

Syllabus GVPT 482 Government and Politics of Latin America  
Classroom TYD1101  
Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00pm - 3:15pm

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This course examines key political and economic policies in Latin America over the past four decades. The seminar will be of interests to students who wish to deepen their knowledge of major events and trends in the region, such as the democratic transitions of the 1980s, the market reforms of the 1990s, and the rise of a Leftist leadership in the 2000s. Students will survey the main debates of contemporary political economy in the region. Drawing from studies in the field of Comparative Politics and Latin American Studies, this course explores the interactions of political and economic actors under specific international conditions, with a particular emphasis on how the state structures, channels and negotiates the economy. Please note that the course does not have a textbook. Rather, similar to graduate seminars, students must read before class a number of research articles and book chapters assigned to each week. The course is organized in three sections: readings on the STATE, on the ECONOMY, and on SOCIETY. This organization is mainly analytical, as most readings touch on two or all three of these areas. But authors prioritize their focus. An important exercise of this class will be to determine how do different authors direct the arrows of causal explanation: do economic factors shape political outcomes? Do state institutions determine political participation?

Course Readings:

All class readings are available to you on Elms in the weekly module (or folder) when they are due. In addition, I might post short readings, such as newspaper articles or any other class handout, so please make sure you check regularly the weekly modules for them.

GVPT 482 and BSOS Policies: <http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html>

Course Evaluation is based on the following:

**Participation (10% of final grade)**

To do well in participation you must come to class well prepared and ready to comment on the readings: pose questions, share your own take of the readings, help further and deepen discussion with your classmates. Further, there will be many in-class exercises, either individual or group based. Completion of these exercises determines in great part your course participation grade, so make sure you do not miss class other than for excused absences. If for any reason participating in class gives you concern, please come see me at the beginning of the semester and I will gladly help you with this.

Special Note on Attendance: As class participation is so important, it goes without saying that attendance is critical. You cannot get any credit for participation if you are not in the classroom. Regularly, I will check attendance at the beginning of class but please note that I will not count you present if you are late.

**Research Design on the State (10% of final grade)**

In this assignment, students are asked to formulate a viable and relevant research question drawing from the research discussed in the first section on the state. In just one page, students will (1) state

their research question, which must address an actual empirical puzzle of the region or country in the region; (2) formulate one hypothesis to be tested; (3) make explicit whether the DV and main IVs are political, economic, or societal variables (one must be state or regime-related); and (4) identify two sources of data (with full reference and corresponding online link). This exercise will test the causal thinking of students, their skills in designing a research project, and their understanding of the salience and relevance of contemporary Latin American problems. It is due on Tuesday September 27<sup>th</sup> on Elms. Instructions will be posted on Elms one week before the assignment is due.

### **Two In-Class Exam (25% and 35% each)**

There will be two exams (one midway through the semester, the other at the end) where students will be tested on their knowledge of key concepts, theories, and facts. Exam dates are Thursday, October 27<sup>th</sup> and December TBA (the University official final examination schedule becomes available mid-semester on Testudo). We will have a review session on Tuesday, October 25<sup>th</sup> for the first one. To make good use of the review session, make sure you bring questions to class.

### **Policy Memo for the president elect of the United States (20% of final grade)**

This final assignment gives students the opportunity to carry out research on a Latin American country of their choosing. Students will pick one issue (LGBT, Gender, Indigenous, or Environmental politics) to be explored in one country of the region. Drawing from the concepts and theories covered in the course, they will write a two-page memo to the new US president. The objective is to inform the new US president of the top two issues/problems in this policy area and recommend two policy proposals for the US to pursue through foreign policy. The memo is due on Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. Students should upload the memo to Elms and bring a hard copy to class. I will provide specific guidelines for this assignment mid-semester.

