

Latin American Politics
(PSCI 333 – Non-European Political Systems)
Spring 2013
Tuesdays/Thursdays (11:00am-12:15pm)
BA 243

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Office Hours: T/TH 1:00-2:00, W 3:45-4:45, or by appointment

Course Description:

Welcome to Latin American Politics! The purpose of this course is to study the systems, institutions, historical processes, and cultural factors that influence political activity in Latin America. After a brief examination of early Latin American political history and the formation of independent states in the region, we will take an in-depth look at Latin American politics through the lenses of race, religion, gender and sports. Then, we will shift our focus to the *types* of governments that have emerged in the region: democratic, military, populist, and revolutionary. Subsequently, we will closely examine case studies of politics in three Latin American countries. The course will conclude by analyzing the rise of leftist presidents in Latin America.

Format:

Each class session will involve lectures and *extensive* discussions about the assigned readings. You will regularly be called upon to answer questions about the readings and provide your opinions on the assigned topics. In addition to the assigned readings listed in the syllabus, we will often read short news articles and opinion columns in class and discuss them on the spot, since developments in Latin American politics occur on a daily basis. In addition, we will use videos and invite guest speakers to further our understanding of Latin American politics.

This syllabus is subject to change at any time at the professor's discretion.

NO PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES ARE ALLOWED IN CLASS AT ANY
TIME.

THIS INCLUDES (BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO):

CELL PHONES,

LAPTOPS,

iPADS,

iPODS,

MP3 Players/Recorders,

Translation Devices

VIDEO CAMERAS

OR ANY OTHER AUDIO AND/OR VIDEO RECORDERS OF ANY KIND

***IF ANY OF THESE DEVICES ARE PRESENT IN CLASS YOU WILL BE ASKED
TO STORE THEM OR LEAVE THE CLASS IMMEDIATELY.***

Requirements/Assignments:

Examinations:

In this course, **all students are required to take TWO exams** that will be in a short answer/identification format. *Each response will be graded by evaluating the accuracy and level of knowledge that you demonstrate in your answers.* Together, these exams will comprise **80%** of your grade. **There is not a final exam in this course.**

If you miss an exam, you will receive 0% for that exam.

If you have a **legitimate reason** for missing an exam (e.g. severe illness or injury *requiring professional medical care*, emergencies in your *immediate* family, participation in *official* university activities, legal *obligations*) **AND** you have **supporting documentation** for your absence, then you may **request** taking the make-up exam, which will be **a comprehensive examination given during finals week.**

Requests for taking the make-up exam must be **submitted in writing and include documentation** explaining and substantiating why the absence was legitimate. An approval to take the make-up exam will be based solely upon the professor's evaluation of your request and supporting documentation. Your grade on the make-up exam may **only** be used to substitute **one** missed exam. Any other missed exams will receive 0% scores, irrespective of the circumstances.

Attendance: 10% of your grade is based on your class attendance. Students are required to attend class and attendance will be taken at the end of each class session using a sign-in sheet. **Signing in a student who is not present or a asking a student to sign you in when you are absent constitutes academic dishonesty (see p.3).** It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they have signed in. Arriving late and/or leaving early will negatively impact your attendance grade. *Attendance is critical, discussions are irreplaceable, and course sessions cannot be "made up."* **I will not be managing any excuses for absences. You can miss up to **THREE** class sessions without penalty for any reason. More than three absences will result in a reduction in your grade, **REGARDLESS of the reason (excused OR unexcused).****

The attendance grade scale appears below.

- **0 absences = you will get a bonus of 2% added to your grade**
- **1-3 absences= no penalty**
- **4 absences= -1% from your grade**
- **5 absences= -2% from your grade**
- **6 absences= -3% from your grade**
- **7-8 absences= -5% from your grade**
- **9-10 absences= -7% from your grade**
- **11 or more absences= -10% from your grade**

Participation: Your participation in this course is worth **5%** of your grade. Positive participation includes responding to my questions, asking your own questions, and contributing to class discussions. Your participation grade will be reduced if you use personal electronic devices in class, misbehave in class, or disrupt class in any way.

