

Latin American Politics
Political Science 3680/8685
Latino/Latin American Studies 3680/8685
University of Nebraska Omaha
Fall 2015

Monday & Wednesday 11:30 am-12:45 pm
Arts and Sciences Hall 279

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Office: Arts and Sciences Hall 275
Office Hours: M&W 9:00-11:00 am
T 1:00-2:00 pm
(And by appointment)

Course Description

Political scientist Charles W. Anderson once wrote that Latin America was a “living museum,” because, in his view, the “normal rule of Latin American political change is that new power contenders may be added to the system, but old ones may not be eliminated” (1964, 3-4). This course provides a theoretical basis for understanding the major political and economic patterns, actors, and challenges in the region from the early 20th century to the present. The course is organized around four broad themes: (1) US-LAM Relations, with a focus on revolution and counterrevolution; (2) Democratic Openings and Authoritarian Reversals; (3) Democratic Consolidation; and (4) Contemporary Issues, Actors, and Challenges. The third and fourth sections engage with contemporary challenges, actors, and their evolution. We return explicitly to Charles Anderson’s proposition that new actors have been added yet old actors have not departed the political scene. Anderson was writing in 1964. Thus, we will consider the question: Is Anderson’s view still correct? Have more actors simply been added to the system? Or, has the system changed fundamentally? Whether the answer is yes or no, what does this mean for Latin American politics today?

Prerequisites

This is an upper-level Political Science course. PSCI 2500 (Introduction to Comparative Politics) or junior standing or permission of instructor is required. Graduate: PSCI 2500 or equivalent is recommended.

Course Materials

Textbook: Vanden, Harry E. and Gary Prevost. 2014. *Politics of Latin America: The Power Game*. New York: Oxford University Press, fifth edition.

Individual class readings are available on the UNO online system, Blackboard.

Evaluation: Your course grade will be based on the following:

Participation: 15%

Midterm exam: 20% -- Held in class on October 14

Final exam: 25% -- Held in class during final exam period (December 16 at 10:00am)

Research Paper Proposal: 5% -- Due in class on October 7

Paper: 35% -- First draft due in class on November 11 (15%); Final draft due in class on December 9 (20%)

Participation (15%)

The course will require active student participation. Students are expected to do the assigned readings and come to class prepared to share your questions, comments, and ideas. Plan to ask and answer questions, clarify readings, to discuss course material, and to participate in activities. The classroom offers you a forum to engage with your peers and to learn from each other. I expect everyone to promote an active learning environment by supporting each other intellectually, asking questions, and by being an aggressive learner.

A few basic ground rules:

- Always be present, physically and mentally—**Laptops, phones, texting devices are not allowed during class**
- Treat everyone in the class with patience and respect
- Be curious and ask questions of your classmates, of our readings, and of me
- When you speak, remember that you are in dialogue with the entire class. Speak to and listen to all of your classmates
- You are responsible for your own learning and accountable for your own work—you are ultimately in charge of your own educational experience

Exams (Midterm: 20%; Final Exam: 25%)

The in-class midterm and final will consist of short identification questions, essays, and a map exercise. Mastery of both the lecture material and the assigned readings will be necessary for the exams. *Do not miss exams. If an emergency arises and you cannot make it, please contact me beforehand to request a makeup exam. The ability to make up work missed will be at the discretion of the instructor. Make up exams will be more challenging in format and content than the in-class exams. Un-excused absences from exams will result in a grade of “zero” for that exam.*

Research Paper (Proposal: 5%; First Draft: 15%; Final Draft: 20%)

During the semester, you will follow the politics and political challenges in one country of your choosing in Latin America. You will identify a key political problem in that country and write a 16-20 page paper (double-spaced, 1” margins, 12 pt Times New Roman font) analyzing that problem and exploring similarities and differences with other countries we discuss in class. You might, for example, focus on the populism of Hugo Chavez in Venezuela, and draw on theories of populism in the course materials and make comparison to populism under Juan Perón in Argentina. You are encouraged to use comparisons to enrich the understanding of your country/political phenomenon and to provide context, but the paper should primarily focus on one country.

