

University of Maryland

Department of Government and Politics

GVPT 482 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS OF LATIN AMERICA

Fall 2017

COURSE INFORMATION

GVPT 482

Date and time: Mon and Wed 1p-2:15p.

Location: HBK 0109

INSTRUCTOR

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Office: TBD

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Office hours: Mon and Wed 4:15p.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course explores in a comprehensive way the politics of Latin America, general processes and trends, patterns, major changes and evolution, and key issues, as well as more detailed case studies of some relevant countries. Since 1978 a “third wave of democratization” started in the region, and currently almost all countries are electoral democracies. In the first part we are going to examine this process, and the different scholarly attempts to capture and understand the problems of transition, consolidation and quality of democracy, assessing different causal factors, such as historical legacies and political culture, economic development, political institution & actors, political change (social & political movements, revolutions) and society issues. Due attention will be devoted to the political economy (industrialization, the Washington Consensus, the boom & bust of natural resources), the swift to left and the performance of social-democratic, “Bolivarian” and non-leftist governments. In the second part we are going to examine in greater detail the politics of a set of specific countries, such as Mexico, Cuba, Venezuela, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina and Chile. In the third and final part we are going to analyze current issues, such as mass media & public opinion, constitutional reform and security challenges.

Knowledge of Spanish, French or Portuguese is not a requirement of the course, but of course it is welcomed.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- The primary goals of the course are to introduce you to:

1-The politics of Latin America in recent decades, as well as current relevant issues, such as economic development, inequality, education, health, gender, human rights, environment, etc.

2- Scholarly approaches to the study of Latin America, in particular about the “third wave of democratization”, democratic transition, consolidation, and quality of democracy in the region.

3- Political institutions and rules, political parties, leaders, and social and ethnic movements, in particular the role of the president, the congress and the courts, as well as other influential power structures such as the armed forces, the Church, organized capital and labor, and the media.

4-Current major political and electoral processes and events, impacting the region and relevant specific countries.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After the course the students will:

1-Know the main historical trends and evolution of politics in Latin America.

2-Think critically and understand different scholarly approach toward the “third wave of democratization”, transition to democracy, consolidation and quality of democracy and to be able to analytically connect them to current events.

3-Know and develop a deeper understanding of relevant institutions, political parties, actors, political processes and events shaping the political situation of the region, in particular the role of the president, the congress and the courts, as well as other influential power structures such as the armed forces, the Church, organized capital and labor, and the media.

4-Be able to evaluate key political processes and issues in the region and to make analytical alternative arguments and recommendations for policymakers and other stakeholders.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & FEATURES

LA&C POLITICAL NEWS DEBATE

In each class the initial 10 minutes will be devoted to comment and analyze the most relevant political news of Latin America & Caribbean of the preceding week, so students must follow the events through different national and international media. Students also are encouraged to seek information about cultural activities related with Latin America and in the Washington-Baltimore area. It is highly recommended to participate in the conferences and lectures that UM might organize about Latin America & the Caribbean.

RESEARCH PAPERS GUIDELINES & BOOK CRITIQUE

For this course a book critique is a 4 pages piece summarizing and (more important) analyzing a relevant book. It must discuss the theoretical approach, election of concepts, arguments, evidence, and connections or contrasts with another or other books or academic articles. The book must be chose in agreement with the professor. The critique must be made available for the class in Canvas the day before October 9.

The paper (6 pages excluding bibliography) is due on October 30, hard copy, at the beginning of the class. Detailed instruction and guidance will be given in due time. They must have a title, a 150 words abstract, introduction, conclusion, a bibliography, numbered pages, times new roman (size 12-point font, 1.5 spaced), one inch margins. It is advised that the student chose the topic well in advance in consultation with the professor. It must be a

relevant question about an important topic or specific event or national political *problematique*, and it must be addressed in a comprehensive, rigorous and analytical manner. For example, a paper might consist in a comparison between political processes in two different countries, during a given period of time.

A final note, about the syllabus. This syllabus is not a contract; it is a guide to help you to organize your own intellectual effort to gain mastery on the politics of a vast, rich and complex region (and scholarship!). As such, it is always work in progress, it might be updated a couple of times during the course, and is a future source of reference for your studies, research or work.

GRADE COMPUTATION

Book critique (10%)

Attendance, group presentations and class participation (brief presentations, debates, discussions in class and/or Canvas, etc) (25%)

Midterm 6 pages short paper (30%)

Final Exam (35%)

EXPECTATIONS & CLASS POLICIES

Students are expected to attend every class and to be well prepared for class discussions and to contribute actively, in an articulated manner. Students need to be respectful of comments informed by different set of values, and must refrain from insulting or making derogatory statements.

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the UM appropriate authorities privately to discuss specific needs.

A letter grade will be deducted for late work. Do not procrastinate, organize your work carefully and plan in advance.

Please contact the professor any time needed. Direct consultation can be arranged by email (usually before or after class).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic honesty is strictly enforced. Please revise in detail UM policies regarding plagiarism, quotations, etc. Please ask UM authorities for further assistance.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR DISRUPTION OF CLASSES

Please revise UMBC policies. In the event of an emergency (weather: hurricane, storms, snow, quake, etc.), class will not be disrupted and must continue via internet.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Internet resources

Organization of American States www.oas.org

Inter American Development Bank www.iadb.org

Pan American Health Organization www.paho.org

World Bank www.worldbank.org

Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean www.eclac.org

International Monetary Fund www.imf.org

Political Database of the Americas www.georgetown.edu/pdba

Other Useful Websites

[//lanic.utexas.edu/la](http://lanic.utexas.edu/la)

See *Latinobarometro* for series and current polls data about politics in Latin America.
www.latinobarometro.org

Recent Economic Information

-Economic Intelligence Unit, *EIU Country Report*, (various issues).