Pop Quizzes and Short Writing Assignments: These will be assigned randomly throughout the semester and will count for a total of **5%** of your grade. If you are *absent* when a short writing assignment or pop quiz is given, you **cannot** make it up, irrespective of the circumstances. Short writing assignments and pop quizzes will be graded on the basis of the content and clarity of your answers.

Grades: Your grade in this course will be determined by the criteria listed below. Specifically, the following scale will be used to determine your grade:

- Exam #1 (March 7): 40%
 - Exam #2 (May 2): 40%
 - Attendance: 10%
 - Participation: 5%
 - Short Writing Assignments/Quizzes: 5%
- A 90-100%; B 80-89.9%; C 70-79.9%; D 60-69.9%; F Below 60%**

Learning Objective:

Students will understand and employ significant theoretical and analytical approaches to understand the systems, institutions, historical processes, and cultural factors that influence political activity in Latin America

Notes on Academic Dishonesty of ANY kind: Any student who is caught committing any kind of academic dishonesty will receive an “F” in this course and will be reported to the University administration. “Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one’s own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), signing the attendance sheet for a student who is absent (or asking another student to sign you in when you are absent), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material” (Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures A13.12). If you have any doubt as to what may constitute academic dishonesty, please consult with me prior to submitting any assignments.

Graduating Student Portfolio:

The portfolio assignment is designed to assist the Political Science Department in assessing how well students and faculty fulfill the department’s academic objectives. As a formal condition of graduation, all Political Science majors must submit a portfolio containing graded assignments from upper-level courses that were completed in the Department. It is the student’s responsibility to save all syllabi and graded course materials from every upper division political science course to complete the portfolio. Candidates for December graduation must submit their materials by November 15 in the graduation year. Candidates for May or August graduation must submit their materials by April 15 in the graduation year. The requirements must be fulfilled in a conscientious

fashion and follow the organizational guidelines listed below. Unsatisfactory portfolios and materials will be returned to the student for resubmission and may delay the date of graduation.

For specific portfolio guidelines and format, please pick up a portfolio guideline in the Department of Political Science.

In order to maximize your performance in this course, you must:

- ***TURN OFF ALL PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES BEFORE CLASS BEGINS. THIS INCLUDES (BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO): CELL PHONES, LAPTOPS, iPADS, IPODS, MP3 Players/Recorders, Translation devices, VIDEO CAMERAS, OR ANY OTHER AUDIO AND/OR VIDEO RECORDERS OF ANY KIND***
- ***IF ANYONE IS FOUND TO BE TEXTING OR ANSWERS A PHONE CALL DURING CLASS, THE ENTIRE CLASS WILL TAKE A *POP QUIZ* ON THE SPOT.***
- Attend each class session AND arrive ON TIME (the classroom door will not be opened for late arrivals **15 minutes after class starts**; Notify the professor in advance if you need to arrive late or leave early (this may affect your attendance grade);
- Read the assigned material before class;
- Be prepared to discuss the topics presented in class;
- Refrain from reading materials or working on other homework during class;
- Do NOT get up in the middle of class to go to the bathroom unless absolutely necessary;
- Be courteous to -and respectful of- your fellow students and professor.

Code of Student Conduct: *Faculty have the authority to request students who exhibit inappropriate behavior to leave the class and may refer serious offenses to the University Police Department and/or the Dean of Students for disciplinary action. Failure to comply with the Code of Student Conduct and commonsensical directions listed above may result in a verbal request to cease inappropriate behavior, your immediate removal from the class, being immediately dropped from the class, and/or a review by an appropriate university disciplinary agency. For more information on this subject, please see the Student Guidebook.*

Note to Students with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library, Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Required Readings:

Textbook

There is **one required text** for this course:

- **Politics of Latin America: The Power Game** (Third Edition, 2009, Oxford University Press)
by Harry E. Vanden and Gary Prevost
ISBN: 978-0-19-533998-7

Readings Packet

In addition to the text, there is a **required readings packet** that you will need to download and print out from dropbox.com.

