democratization that occurred in several Central American countries differ from the transitions in Southern Cone countries? What obstacles have citizens of El Salvador encountered along the path of democratization?

- Wood. "Challenges to Political Democracy in El Salvador." In *The Third Wave of Democratization in Latin America: Advances and Setbacks*, ed. Hagopian and Mainwaring (2005), p. 179-201.

TH, 9/24: Democratization in Mexico: the decline of PRI hegemony

Why did the PRI dominate Mexican politics for such a long time? What accounts for the decline of its hegemony?

- Solinger, Dorothy. "Ending One-Party Dominance: Korea, Taiwan, and Mexico." *Journal of Democracy* (2001).
- *Recommended:* Lawson. "How Did We Get Here? Mexican Democracy After the 2006 Elections." *PS: Political Science and Politics* (2007).

T, 9/29: Populism: The path to "true" democracy or to authoritarianism?

Case: Venezuela

What are the origins of Chavismo? What have been the consequences for democracy in Venezuela?

- Roberts. "Social Correlates of Party System Demise and Populist Resurgence in Venezuela." *Latin American Politics and Society* (2003).
- *Democracy in Latin America*, Ch. 6.

TH, 10/1: Personalism and populism con't

- Hawkins. "Populism in Venezuela: The Rise of Chavismo." *Third World Quarterly* (2003). (saved in public folder as Hawkins 1).
- *Recommended:* Penfold-Becerra. "Clientelism and Social Funds: Evidence from Chávez's Misiones." *Latin American Politics and Society* (2007).

Reminder: Preliminary research topics due in my office on Friday, 10/2, no later than 4 PM!

T, 10/6: National security threats and the breakdown of democracy

Case: Peru

How does this case illustrate the tensions that can exist between maintaining national security and safeguarding democracy?

- Burt. "Quien Habla Es Terrorista: The Political Use of Fear in Fujimori's Peru." *Latin American Research Review* (2006).
- *Recommended:* Feinstein. "Proof and Consequence: Peru Convicts Fujimori." *NACLA Report on the Americas* (2009).

Required documentary: State of Fear (2005, 90 min). Available on Moodle.

TH, 10/8: Democracy in Latin America: Taking stock

What are the prospects for further democratic consolidation and deepening in the region? Do you agree with Smith's conclusions about the "taming of democracy"?

- *Democracy in Latin America*, Chs. 10, 11 & 12.

T, 10/13: Review for Exam 1

No reading assignment (time to catch up!).

TH, 10/15: Exam 1

Take-home essay is due in my office on Friday, 10/16 at 4 PM.

T, 10/20: No Class (Fall Recess)

TH, 10/22: The politics of poverty and inequality
Case: Brazil

What do economic and social inequalities affect democratic citizenship? Is Brazil fated to remain a “democracy without equity”?

- Weyland. “The Growing Sustainability of Brazil’s Low-Quality Democracy.” In *The Third Wave of Democratization in Latin America: Advances and Setbacks*, ed. Hagopian and Mainwaring (2005), p. 90-120.

Required documentary: Manda Bala/Send a Bullet (2007, 85 min). Available on Moodle.

T, 10/27: Working for the Man?

How has the Latin American labor force changed in recent decades, and what are some of the political implications of these transformations?

- Sabatini and Farnsworth. “The Urgent Need for Labor Law Reform.” *Journal of Democracy* (2006).
- Zibechi. “Worker-Run Factories: From Survival to Economic Solidarity.” *Interhemispheric Resource Center* (2004). Available at: <http://americas.irc-online.org/citizen-action/series/12-factories.html>

TH, 10/29: Violence, criminality, and (un)rule of law
Case: Guatemala

What are the political causes and consequences of weak rule of law in the region’s democracies?

- Godoy. “When ‘Justice’ Is Criminal: Lynchings in Contemporary Latin America.” *Theory and Society* (2004).

T, 11/3: Violence, criminality, and (un)rule of law, Part Deux
Case: *Mexico*

- Staudt. *Violence and Activism at the Border: Gender, Fear, and Everyday Life in Ciudad Juárez* (2008), Chs. 1 & 2.

TH, 11/5: Activism in Mexico

- Staudt. *Violence and Activism at the Border...* (2008), Ch. 4.

Reminder: *Outline of research and working bibliography due at beginning of class*

T, 11/10: The resilience of dictatorship in Cuba

What explains the continued survival of the Cuban regime? Is political change “just around the corner”?

- Hawkins. “Democratization Theory and Nontransitions: Insights from Cuba.” *Comparative Politics* (2001) (saved in public folder as Hawkins 2).
- Mujal-León. “Tensions in the Regime.” *Journal of Democracy* (2009).

TH, 11/12: Recent trends in Latin American democracies

What accounts for the recent strengthening of indigenous and leftist parties/candidates in the region?

- Cleary. “Explaining the Left’s Resurgence.” *Journal of Democracy* (2006).
- Van Cott. “Latin America’s Indigenous Peoples.” *Journal of Democracy* (2007).

T, 11/17: People Power? & Review for Exam 2

How does social accountability work? Is this one of the keys for strengthening the region’s democracies?

- Peruzzotti and Smulovitz. “Social Accountability: An Introduction.” In *Enforcing the Rule of Law: Social Accountability in the New Latin American Democracies* (2006), ed. Peruzzotti and Smulovitz, p. 3-33.

TH, 11/19: Exam 2

Take-home essay is due in my office on Friday, 11/20 at 4 PM.

T, 11/24: Research workshop

- Bring your questions, concerns, and inspirations to class to discuss.

TH, 11/26: Happy Thanksgiving (no class)

T, 12/1 & TH, 12/3: Research presentations & discussion

- No reading assignment

Research papers due in my office on Friday, 12/4, no later than 4 PM!

T, 12/8: Last class meeting

Looking ahead, how do you expect the region's politics to evolve in the early 21st century? What role might the political and economic relationship between the United States and Latin American countries play?

Note: The above schedule is subject to modification if the instructor deems it necessary.