Politcs 210 LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS
Oberlin College
Fall 2010
TR 11:00-12:15pm, King 337
3 SS credits; CD

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Office hours: Monday 10am-12pm, Thursday 1-2pm
Students can sign up for office hours this term at http://tinyurl.com/34ywc3f

Themes. This course provides an introduction to politics in Latin America. It is designed to provide students with a framework for understanding how major economic, social and intellectual trends have shaped the region’s political institutions and the distribution of political power among different societal groups since the late 19th century. Conceptually, the course emphasizes the role of the following as shapers of Latin American politics: the state; major theories and policies of economic development; the regimes and practices of authoritarianism, populism, and democracy; the military; and the United States. Country case studies focus on Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Cuba and Venezuela, but readings and discussion will also extend to developments in other countries in the region.

Goals. Students will learn to use conceptual and theoretical frameworks to understand the major political processes in the region. They will also practice comparative analysis in studying several country cases in the region. Class discussions and analytical paper assignments give students opportunity to hone their oral and written skills.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance: Regular attendance is requisite for the course. Only absences due to illness or other emergency are acceptable and excusable. Please arrive on time.

Participation: Informed student participation and constructive debate in class are essential for a productive learning experience in the course. Come to class prepared with questions and comments on course topics and the readings.

Paper: Students will write one 5-7 page analytical paper, with a choice of topics to write on.

Exams: The midterm and final are in-class exams; ids and essay format.

Grades are based on the following formula:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation and attendance</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam, in class on 10/7:</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>Analytical Paper (5-7 pages) due 11/18:</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>Final Exam, in class on 12/19:</td>
<td>30%</td>
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Readings: Readings should be completed as indicated in the syllabus, before class. The books listed below are available for purchase at the Oberlin College Bookstore. Copies of these are also available in Reserves at Mudd Library. All additional readings are in Blackboard.


Recommended:

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

All academic work for the course must meet the standards of the Honor Code. Please be sure you are familiar with it and see me if you have questions about how it applies in assignments for the course.

Students must complete all assigned papers and exams in order to be eligible for a passing grade in the course.

Paper due dates and times are firm and not negotiable; you should plan ahead to be able to meet them. Late papers will receive a lower grade: one-step grade reduction (e.g., from B to B–) if submitted within 12 hours; 2-step grade reduction if submitted during the next 12-hour period, etc.; papers submitted more than 5 days late receive an automatic F. If you are unable to submit a paper to me as expected, please email it to me in MS Word. Please do not slip papers under my office door.

Exam times and dates: Students who fail to attend a scheduled exam will have one opportunity for a make-up exam, which will count toward the course grade at 75% of the exam grade. Only extreme circumstances, such as medical or family emergencies, may warrant exceptions to these terms regarding papers and exams.

I request that students with a documented disability needing academic accommodations speak with Jane Boomer in the Office of Disability Services (440-775-8464) and with me as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential.

SOME CURRENT EVENTS SOURCES

A good resource to consult for links to everything from online newspapers to government ministries is The Latin America Network Information Center, (http://lanic.utexas.edu).

The Americas Policy Program (a project of the Center for International Policy) has in-depth policy reports and commentaries on issues like international trade, immigration, and US-Latin America relations (http://americas.irc-online.org). Similarly, the Washington Office on Latin

US- and Canada-based think tanks producing timely publications and events with a significant Latin America focus include the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars (domestic politics, international conflicts, public security issues http://www.wwics.si.edu), Inter-American Dialogue (analysis of political and economic trends http://www.iadialogue.org) and the United States Institute of Peace (conflict resolution, includes database of peace accord documents http://www.usip.org). Also offering excellent analysis of regional trends is the Canadian Foundation for the Americas, FOCAL (http://www.focal.ca).

Among Latin American based research centers, for wide-ranging and timely scholarship see FLACSO (with sites in several LA countries) at http://www.flacso.org.

