

# **International Relations of Latin America**

**Political Science 4280/8286  
Latino/Latin American Studies 4280/8286  
International Studies 4140-007  
University of Nebraska Omaha  
Fall 2017**

**Tuesday 5:30 pm - 8:10 pm  
Arts and Sciences Hall 279**

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## **Course Description**

In the 1996 edition of *U.S.-Latin American Relations*, political scientist Michael J. Kryzanek wrote “this is clearly a time of cooperation and conciliation in the region as the North Americans and South Americans enter a period that is filled with promise.”<sup>1</sup> Kryzanek opened the 2008 edition of the same book with the rather tragic line: “although the United States and the countries of Latin America occupy the same hemisphere, they are worlds apart.”<sup>2</sup> As these divergent introductions from Professor Kryzanek note, the end of the Cold War brought hope for a new era in international politics in the region, but that optimism quickly faded as many states in Latin America rejected U.S.-led neoliberal economic programs and as the United States once again became pre-occupied with other parts of the world. As the global political environment trends toward multi-polarity and re-alignment of state relationships, what does this mean for the future of Latin America in the world? This course provides a theoretical and empirical basis for understanding international relations of Latin America. The course is organized around four broad themes: (1) Latin American state development and international relations, (2) U.S.-Latin American relations, (3) Inter-American issues, and (4) Latin America in contemporary global politics. The third and fourth sections of the course engage the contemporary consequences of long-standing political and economic patterns with an eye toward the potential for short-term and long-term change in Latin American international relations.

## **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.

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<sup>1</sup> Kryzanek, Michael J. 1996. *U.S.-Latin American Relations*. Westport: Praeger, third edition, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Kryzanek, Michael J. 2008. *U.S.-Latin American Relations*. Westport: Praeger, fourth edition, 1.

## **Course Materials**

Smith, Peter H. 2012. *Talons of the Eagle: Latin America, The United States, and the World*. New York: Oxford University Press, fourth edition.

LaRosa, Michael and Frank O. Mora, eds. 2015. *Neighborly Adversaries: Readings in U.S.-Latin American Relations*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, third edition.

Individual class readings are available on the Canvas course site under the Files section in folders for their respective weeks.

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

Class Participation: 20%

Quizzes: 15%

Three (3) weekly reading reaction memos: 5% each (15% total)

Policy paper: 30%; identify issue and country/ies (Sept. 12), research proposal (Sept. 19), paper due (Oct. 24)

Policy presentation: 20%; required consultation with UNO Speech Center (Nov. 6-17), in-class presentation, peer discussant role, and Q&A participation (Nov. 21-Dec. 5)

## **Class Participation (20%)**

This course requires active student participation. As students in my course, you are expected to do the assigned readings and to 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, by reflecting on what you have learned, and by being committed to your education.

A few basic ground rules:

- **Attend class.** Pay attention. Take notes when I lecture. Read your notes after each class.
- Put away your electronic devices. Let this class be a respite from the damage networked mobile devices do to the human brain. In this class, you will engage with other humans, and you will think for yourself.
- Take notes when you read so that you will better retain the information in the readings and be prepared to discuss it.
- Treat everyone in the class with patience, common courtesy, and basic human decency.
- 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.

## **Quizzes (15%)**

There will be periodic short quizzes to test recollection and comprehension of key points from lectures and readings. Material and dates for quizzes will be announced as they approach.

### **Reaction Memos (Three memos: 5% each = 15% total)**

During the course of the semester, each student must write a total of three reaction memos on weekly course readings. Each paper should be one page in length and single-spaced type (1" margins, Times New Roman, 12 pt font). The reaction papers should (1) summarize the important points of the readings, (2) discuss how the readings relate to each other and to previous material (readings and lectures as appropriate), and (3) critically evaluate the arguments. There are multiple readings for each class session—selected because they typically offer differing perspectives on the material and/or introduce new considerations on the overall topic. The goal of having you write the reaction memos is to provide you with an opportunity to prepare for in-class discussion by writing your own thoughts in which you synthesize the readings, reflect on them, and assess them in the context of where they fit in the major themes of the course. Because you will write only three throughout the semester, you have flexibility on when you choose to do them, but **a reaction memo for a particular session's readings must be submitted at the time of that session.**

### **Policy Paper (Proposal: 5%, Final Paper 25% = 30% total)**

During the semester, you will identify a key problem in contemporary international relations of Latin America and write a 10-page policy paper (double-spaced, 1" margins, 12 pt Times New Roman font) analyzing that issue and proposing a policy recommendation.

