

FP323: Latin American Politics

Spring 2019
Nimitz 114
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Course Overview

Latin America has had a long and interesting—although troubled—experience with democracy. Moreover, almost every country in the region has undergone a relatively recent democratic transition from authoritarian rule. As a result, this class focuses primarily on Latin American democracy and accountability, including the initiation of democratic rule, its downfall and its regeneration. In order to understand the development and deepening of democracy in Latin America, this course will also focus on political institutions, economic development, the military, and US-Latin American relations. While this list does not come close to exhausting the possible contributions to Latin American democratic development, it is meant to offer a foundation for further study of the region.

The course is divided into four blocs. The first (and longest) one provides an overview of Latin American politics and economics, while blocks II-IV examine Latin America by region, beginning with Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean, continuing with a look at the Andes, and ending with the Southern Cone. Nearly all of these sessions use the experience of a single country (e.g. Venezuela) or sub-region (e.g. Central America) as a tool to explore a broader theoretical topic, such as the role of political parties in a democracy or the effects of U.S. foreign policy.

Books and other readings

There is only one required book for this class. However, in addition to the required text, a large number of book chapters and articles will be assigned. Those marked with asterisks (**) in the syllabus are also available electronically on the class's Blackboard page. We will use a portion of each class for discussion, so it is important to keep up with the reading assignments.

- Skidmore, Thomas, Peter Smith, and James Green. 2013. *Modern Latin America* [Eighth edition]. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Requirements and Grading

a) Participation and Current Events Reports	15%
b) Quizzes	10%
d) Midterm	25%
e) Research Paper	20%
f) Final	30%

Participation (15%): The participatory component of the course is composed of three elements:

- **In class discussion (5%):** Midshipmen are expected to attend and participate in all classes (showing up and falling asleep, for example, will not count). Quality participation means demonstrating (a) a solid grasp of the information covered in readings and in class, (b) an ability to analyze information and issues critically, and (c) a willingness to listen to others.
- **Current events (5%):** Throughout the semester, each midshipman will give a current event reports on a relevant political issue from somewhere in Latin America. Each report should include a recapitulation of a news event, as well as a brief analysis tying the news story to a political science topic from the course. The summary should last no longer

FP323: Latin American Politics

than **five minutes**. Each midshipman should also write and **turn in two questions** related to their presentation the day they speak; I may pick one of these questions to put on a class quiz (see below) or exam. The report schedule will be posted; **there are no make-ups for missed reports**.

- **Extra-curricular (5%):** Students are also required to attend **two** Latin American- or Latino-related events during the semester and to turn in a **one page summary** evaluated on a pass/fail basis. This could include attending a cultural activity, reading a piece of Latin American literature, or even watching a Latin American movie. Further, information concerning qualifying events will be provided in class. Note: No *Narcos*.

Quizzes (10%):

- **Map quiz:** We will also have an in-class map quiz on January 17. You will need to identify 25 countries and their capitals: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, French Guiana, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela
- **Reading quizzes.** There will be approximately 6 unannounced reading quizzes throughout the semester (~25-30 quiz questions total). I will drop the lowest and take the mean score. **Optional:** You may substitute 6 one-page reading summaries in lieu of the reading quiz. However, you may not mix and match quizzes and summaries.

Midterm (25%): The midterm examination will be held in class on February 14 after a brief review session. It will be composed of multiple-choice, essay, and short-answer questions.

Research Paper (20%): USAID has hired you as a policy consultant to help develop initiatives to promote democracy and development in the country to which you have chosen (or were assigned). You must develop a 10-12-page policy brief (a) explaining 1-2 policy issues in your country, including their origins and effects; (b) outlining current attempts by policy leaders in your country or in the international community to solve the issue; and (c) making recommendations to USAID for future initiatives.

Final (30%): The final is cumulative, and will assume a format similar to the mid-term in terms of multiple choice, short answer, and two essay questions.

The standardized grade scale applies:

90-100	A
80-90	B
70-80	C
60-70	D
Below 60	F

Behavioral expectations

Beyond the grading component, this course is interactive, and midshipmen are required to stay awake and participate in a meaningful way. Laptop computers, cell phones, tablets, and other electronic devices are not allowed during class sessions unless otherwise designated. Violators will face grade penalties decided by the instructor.

Midshipmen are expected to be respectful of the opinions of others. Midshipmen may consume food and drink in class so long as they are not disruptive. In accordance with USNA policy, the use of tobacco products of any type is prohibited in class.

FP323: Latin American Politics

Academic Honesty

Midshipmen are expected to exhibit the highest integrity in all of their activities concerning this course. Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism and cheating *of any type*, will not be tolerated and will be cause for the initiation of an honor proceeding. Students should be careful to attribute material properly whenever there is any doubt.

Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's words, ideas or work – whether accidentally or deliberately – as your own, without acknowledgment of sources. Plagiarism is a form of cheating and is an honor violation, and all plagiarists will be treated as honor offenders, in addition to receiving a grade of zero for the plagiarized work. Plagiarism may include:

- Copying written work from another source, published or unpublished, without proper acknowledgment of the original;
- Buying papers online or from a paper mill;
- Resubmitting or double submitting work to two different classes;
- Using gouge or company files;
- Submitting someone else's work as your own. The above list should not be treated as exhaustive.

If you are not sure what plagiarism is, find out. Midshipmen are responsible for knowing and understanding what constitutes plagiarism. If in doubt, document your sources, or see me to ask further questions. Please take a close look at the Library's very helpful web site on avoiding plagiarism, which can be found at <http://libguides.usna.edu/plagiarism>.

Late Policy/Make-Ups

All exams and quizzes are to be taken at the scheduled time. The only exception to this is for an academy-approved absence with proper documentation. Be forewarned: the make-up exam will be tougher than the original. Failure to take an exam or quiz at the scheduled time will result in a grade of zero (0). **I will not accept late papers** (so do not wait to the last minute to write it).

Schedule of Assignments

Below is a schedule of assignments for the class. All readings not from the textbook can be found on the course's Blackboard page. Note that these are subject to change at my discretion; while I do not anticipate making changes, I will notify you at least one week in advance if it is necessary to do so. However, if there are to be any changes to the below assignments, I will let you know as far in advance as possible. All readings are to be completed by the beginning of each class.

INTRODUCTION

Week 1

Thursday, January 10

Why Study Latin America? What is "Latin America"?

Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America*

- Ch. 1, "Why Latin America?" (pp.3-15)

**Colburn, Forrest D. 2002. "Latin America as a Place" in *Latin America at the End of Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press (pp.9-16)

PART I: ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL EVOLUTION

Week 2

Tuesday, January 15

A Blueprint for Failure? The Colonial State

Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America*

- Ch. 2, "The Colonial Foundations" (pp.16-44)

FP323: Latin American Politics

- Thursday, January 17
In-class map quiz
- Patterns of Economic Development—and Policy Innovation (Part I)**
Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America*
• Ch. 12, “Strategies for Economic Development” (pp.343-369)
- Week 3**
Tuesday, January 22
- Patterns of Economic Development—and Policy Innovation (Part II)**
**Lustig, Nora. 2015. "Most Unequal on Earth." *Finance and Development* (September): 14-16.
**Hellinger, D. (2014). “The Few and the Many: Inequality in Latin American Politics” in *Comparative Politics of Latin America: Democracy at Last* New York: Routledge (read only “Race and Ethnic Inequality” and “Women, Gender, and Exclusion”, pp54-62).
**Díaz-Cayeros, Alberto, and Beatriz Magaloni. 2009. "Aiding Latin America's Poor." *Journal of Democracy* 20: 36-49.
- Thursday, January 24
- Patterns of Political Development (Part I)**
Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America*
• Ch. 13, “Dynamics of Political Transformation” (pp.370-395)
- Week 4**
Tuesday, January 29
- Patterns of Political Development (Part II)**
**Pérez-Liñán, Aníbal, & Mainwaring, Scott. (2013). Regime Legacies and Levels of Democracy: Evidence from Latin America. *Comparative Politics*, 45(4), 379-397.
- Thursday, January 31
- Populism**
**Mudde, Cas, and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser. 2013. "Exclusionary vs. Inclusionary Populism: Comparing Contemporary Europe and Latin America." *Government and Opposition* 48 (2):147-74.
**Weyland, Kurt. 2013. "Latin America’s Authoritarian Drift: The Threat from the Populist Left." *Journal of Democracy* 24: 18-32.
- Week 5**
Tuesday, February 5
- The Military and Politics**
**Hellinger, D. (2014). “Democratic Breakdown and Military Rule” in *Comparative Politics of Latin America: Democracy at Last* New York: Routledge (pp171-205).
**Lehoucq, Fabrice, and Aníbal Pérez-Liñán. 2014. "Breaking Out of the Coup Trap: Political Competition and Military Coups in Latin America." *Comparative Political Studies* 47 (8):1105-29.
- Thursday, February 7
- PART II: MESOAMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**
Mexico: Revolution, Rise and Fall of the PRI, and Narco-Violence (Part I)
Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America*
• Ch. 3, “Mexico: The Taming of a Revolution” (pp.47-78)
- Week 6**
Tuesday, February 12
- Mexico: Revolution, Rise and Fall of the PRI, and Narco-Violence (Part I)**
Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America*
• Ch. 3, “Mexico: The Taming of a Revolution” (pp.47-78)

FP323: Latin American Politics

Thursday, February 14 **MIDTERM EXAM**

Week 7

Tuesday, February 19
Policy paper directions

Central America: U.S. Interventionism, Civil War, and Gangs

Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America*

• Ch. 4, “Central America and the Caribbean: Within the U.S. Orbit” (pp.79-111)

Tuesday, February 21

**Butler, Maj Gen Smedley. 1935. “War is a Racket.” (speech)

**"The federal government may inadvertently be helping MS-13 to recruit." 2017. *The Economist*.

<https://www.economist.com/united-states/2017/08/03/the-federal-government-may-inadvertantly-be-helping-ms-13-to-recruit>

**Feinberg, Richard E. 2018. "Nicaragua: Revolution and Restoration." Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.