The paper-writing process will begin with **identifying the country and political issue** in which you are interested by Monday, September 14. The next class meeting, Wednesday, September 16, will be a **class research session** at the Criss Library (Room 112) where we will talk more about sources, citations, and research. You will have time to search for and retrieve research materials. As you read broadly and prepare your **research proposal**, you will begin to narrow your general topic into a specific *research question*. For example, your general country/topic of interest might have been “coca growing in Bolivia.” In order to develop a research question for the paper, consider the political history of the phenomenon in the country, the political relevance of the phenomenon, the political actors involved, and how that issue ties into other political and economic developments over the same time period in the country. From considerations like these, you might, for example, then have a research question such as, “What explains the rise of the *cocalero* movement in Bolivian politics?” And a brilliant, well-researched, multi-faceted explanation is the answer to the research question that comprises your eventual research paper!

You will submit your **research proposal** on Wednesday, October 7. The proposal is a two-page (double-spaced, 1” margins, 12 pt Times New Roman font) essay presenting your research question, discussing the importance of the issue in the country, and providing a reference list of sources (at least one from the syllabus and three outside scholarly sources). The essay must demonstrate that you have read at least one source from your list (a source not on the syllabus) by discussing that source and pointing to what questions this source has led you to pursue in your paper. *I will approve the proposal and/or ask you to revise before proceeding with the research project.*

The **first draft** of the paper is due Wednesday, November 11, with a **peer review workshop** on Wednesday, November 18. After the peer review workshop, you will revise your paper by incorporating the feedback you receive from the professor and your fellow students. The **final draft** is due on the last class day, Wednesday, December 9. Further details about the first draft, in-class paper workshop, and final draft will be distributed in class and online.

UNO Writing Center

The UNO Writing Center offers free one-on-one consultations with trained consultants to all students, faculty, and staff. Their goal is to help writers improve their writing skills and confidence in all types of writing, in all subject areas, and at all stages of the writing process. For more information about their hours and locations or to schedule an appointment, visit their website at www.unomaha.edu/writingcenter or visit them at their main location in Arts and Sciences Hall, Room 150. I strongly encourage you to meet with the Writing Center both early in the semester as you formulate and organize your ideas for the paper and later in the semester once you have written a draft of the paper.

Academic Integrity

You must maintain academic integrity at all times. Plagiarism/cheating are serious academic crimes, and I will pursue any infringements seriously and actively. At a minimum, any infringement will result in a grade of “zero” on the assignment. For more information on University of Nebraska Omaha policies on academic integrity, please see: <http://www.unomaha.edu/student-life/achievement/student-conduct-and-community-standards/policies/academic-integrity.php>

Special Accommodations

Accommodations are provided for students who are registered with Disability Services and make their requests sufficiently in advance. For more information, contact Disability Services (MBSC 111, Phone: 402-554-2872, TTY: 402-554-3799) or go to the website: www.unomaha.edu/disability.

Late Policy

Late papers will be penalized by two-thirds of a letter grade per day late. For example, an “A+” paper one day late would receive a grade of an “A-.”

Schedule of Class Meetings

Week One

Monday, August 24: Introduction to the course

- Vanden & Prevost, Introduction (“Notes on Studying Politics in Latin America”) and Chapter 1

Wednesday, August 26: Overview of Latin American political history, sub-regional geography

- Vanden & Prevost, Chapter 3

Week Two

Monday, August 31: Political economy, economic development

- Vanden & Prevost, Chapter 7
- Frank, André Gunder. 1969. “The Development of Underdevelopment.”
- Read the United Nations Development Program piece, “About Latin America and the Caribbean” here: <http://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/rblac/en/home/regioninfo/>

I. U.S. - Latin American Relations

Wednesday, September 2: U.S.-Latin American relations

- Vanden & Prevost, Chapter 11
- Kryzanek, Michael. 2008. *U.S.-Latin American Relations*, Introduction.