### Academic Honesty:

Please read carefully the following statements from the UMD Teaching Policies and Guidelines: “The student-administered University Honor Code and Honor Pledge prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents and forging signatures. On every examination, paper or other academic exercise not specifically exempted by the instructor, students must write by hand and sign the following pledge, “I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination or assignment.” Compliance with the code is administered by the Student Honor Council, which strives to promote a community of trust on the College Park campus. Allegations of academic dishonesty should be reported directly to the Honor Council (4-8450) by any member of the campus community. For additional information, consult the Office of Student Conduct ([studentconduct.umd.edu](http://studentconduct.umd.edu)).”

**This course has a zero tolerance policy regarding academic dishonesty. All potential violations will be forwarded to the Student Honor Council.**

### Students with Disabilities:

Students who anticipate problems with fulfilling course requirements because of the way they see, hear, read, or get around campus should advise me within the first two weeks of class. Special arrangements will be made in cooperation with staff at the Disability Support Services (301.314.7682 or [Dissup@umd.edu](mailto:Dissup@umd.edu))

## THE STATE

### Week 1

*On Tuesday we will go over syllabus and class expectations*

The Democratic State

Mainwaring, S. and Pérez-Liñán, A. (2013). "Democratic Breakdown and Survival" *Journal of Democracy* 24 (2): 123-137.

**Group Exercise: Survey Design on democratic consolidation and satisfaction.**

### Week 2

The Gendered State

Htun, M. (2003). *Sex and the state: abortion, divorce, and the family under Latin American dictatorships and democracies*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-77.

**Group Exercise: Formulate 3 strategies to push for pro-choice legislation or 3 strategies to push for pro-life legislation under varying degrees of political openness.**

### Week 3

The Single-Party State

Martinez-Gallardo, C. (2012). "Mexico" in *Case Studies in Comparative Politics*, Ed. Samuels, D.J. Pearson Higher Ed, pp. 236-276.

Magaloni, B. (2005). "The Demise of Mexico's One-Party Dominant Regime: Elite Choices and the Masses in the Establishment of Democracy" in *The Third Wave of Democratization in Latin America: Advances and Setbacks*, Eds. Frances Hagopian and Scott P. Mainwaring, Cambridge University Press, pp. 121-146.

**Group Exercise: You want to be hired as the next "Our Brand is Crisis" campaign strategist of Mexico (who would play *you* in the Hollywood sequel?). Come up with a 5' campaign pitch for your candidate (of the PRD, PAN, or PRI), who is running for president of Mexico in the next election (2018).**

### Week 4

The Resource State

Karl, T. L. (1997). *The paradox of plenty: Oil booms and petro-states*. University of California Press, pp. 3-22.

Mazucca, S. (2013). "Natural Resources Boom and Institutional Curses in the New Political Economy of South America" in *Constructing Democratic Governance in Latin America*, Eds. Dominguez, J. and Shifter, M. Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 102-26.

**Individual Exercise: As the top energy advisor of the President of Venezuela, you must recommend three effective policy measures to avoid the resource curse. Be mindful of both political and economic costs, or *you* may lose your job.**

### Week 5

Movie

*No* (2012) Chile.

**Research Question and Design Assignment on the State is due on Elms on Tuesday**

September 27<sup>th</sup>.

## THE ECONOMY

### Week 6

#### Neoliberalism

Arceneaux, C. L. and Pion-Berlin, D. (2005). *Transforming Latin America: the international and domestic origins of change*. University of Pittsburgh, pp. 42-85 (Chapter 3, Neoliberal Reform in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile).

Baker, A. (2003). Why is Trade Reform so Popular in Latin America? A Consumption-Based Theory of Trade Policy Preferences. *World Politics* 55 (3): 423-455.

**Group Exercise: You are pushing your government to adopt market reforms. Who are your allies? Who are your opponents? Describe the process of one market reform and identify 3 groups in favor of neoliberalism and three against.**

### Week 7

#### Trade and Debt

Alcañiz, I. and Hellwig, T. (2011). "Who's to Blame? The Distribution of Responsibility in Developing Democracies." *British Journal of Political Science* 41 (2): 389-411.