Week 8

Tuesday, February 26

Catch up day

PART III: THE ANDES

Thursday, February 28

Colombia: Guerilla War and Demobilization

Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America*

• Ch. 7, “Colombia: Civility and Violence” (pp.184-211)

**Casey, Nicholas, and Federico Rios Escobar. 2018. "Colombia Struck a Peace Deal With Guerrillas, but Many Return to Arms." *The New York Times*, 18 September.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/18/world/americas/colombia-farc-peace.html>

Week 9

Tuesday, March 5

Venezuela: The Rise and Reign of Chavismo

**Polga-Hecimovich, John. 2017. “The Roots of Venezuela's Failing State” *Origins* 10(9)

<http://origins.osu.edu/article/roots-venezuelas-failing-state>

**Anderson, John Lee. 2001. “The Revolutionary” in *The New Yorker* (September 10)

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2001/09/10/the-revolutionary>

Thursday, March 7

**Anderson, John Lee. 2013. “Postscript: Hugo Chávez, 1954-2013” in *The New Yorker* (March 5)

<http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/postscript-hugo-chvez-1954-2013>

March 12 and 14

Spring break

Week 10

Tuesday, March 19

Peru: Terrorism and Neopopulism

Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America*

• Ch. 6, “The Andes: Soldiers, Indians, and Oligarchs” (pp.142-183)

Thursday, March 21

**Guillermoprieto, Alma. 1994. “Lima, 1993” in *The Heart that Bleeds: Latin America Now*. New York: Vintage Books (pp. 259-286)

Week 11

Tuesday, March 26

Bolivia: Indigenous Politics

**Finnegan, William. 2002. “Leasing the Rain,” *The New Yorker*, New York: Condé Nast

FP323: Latin American Politics

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/04/08/leasing-the-rain>

**Madrid, Raúl. 2008. "The Rise of Ethnopolitism in Latin America," *World Politics* 60(3): 475-508.

Thursday, March 28

Ecuador: Land of Populists

**de la Torre, Carlos. 2013. "Technocratic Populism in Ecuador." *Journal of Democracy* 24(3): 33-46.

PART IV: THE SOUTHERN CONE

Week 12

Tuesday, April 2

Argentina: Development Reversal

Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America*

• Ch. 9, "Argentina: Progress and Stalemate" (pp.236-267)

Thursday, April 4

**Guillermoprieto, Alma. 2001. "Little Eva" in *Looking for History*. New York: Vintage Books (pp.3-17)

**Levitsky, Steven, and María Victoria Murillo. 2003. "Argentina Weathers the Storm" *Journal of Democracy*, 14(4): 152-166

Week 13

Tuesday, April 9

Chile: Regime Legacy

Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America*

• Ch. 10, "Chile: Repression and Democracy" (pp.268-295)

Thursday, April 11

**DeYoung, Karen, David Montgomery, Missy Ryan, Ishaan Tharoor, and Jia Lynn Yang. 2016. "This was not an accident. This was a bomb." *The Washington Post*.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/national/2016/09/20/this-was-not-an-accident-this-was-a-bomb/>

**Siavelis, Peter. 1997. "Continuity and Change in the Chilean Party System: On the Transformational Effects of Electoral Reform." *Comparative Political Studies* 30 (6):651-74.

Week 14

Tuesday, April 16

Brazil: Great Expectations

Skidmore, Smith, and Green, *Modern Latin America*

• Ch. 11, "Brazil: The Awakening Giant" (pp.296-340)

Thursday, April 18

**Romero, Simon. 2016. "Insider's Account of How Graft Fed Brazil's Political Crisis", *The New York Times* (April 3)

Policy paper due

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/04/world/americas/insiders-account-of-how-graft-fed-brazils-political-crisis.html>

**Winter, Brian. 2018. "System Failure: Behind the Rise of Jair Bolsonaro." *Americas Quarterly*

<https://www.americasquarterly.org/content/system-failure-behind-rise-jair-bolsonaro>

Week 16

Tuesday, April 23

No class

Thursday, April 25

Catch up day

Week 17

Tuesday, April 30

Closing Thoughts and Review

**Ocampo, José Antonio. 2015. "Uncertain Times." *Finance and Development* (September): 6-11.