-World Bank, IMF, IADB, PAHO, ECLAC: Statistical information about LA&C Countries.

REQUIRED BOOKS:

Vanden, Harry & Prevost, Gary: *Politics of Latin America*, Oxford University Press, 6th edition, 2017.

Dominguez, Jorge I, and Michael Shifter, eds., *Constructing Democratic Governance in Latin America*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 4th edition, 2013.

READINGS:

Readings will be indicated in previous classes; books will be on reserve in the library; articles will be uploaded to canvas

SUGGESTED BOOKS:

Skidmore, Thomas et al, *Modern Latin America*, Oxford University Press, 8th edition, 2013.

Levine, D.H., and R.L. Molina (eds.), *The Quality of Democracy in Latin America*, Lynne Rienner, 2011.

Whitehead, Lawrence, *Latin America. A New Interpretation*, revised and updated, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

Munck, Ronald, *Contemporary Latin America*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

Foweraker, Joe, Todd Landman and Neil Harvey, *Governing Latin America*, Polity, 2003.

Panizza, Francisco, *Contemporary Latin America. Development and Democracy beyond the Washington Consensus*, Zed Books, 2009.

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

Levine, D.H., and R.L. Molina (eds.), *The Quality of Democracy in Latin America*, Lynne Rienner, 2011.

Wiarda, H.J and F. Kline (eds.), *Latin American Politics and Development*, seven ed., Westview, 2011.

Blake, Charles H., *Politics in Latin America*, Houghton Mifflin, 2005.

Philip, George, *Democracy in Latin America*, Polity, 2003.

Castañeda, Jorge, *Utopia Unarmed. The Latin American Left After the Cold War*, Vintage, 1993.

Mainwaring, Scott, and Christopher Welna (eds.), *Democratic Accountability in Latin America*, Oxford University Press, 2003 (particularly chapters 2 and 10).

Schneider, Ronald M., *Latin American Political History*, Westview, 2007.

Black, Jan Knippers (ed.), *Latin America. Its Problems and Its Promise*, Westview, fourth edition, 2005.

A brief review of the political economic and economic development of region is recommended. I suggest first reading more approachable chapter 7 of Vanden, Harry & Prevost, Gary: *Politics of Latin America*, Oxford University Press, 4th edition, 2011. John Ward's *Latin America Development and Conflict since 1945*, Routledge, (second edition), 2004, is a useful introduction to LAC economic development. A deep historical perspective can be found in Bulmer-Thomas, Victor, *The Economic History of Latin America since Independence*, Cambridge University Press, third edition, 2014. A comprehensive political economy background and analysis of Latin America & Caribbean is provided by Franko, Patrice, *The Puzzle of Latin American Economic Development*, Rowman & Littlefield, 3rd edition, 2007.

COURSE SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER

INTRODUCTION

Week 1: Tuesday, September 3

Introduction to the Course: Latin America Politics

Suggested Readings

Galeano, Eduardo, *Open Veins of Latin America*, Monthly Review Press, 1997. Foreword by Isabel Allende.

Mendoza, Plinio Apuleyo, et al, *Guide to the Perfect Latin American Idiot*, Madison Books, Second ed. 2001. Introduction by Mario Vargas Llosa. See especially chapter 3.

“Notes on Studying Politics in Latin America”, in Vanden, Harry E. and Gary Prevost, *Politics of Latin America*, Oxford University Press, third edition, 2009, pp. xviii-xxiii.

WEEK 2:

Monday 11:

Colonies, Independence and State building

Wednesday 13:

Democracy, Dictators, and Military Dictatorship

SECOND PART

WEEK 3:

Monday 18:

The Third Wave of Democratization and Scholarship on Transition to Democracy

Wednesday 20:

On Consolidation of Democracy in Latin America

WEEK 4:

Monday 25:

The Debate over the Quality of Democracy in Latin America

Wednesday 27

The Political Economy of Latin America I: State, Markets and Society, and the Washington Consensus.

OCTOBER

WEEK 5:

Monday 2:

Politics, Power, Institutions, and Actors

Wednesday 4:

The Political Culture of Latin America

WEEK 6: BOOK CRITIQUE DUE

Monday 9:

Political Change in Latin America: Social & Political Movements, and Revolutions

Wednesday 11:

Society, Family, and Gender issues in Latin America

WEEK 7:

Monday 16:

Politics and Religion in Latin America

SECOND PART

Wednesday 18:

Argentina

WEEK 8:

Monday 23

Argentina (Mid Term Elections Oct 22, 2017)

Analysis and Debate

Wednesday 25

Mexico

Group Presentation

WEEK 9:

Monday 30: PAPER DUE

Guatemala

Group Presentation

NOVEMBER

Wednesday 1:

Nicaragua

Group Presentation

WEEK 10:

Monday 6:

Colombia

Group Presentation

Wednesday 8:

Venezuela

Group Presentation

WEEK 11:

Monday 13:

Cuba

Group Presentation

Wednesday 15:

Chile

Group Presentation

WEEK 12:

Monday 20

Chile (Presidential Elections Nov. 19, 2017)

Analysis and Debate

Wednesday 22 THANKSGIVING

THIRD PART

WEEK 13:

Monday 27:

The Turn to Left, its Demise and the Natural Resources Boom & Boost:

**Wednesday 29:
Security Challenges and Democracy Governance**

DECEMBER

WEEK 14:

**Monday 4
Constitutional rewrites**

**Wednesday 6
Mass Media & Public Opinion**

WEEK 15:

**Monday 11:
Prospects for Democracy in the XXI Century**

Wednesday 13: FINAL EXAM