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. 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. There will be two small research/discussion projects, for 10/4 and 11/8.

Paper: Students will write one 6-7 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:
- Class Participation and attendance: 20%
- Midterm Exam, in class on 10/9: 25%
- Analytical Paper (6-7 pages) due 11/20: 25%
- Final Exam, in class on 12/19: 30%

http://tinyurl.com/34ywc3f

Office hours: Wednesdays 10:00am-12:00pm, and by appointment

E-mail: kristina.mani@oberlin.edu

Office hours: Wednesdays 10:00am-12:00pm, and by appointment

Students can sign up for office hours at http://tinyurl.com/34ywc3f
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.


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 including 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 America* focuses on issues of human rights, security and justice (http://www.wola.org). These NGOs lobby in Washington for more progressive US policies toward Latin America. In addition, the *NACLA Report* offer analysis of Latin American conditions from a critical-theory perspective (http://www.nacla.org).
Good analysis on regional trends in crime and public insecurity is InSight Crime, that took off with funding from the Open Society Institute and American University; http://www.insightcrime.org/

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.

Take Note: Related Course offered during Fall’s second Module (after fall break):

POLT 269 Latin American Politics Past and Present through Film (1 SS credit, P/NP) Second Module, Thursdays 1:30-4:30pm; AJLC 120. Enrollment: 35. Mani. Introduction, screening, and discussion of films from the Latin American New Wave cinema, which present powerful critiques of social justice, political power, and economic conditions in the region. Focus on films from Argentina and Chile. This course is offered to students concurrently enrolled in POLT 210 or HIST 293 or HISP 318. Students participate in either of two discussion groups (Spanish or English) and write several short essays.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS

BB=Blackboard
VP=Vanden and Prevost
KR=Kingstone Reader

Tuesday 9/4. Introduction to the Course

Thursday 9/6. Overview of Latin American Political Development

Tuesday 9/11. Democracy in Latin America I: The State and Rule of Law
- UN Development Programme, Democracy in Latin America: Towards a Citizens’ Democracy, 2005, pp. 49-73. BB
- Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, “Democracies Without Citizenship,” 2.3 in KR.

- Philippe C. Schmitter & Terry Lynn Karl, “What Democracy Is…and Is Not,” 2.1 in KR.
• Latinobarómetro Report 2011. Charts on p. 30-31, 35; read from the break on p. 38 through 44; 47-48. BB

Tuesday 9/18 and Thursday 9/20. Chile
• VP ch. 16 (“Chile”).
• Barrett, “The Limits of Democracy,” 8.2 in KR.

Tuesday 9/25 and Thursday 9/27. Argentina
• VP ch. 15 (“Argentina”).

Tuesday 10/2. The Collective Memory of Political Repression: Chile: Obstinate Memory (documentary by Patricio Guzman, 1998)

Thursday 10/4. Research and Discussion: Human Rights and Transitional Justice
Research assignment available in Blackboard. Group based discussion of your findings.

Tuesday 10/9. Midterm Exam in class.

Thursday 10/11. Populism Latin American Style

Tuesday 10/16 and Thursday 10/18. Venezuela
• VP ch. 17 (“Venezuela”).
  NOTE: Read the summary and recommendations, and the sections on courts and the media (though you’re welcome to read the entire report!)

Week of 10/22: Fall Break, no classes.
Tuesday 10/30 and Thursday 11/1. Brazil

- VP ch. 14 (“Brazil”).
- Power and Roberts, “A New Brazil?” 7.3 in KR.
- Recent news: Leader’s Torture in the 70s Stirs Ghosts in Brazil (NYT article, 8/5/12) http://www.post-gazette.com/stories/news/world/leaders-torture-in-the-70s-stirs-ghosts-in-brazil-647723/#ixzz22hLJhaX1
- Recent news: Is Dilma dissing her political base? http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/08/22/us-brazil-rousseff-idUSBRE87L0V320120822

Tuesday 11/6. Election Day, no class. Vote and get out the vote. Viva el voto!

And…prepare for the assignment due at next class!

Thursday 11/8. Research and Discussion: U.S. Policy Toward Latin America, Past/Present

Research assignment available in Blackboard. Group based discussion of your findings.

Tuesday 11/13. Economic Development I: Modernization and Dependency

- Duncan Green, “State versus Market,” 3.1 in KR.
  Recommended: Guillermo O’Donnell, Modernization and Bureaucratic Authoritarianism (Berkeley: University of California, 1973), pp. 167-201. BB

Thursday 11/15. Economic Development II: Neoliberal Reform


********analytical papers due 11/29********

Recommended reading: Peter Ranis, “To Occupy, To Resist, To Produce: Argentina’s Worker-Managed Factories and Enterprises.” BB

Thursday 11/22. Thanksgiving Break, no classes.

Tuesday 11/27 and Thursday 11/29. Cuba

- VP ch. 13 (“Cuba”)
- Jorge Domínguez, “The Secrets of Castro’s Staying Power,” 10.1 in KR.

**Tuesday 12/4. US-Latin American Relations**
  http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Americas/2012/0730/How-Latin-America-is-reinventing-the-war-on-drugs  
  *Recommended*: Louis A. Perez, “Fear and Loathing of Fidel Castro: Sources of US Policy Toward Cuba,” 10.3 in KR.  

**Thursday 12/6. The Military: Back in the Barracks?**
- Consuelo Cruz and Rut Diamint, “The New Military Autonomy in Latin America,” 4.1 in KR.  

**Tuesday 12/11 and Thursday 12/13. Conclusions from the Course**

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