Course Schedule:

Week 1 Introduction; Geography

January 15, 17

Read:

- ***Buy your book and download/print out your Readings Packet.***
- Vanden and Prevost, Preface
- Vanden and Prevost, Notes on Studying Politics in Latin America
- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 1 “Introduction”

Week 2 Colonization

January 22, 24

Read:

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 2 “Early History”

Week 3 Independence and Modernization

January 29, 31

Read:

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 3 “Democracy and Dictators”

Week 4 Political Culture

February 5, 7

Read:

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 8 “Democracy and Authoritarianism”
- **(Readings Packet)** Wiarda and Kline: “Changing Political Culture” in A Concise Introduction to Latin American Politics and Development

Week 5 Race & Politics

February 12, 14

Read:

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 4 “The Other Americans”
- **(Readings Packet)** De la Cadena, Marisol “Reconstructing Race: Racism, Culture and Mestizaje in Latin America” NACLA Report on the Americas v. 34 no. 6 (May/June 2001)
- **(Readings Packet)** Sansone, Livio “Anti-Racism in Brazil” NACLA Report on the Americas v. 38 no. 2 (September/October 2004)

Week 6 Gender & Politics

February 19, 21

Read:

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 5 “Society, Family, and Gender”

Week 7 Sports & Politics

February 26, 28

Read:

- **(Readings Packet)** Zolov, Eric: “The Harmonizing Nation: Mexico and the 1968 Olympics” in In the Game
- **(Readings Packet)** Pettavino, Paula and Phillip Brenner: “The Role of Sports in Cuba’s Domestic and International Policy”
- **(Readings Packet)** Rodriguez, Robert: “Generals and Goals: Nationalism and Sport in Argentina” in Sport and the Construction of Identities
- **(Readings Packet)** Farred, Grant: “Race and Silence in Argentine Football” in In the Game
- **(Readings Packet)** Daflon, Rogerio and Teo Ballve: “The beautiful game? Race and class in Brazilian Soccer”

Week 8 Religion & Politics; EXAM 1

March 5, 7

Read:

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 6 “Religion in Latin America”

Read: Prepare for Exam # 1.

- ***Exam #1 will take place at the beginning of class on THURSDAY, the 7th of March. You will have the entire class period to complete it. The exam will cover all of the material presented from the 15th of January through the 5th of March.***

Week 9 SPRING BREAK (No Classes)

March 12, 14

Read:

- Nothing.

Week 10 Political Economy;Populism

March 19, 21

Read:

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 7 “The Political Economy of Latin America”
- (*Readings Packet*) Conniff, Michael: Introduction “Populism in Latin America”

Week 11 Institutions

March 26, 28

Read:

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 9 “Politics, Power, Institutions, Actors”

Week 12 Revolutions

April 2, 4

Read:

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 10 “Struggling for Change”

Week 13 Case Study #1: Nicaragua

April 9, 11

Read:

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 20 “Nicaragua”

Week 14 Case Study #2: Cuba

April 16, 18

Read:

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 17 “Cuba”

Week 15 Case Study #3: Argentina

April 23, 25

Read:

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 16 “Argentina”

Week 16 The Latin American Left; EXAM 2

April 30, May 2

Read:

- *(Readings Packet)* Cleary, Matthew: “A ‘Left Turn’ in Latin America?: Explaining the Left’s Resurgence”
- *(Readings Packet)* Castaneda, Jorge and Morales, Marco A. Chapter 1 “The current state of the Utopia” in LEFTOVERS Tales of the Latin American Left
- *Exam #2 will take place at the beginning of class on THURSDAY, the 2nd of May. You will have the entire class period to complete it. The exam will cover all of the material presented from the 19th of March through the 30th of April.*

Finals Week Make-Up Examination

May 6-10 (Exam date and time TBA)

- *If you have been approved to take the Make-up Exam, it will take place at the scheduled final exam date and time for this course. The make-up exam is comprehensive, covering material presented from January 15-April 30. You will have one hour and fifteen minutes to complete it.*