Michaelowa, K., & Humphrey, C. S. (2010). "The Business of Development: Trends in Lending by Multilateral Development Banks to Latin America, 1980-2009" Working Paper #65 of the Center for Comparative and International Studies (CIS), University of Zurich.

**Group Exercise: Advise a small, medium, or large Latin American state in dire economic crisis on where and how to access international credit. The thing is, you are a "Chicago Boy" type, a leftist populist, or a centrist. Given this, what recommendation do you make?**

### Week 8

#### Inequality

Tepperman, J. (2016). "Brazil's Antipoverty Breakthrough: The Surprising Success of Bolsa Familia." *Foreign Affairs*, 95: (34-44).

Reis, E. (2011). "Elite perception of poverty and inequality in Brazil" in *The great gap: Inequality and the politics of redistribution in Latin America*, Ed. Blofield, M. Penn State Press, pp. 89-108.

**Group Exercise: Depending on your employment (CEO, construction worker), you have different levels of income. Now you must determine what a just social subsidy is for the poorest in our country.**

### Week 9

#### Midterm Review

#### In-Class Exam

### Week 10

#### Commodity Boom

Weyland, K. (2009). "The Rise of Latin America's Two Lefts: Insights from Rentier State Theory." *Comparative Politics* 41 (2): 145-164.

Harmer, T., & Burton, G. (2010). "Powering up: Latin America's energy challenges" (Bolivia, Brazil, Mexico, Paraguay, Ecuador and Venezuela). Report prepared by IDEAS at the London School of Economics.

**Individual Exercise: Create a matrix of Latin America's top commodity exports.**

## SOCIETY

### Week 11

Documentary

*Cocalero* (2007) Bolivia.

### Week 12

LGBT Politics

Corrales, J. (2015). The Politics of LGBT Rights in Latin America and the Caribbean: Research Agendas. *ERLACS*.

Díez, J. (2015). *The Politics of Gay Marriage in Latin America: Argentina, Chile, and Mexico*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 111-151.

**Individual Exercise: Congratulations! You've been hired as an Assistant Professor at the Department of Government and Politics at UMD and you are working on a book project at the intersection of comparative politics and LGBT politics in Latin America. What is your book about? Specifically, what is the research question you are attempting to answer?**

### Week 13

Gender Politics

Krook, M. L. (2010). *Quotas for women in politics: Gender and candidate selection reform worldwide*. Oxford University Press, pp. 3-17 and 161-182.

**Group Exercise: How would you design and implement gender quota legislation for the United States?**

### Week 14

Indigenous Politics

Massicotte, M. J. (2014). "Feminist Political Ecology and La Via Campesina's Struggle for Food Sovereignty Through the Experience of the Escola Latino-Americana de Agroecologia (ELAA)" in *Globalization and food sovereignty: Global and local change in the new politics of food*, Eds. Andrée, P., Ayres, J., Bosia, M. J., and Mássicotte, M. J. University of Toronto Press.

Yashar, D. J. (2015). Does Race Matter in Latin America: How Racial and Ethnic Identities Shape the Region's Politics. *Foreign Affairs* 94: 33-40.

**Individual Exercise: Speed pitching, you have one minute to pitch a policy proposal to a Latin American government to solve a problem faced by a native nation.**

### Week 15

Environmental Politics

Hochstetler, K., & Keck, M. E. (2007). *Greening Brazil: environmental activism in state and society*.

Duke University Press, pp. 1-22 and 97-139.

**Individual Exercise: Speed pitching, you have one minute to pitch a policy proposal to the Brazilian government to solve an environmental problem of your choosing.**

**Policy Memo for the president elect of the United States is due on Thursday December 8<sup>th</sup>.**

Final Exam (@TYD1101) Date will be assigned mid-semester by Testudo