Week Three: Cuba

Monday, September 7: Labor Day holiday (NO CLASSES)

Wednesday, September 9: Revolution in Cuba

- Vanden & Prevost, Chapter 10 (254-258, up to “Other Revolutionary Endeavors”) and Chapter 19
- Wickham-Crowley, Timothy. 1992. *Guerrillas and Revolution in Latin America: A Comparative Study of Insurgents and Regimes since 1956*, Introduction, excerpts from Chapters 11-12.

Week Four: Nicaragua & El Salvador

Monday, September 14: Revolution, counterrevolution, peace processes and guerrilla transformation in Central America

- **Country selection and topic for research paper due in class today**
- Vanden & Prevost, Chapter 10 (258-268) and Chapter 21
- Martín Álvarez, Alberto. 2010. *From Revolutionary War to Democratic Revolution: The Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) in El Salvador*, Part 5 “Transition to democratic politics” (33-36).

Wednesday, September 16: **Library Research Session (Class will meet in Criss Library Room 112)**

- Landman, Todd. 2008. *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: An Introduction*.

II. Democratic Openings and Authoritarian Reversals

Week Five: Argentina

Monday, September 21: Populism, Perón, and Import Substitution Industrialization

- Vanden & Prevost, Chapter 13 and review Chapter 7 (164-168)
- Malloy, James. 1977. “Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America: The Modal Pattern.”

Wednesday, September 23: Bureaucratic Authoritarianism

- Writing Center Orientation
- Coller, David. 1979. “Overview of the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian Model.”

Week Six: Chile

Monday, September 28: Salvador Allende and “Chile’s Road to Socialism”

- Vanden & Prevost, Chapter 15

Wednesday, September 30: Pinochet dictatorship

- Constable, Pamela and Arturo Valenzuela. 1991. *A Nation of Enemies: Chile under Pinochet*. Preface and Chapter One.

Movie screening (Criss Library Theater Room, 6:00-8:30 pm): *No* (Description from Sony Pictures: In 1988, Chilean military dictator Augusto Pinochet, due to international pressure, is forced to call a plebiscite on his presidency. The country will vote YES or NO to Pinochet extending his rule for another eight years. Opposition leaders for the NO persuade a brash young advertising executive, Rene Saavedra (Gael Garcia Bernal), to spearhead their campaign. Against all odds, with scant resources and under scrutiny by the despot's minions, Saavedra and his team devise an audacious plan to win the election and set Chile free. **Watch the trailer here:** <http://sonyclassics.com/no/>)

Week Seven

Monday, October 5: Transitions from authoritarianism

- Karl, Terry Lynn. 1990. “Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America.” *Comparative Politics* 23(1): 1-21.

Wednesday, October 7: Human rights and transitional justice

- **Research proposal for research paper due in class today**
- Acuña, Carlos and Catalina Smulovitz. 1997. "Guarding the Guardians in Argentina: Some Lessons about the Risks and Benefits of Empowering the Courts." In *Transitional Justice and the Rule of Law in New Democracies*, ed. James McAdams.

Week Eight

Monday, October 12: In-class review session

Wednesday, October 14: **In-class mid-term exam**

III. Democracy and Democratic Consolidation

Week Nine

Monday, October 19: Semester Break (NO CLASSES)

Wednesday, October 21: What is democracy?

- Schmitter, Philippe C. and Terry Lynn Karl. 1991. "What Democracy is... and is Not." *Journal of Democracy* 2(3): 75-88.

Week Ten

Monday, October 26: Elite and popular commitment to democracy

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 8
- Chu, Yun-han, Michael Bratton, Marta Lagos, Sandeep Shastri, and Mark Tessler. 2008. "Public Opinion and Democratic Legitimacy." In *How People View Democracy*, eds. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, 31-44.

Wednesday, October 28: The rules of the democratic game

- Massicotte, Louis, André Blais, Antoine Yoshinaka. 2004. *Establishing the Rules of the Game*, Introduction.
- Linz, Juan J. 1990. "The Perils of Presidentialism." *Journal of Democracy* 1(1): 51-69.