Zona Latina (http://www.zonalatina.com/) offers links to news stories about the region in English language media, as well as links to media sites based in most Latin American countries.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS
BB=Blackboard
VP=Vanden and Prevost
KR=Kingstone Reader
HR=Hershberg and Rosen

Tuesday 9/7. Introduction to the Course

Thursday 9/9 and Tuesday 9/14. Overview of Latin American Political Development
- VP ch. 3 (V&P, “Democracy, Dictators, and Tío Sam”).
- VP ch. 9 (V&P, “Politics, Power, Institutions, and Actors”).

Thursday 9/16. The State in Latin America
- Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, “Democracies Without Citizenship,” 2.3 in KR.

Tuesday 9/21 and Thursday 9/23. Chile
- VP ch. 16 (Eduardo Silva, “Chile”).
- Barrett, “The Limits of Democracy,” 8.2 in KR.

Tuesday 9/28 and Thursday 9/30. Argentina
- VP ch. 15 (Aldo Vacs, “Argentina”).
- Peruzzotti, “The Nature of the New Argentine Democracy: The Delegative Democracy Argument Revisited,” 6.3 in KR. (more below!)
• **Recommended (for die-hard fans of “recuperated factories”):** Raúl Zibechi, “Another World is Possible: The Ceramics of Zanon,” (Silver City, NM: International Relations Center, January 20, 2006).  **BB**

**Tuesday 10/5. Human Rights in the Post-Authoritarian Context**
Also: screening portions of the documentary by Patricio Guzman, *Chile: Obstinate Memory* (1998)

- Katherine Hite, “The Politics of Memory,” ch. 9 in HR.

**Thursday 10/7. Midterm Exam in class.**

**Tuesday 10/12 and Thursday 10/14. Brazil**

- VP ch. 14 (Wilber Albert Chaffee, “Brazil”).
- Power and Roberts, “A New Brazil?” 7.3 in KR.

**Tuesday 10/19 and Thursday 10/21. Venezuela**

- VP ch. 17 (Daniel Hellinger, “Venezuela,”).

**Week of 10/25: Fall Break, no classes.**

**Tuesday 11/2. Populism and the New Left**


**Thursday 11/4. US Influence in Latin America**

- Lars Schoultz, “Latin America and the United States,” ch. 3 in HR.
- Admiral Jim Stavridis, “We’re All In This Together,” *Americas Quarterly* (Fall 2007), 34-43. **BB** or here: [http://www.americasquarterly-digital.org/americasquarterly/fallsample1/?pg=2](http://www.americasquarterly-digital.org/americasquarterly/fallsample1/?pg=2)
- **Recommended:** Louis A. Perez, “Fear and Loathing of Fidel Castro: Sources of US Policy Toward Cuba,” 10.3 in KR.
Tuesday 11/9. Economic Development I: Modernization and Dependency
- Duncan Green, “State versus Market,” 3.1 in KR.

Thursday 11/11 and Tuesday 11/16. Economic Development II: Neoliberal Reform
- Paul Drake, “The Hegemony of US Economic Doctrines,” ch. 2 in HR.
- James E. Mahon, “Good-Bye to the Washington Consensus?” 3.3 in KR.

*******analytical papers due 11/18*******

Tuesday 11/23. New Security Issues, Militaries Reinvented
- Consuelo Cruz and Rut Diamint, “The New Military Autonomy in Latin America,” 4.1 in KR.
- Mark Unger, “Crime and Citizen Security in Latin America,” ch. 8 in HR.
- Additional reading possible TBA.

Tuesday 11/30 and Thursday 12/2. Cuba
- VP ch. 13 (Gary Prevost, “Cuba”)
- Jorge Domínguez, “The Secrets of Castro’s Staying Power,” 10.1 in KR.

Tuesday 12/7. Democracy in Theory/Practice/Perception
- Philippe C. Schmitter & Terry Lynn Karl, “What Democracy Is…and Is Not,” 2.1 in KR.
- Forrest Colburn, “Fragile Democracies,” 2.2 in KR.
- Latinobarómetro Report 2009. Selections TBA. BB

Thursday 12/9 and Tuesday 12/14. Conclusions from the Course

Final Exam: Sunday, December 19, 2010, 9-11am. Location TBA.