

Political Science 407E
Politics in Latin America
Fall 2007

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Office Hours: T/Th 12:50-2:20

This course is an interdisciplinary introduction to politics in Latin America. The first part of the course will examine several competing explanations of the recent pattern of democratization of the region. During the first part of the course, we will also examine some of the challenges facing Latin America's new democracies. The second part of the course provides an in-depth, comparative study of politics in selected countries, with a focus on Mexico, Cuba, and Argentina.

Requirements

Lecture and Discussion: The class will meet on Tuesday and Thursday from 2:30-3:45 in Wright Hall C235 for lectures and discussion. Students are expected to finish all of the assigned readings and to be prepared for group discussion. Participation counts for 5% of the final grade.

Exams, Papers, and Grading: The first exam will be given **October 4**. The final exam is on **December 11, 3:10-5:10 in Wright C235**. In addition, students are required to write a short research paper (10-12 pp.). The paper is due on **November 22**. Exam 1 is worth 25% of the final grade, while the research paper and the final exam each count for 35% of the final grade.

Make-up exams will be given only if the student can demonstrate she/he was absent due to illness or participation in an official university function. Students must provide an excuse in writing from a licensed health care provider or from a university administrator.

University Policy for Students with Disabilities: Any student who, because of a disabling condition, may require special arrangements to meet course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make necessary accommodations. Pursuant to UNLV policy, students must present appropriate verification from the Disability Resource Center in order to receive accommodations (Room 137, Reynolds Student Services Center; 895-0866 [TDD 895-0652]).

Observance of Religious Holidays: Students who miss class due to observance of a religious holiday shall be given the opportunity to make up the missed work. Please notify the instructor no later than the first week of class if you will miss class because of observance of a religious holiday.

Contact via E-mail: A new UNLV policy requires students to use Rebelmail accounts when they contact faculty via e-mail. As the official e-mail system for students, Rebelmail is available to all

students who have been admitted to the university. Non-matriculated students should contact the Office of Information Technology at UNLV students for assistance.

Texts

The required readings for the course are:

Harry E. Vanden and Gary Prevost, eds. Politics of Latin America: The Power Game (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

Peter H. Smith. Democracy in Latin America (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005)

In addition, some of the required readings for this course are on reserve in the Lied library and are accessible through the web at <http://ereserves.library.unlv.edu/>. E-research readings are designated “E-Reserves” in the syllabus. Some readings are also available through the JSTOR and Academic Search Elite databases in the University library (Article First and JSTOR are located at <http://www.library.unlv.edu/search/eralpha.php> These readings are marked with “JSTOR” or “Academic Search Elite” in the syllabus. I will give instructions in class on accessing readings from the library.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND LECTURES

8/28-8/30 Introduction

Vanden & Prevost (hereafter V&P), “An Introduction to Latin America...” pp. 1-40.

9/4-9/6 Conceptualizing Political Regime Types in Latin America

Smith, pp. 1-43.

Sørensen, “What is Democracy?” in E-Reserves.

9/11-9/20 Explanations of Democratization in Latin America: Towards Eclecticism?

Smith, pp. 44-72, 107-133.

9/25-10/2 Problems of New Democracies in Latin America

Smith, pp. 73-106, 213-310.

V&P, “The Political Economy of Latin America,” pp. 146-76.

Evelyn Huber and Fred Solt, Successes and Failures of Neoliberalism,” Latin American Research Review 39, no. 3, 2004, pp. 150-164, in Project Muse database.

Suggested: Kirk A. Hawkins and David Hansen, “Dependent Civil Society: The Círculos Bolivarianos in Venezuela,” Latin American Research Review 41, no. 1 (2006), in Project Muse database.

10/4 **Exam 1**

10/9-10/11 Mexico: History and Political Culture

V&P, “Mexico,” pp. 54, 285-301

10/16-10/18 Mexico: Political Parties and Interest Groups

V&P, "Mexico," pp. 301-5

Camp, "Groups and the State..." pp. 128-57, in E-Reserves.

Charles R. Greer et al., "The State of the Unions in Mexico," Journal of Labor Research 28, no. 1 (2007), in Article First database.

10/23-10/25 Mexico: Political and Economic Reform

V&P, "Mexico," pp. 305-23

Geri Smith and Cristina Lindblad, "Mexico: Was NAFTA Worth It?" Business Week, Issue 3863, December 22, 2003, in **Article First database**

Joseph Klesner, "The 2006 Mexican Elections: Manifestations of a Divided Society?" PS: Political Science and Politics 40, no. 1 (2007) 27-32 in Article First database.

10/30-11/1 Cuba: History and Political Culture

V&P, "Cuba" pp. 325-338

11/6-11/8 Cuba: Interest Groups and the Cuban Communist Party

V&P, "Cuba" pp. 339-344

11/13-11/15 Cuba: Economic Reforms

V&P, "Cuba" pp. 344-53

Javier Corrales, "The Gatekeeper State: Limited Economic Reforms and Regime Survival in Cuba: 1989-2002," Latin American Research Review 39, no. 2 (2004), pp. 35-58, in **Article First database**

Claes Brundenius, "Cuba: Retreat from Entitlement?" in PSC 407Z Electronic Reserves

11/21 Argentina: History and Political Culture

V&P, "Argentina." Pp. 399-418

11/22 Thanksgiving holiday

11/27-11/29 Argentina: Parties and Interest Groups

V&P, "Argentina," pp. 418-431

12/4-12/6 Argentina: Political and Economic Reforms

V&P, "Argentina," pp. 431-432

Economist, "Becoming a Serious Country," June 25, 2004, in **Article First database**

Film, "The Empty ATM"

12/11 Final Exam, 3:10-5:10, Wright Hall C235