Week Eleven

Monday, November 2: Neoliberalism and market reforms

- Vanden and Prevost, review Chapter 7 (170-181)
- Williamson, John. 1990. "What Washington Means by Policy Reform." In *Modern Political Economy: Theory and Policy*, eds. Jeffrey Frieden, Manuel Pastor Jr. and Michael Tomz.
- Baker, Andy. 2003. "Why is Trade Reform so Popular in Latin America? A Consumption-Based Theory of Trade Policy Preferences." *World Politics* 55 (April 2003), 423-55.

Movie screening (Criss Library Theater Room, 6:00-8:00 pm): *The Take* (Description from Klein Lewis Productions: In suburban Buenos Aires, thirty unemployed auto-parts workers walk into their idle factory, roll out sleeping mats and refuse to leave. All they want is to re-start the

silent machines. But this simple act – **The Take** – has the power to turn the globalization debate on its head. In the wake of Argentina’s dramatic economic collapse in 2001, Latin America’s most prosperous middle class finds itself in a ghost town of abandoned factories and mass unemployment. The Forja auto plant lies dormant until its former employees take action. They’re part of a daring new movement of workers who are occupying bankrupt businesses and creating jobs in the ruins of the failed system. Watch the trailer here: http://www.thetake.org/index.cfm?page_name=watch_the_trailer)

Wednesday, November 4: Modern labor and the new political economy

- Watch film *The Take*; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6D7z6aNemfg>

Week Twelve

Monday, November 9: The Pink Tide

- Vanden & Prevost, Chapter 17 and review Chapter 3 (68-69)
- Levitsky, Steven and Kenneth M. Roberts, eds. 2011. *The Resurgence of the Latin American Left*, Introduction (available on Google books)

Wednesday, November 11: Courts and the rule of law

- **First draft of research paper due in class today**
- Writing Center Peer Review Talk
- O’Donnell, Guillermo. 2004. “Why the Rule of Law Matters.” *Journal of Democracy* 15(4): 32-46.

IV. Contemporary Issues and Actors; Has anything changed?

Week Thirteen

Monday, November 16: Recycled Dictators

- “Butcher of Bolivia: Profile of Hugo Banzer, former military dictator” from *The Guardian*
- “Latin Turmoil: A City’s Crisis Reflects Argentines’ Tendency to Turn to the Military” from *The Wall Street Journal*

Wednesday, November 18: **In-class Peer Review Workshop**

Week Fourteen

Monday, November 23: Contemporary military issues

- Hunter, Wendy. 1996. “State and Soldier in Latin America: Redefining the Military’s Role in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile.” Read summary and pp. 1-9.
- Maiah Jaskoski. 2012. “Public Security Forces with Private Funding: Local Army Entrepreneurship in Peru and Ecuador.” *Latin American Research Review* 47:2.

Wednesday, November 25: Thanksgiving holiday (NO CLASSES)

Week Fifteen

Monday, November 30: Social movements, recent protests

- Vanden & Prevost, Chapter 10 (272-284)
- Van Cott, Donna Lee. 2005. *From Movements to Parties in Latin America: The Evolution of Ethnic Politics*, Introduction (available through UNO library as an electronic book; also available on Google books)

Movie screening (Criss Library Theater Room, 6:00-8:00 pm): *Our Brand is Crisis* (Description on UNO Library site: Follows James Carville, Jeremy Rosner and a team of political consultants as they launch a media-savvy campaign for Bolivian presidential candidate Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada. With unprecedented access to think sessions, media training and the making of smear campaigns, witness a shocking example of America 'spreading democracy' overseas and its earth-shattering aftermath. Watch the trailer here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0V3mE5beWuQ>).

Wednesday, December 2: Indigenous politics

- *The New Politics of Protest: Mobilization in Latin America's Neoliberal Era*, Ch.1

Week Sixteen

Monday, December 7: Environmental issues, resource management

- Lubovich, Kelley. 2007. "The Coming Crisis: Water Insecurity in Peru." *Foundation for Environmental Security & Sustainability*.

Wednesday, December 9: China and Latin America

- **Final draft of research paper due in class today**
- Ellis, Evan. 2009. *China in Latin America: The Whats and Wherefores*. Ch. 1 and 2.

In-class final exam on Wednesday, December 16 at 10:00 am