To begin, read broadly about contemporary international relations in the region using the assigned materials for the class and from policy organizations like the [Inter-American Dialogue](#), [Washington Office on Latin America](#), [Council on Hemispheric Affairs](#), and the Latin America sections of the [Council on Foreign Relations](#), [Brookings Institute](#), and the [Carnegie Endowment for International Peace](#). In addition, you should be reading news about the region (from U.S. dailies [The New York Times](#), [Los Angeles Times](#), and newspapers in the region—an exhaustive list available from the [University of Texas LANIC](#)—and news digests such as *The Economist*, *Business Monitor International*, and the *Latin American Weekly Report*).

The paper-writing process will begin with **identifying the IR issue and country/ies** in which you are interested by Tuesday, September 12. The following class meeting, Tuesday, September 19, will be a **class research session** at the UNO Criss Library (meet in room 231) where we will talk more about sources, citations, and research. You will have time to search for and retrieve research materials. The next step is to prepare a **one-page research proposal**, due September 26, in which you will present the issue, discuss its importance in international relations of Latin America, and provide a preliminary reference list of at least three sources. *I will approve the proposal and/or require you to revise before proceeding with the research project.*

The **policy paper**, due October 24, will describe the IR issue and its importance in the international relations of the country/ies involved, outline three policy options available to the relevant policymaker you are addressing, and make a recommendation to that policymaker which option to pursue to address the problem most effectively. Further instructions will be distributed in class.

### **Policy Presentation (20%)**

In Week 14-16, you will give an **in-class presentation** based on your policy paper. The elements of the presentation are those of the paper—you will describe the issue, explain its importance in international relations of the relevant country/ies, outline the policy options, and present your policy recommendation. Think of this as a miniature lesson on the issue that you will provide for your peers. Each presentation will also involve a question and answer period, in which you will be expected to answer questions from the instructor and from your peers. To that end, each student will be assigned as a discussant for at least one classmate's presentation. Your performance as a discussant will be part of your own presentation grade. A representative of the UNO Speech Center will give guest talks in our class on Tuesday, September 12 and Tuesday, November 7 on how to prepare for the presentation. You are required to hold a **consultation with the UNO Speech Center in Week 12-13**, regarding the in-class presentation you will give in Week 14-16. More on the UNO Speech Center below. Further instructions will be distributed in class.

### **UNO Speech Center**

The UNO Speech Center Consulting Room provides free consulting and coaching services to all UNO students, faculty, and staff in preparing oral presentations. The Consulting Room can help you with presentation preparation, outlining, effective delivery techniques, along with any other presentational needs. Speech consulting will help at any stage in the speechmaking process, whether you are just starting to develop topic ideas or nearly finished with preparing a presentation.

Make an appointment by calling the Speech Consulting Room at 554-3201 or stopping by Arts & Sciences Hall 185. Appointments must be reserved at least 48 hours in advance of scheduled consultation date, allowing the Speech Center to ensure adequate facilitation and instruction.

### **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](http://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: <https://www.unomaha.edu/student-life/student-conduct-and-community-standards/policies/academic-integrity.php>

## **Global Diversity Student Learning Outcomes**

This course is part of the UNO Global Diversity General Education Curriculum. In line with UNO priorities, this course has the following student learning outcomes. After completing the course, successful students shall be able to do the following:

- recognize the cultural, historical, social, economic, and/or political circumstances that produce different social and cultural systems;
- demonstrate specific knowledge of the cultural, historical, social, economic, and/or political aspects of one or more countries or nations other than the United States;
- explain the interrelations among global economic, political, environmental and/or social systems; and
- explain ways in which identity is developed and how it is transmitted within and by members of the group or groups.

## **Special Accommodations**

Accommodations are provided for students who are registered with the UNO Accessibility Services Center and make their requests sufficiently in advance. For more information, contact Accessibility Services Center (MBSC 126, Phone: 402-554-2872, TTY: 402-554-6015) or go to the website: <https://www.unomaha.edu/student-life/inclusion/disability-services/>.

## **Late Policy**

On daily/weekly assignments, no late work will be accepted. For the policy paper assignment, late papers will be penalized by 5% per day late. For example, a paper that earns an 85% but is one day late would receive a grade of 80%.

## **Schedule of Class Meetings**

### **I. Latin America and IR Concepts, Theory, Background**

#### Week 1: Tuesday, August 22

Introduction to the course; Overview of Latin American physical geography, political history, and contemporary bi-lateral international issues

- Vanden & Prevost, Chapter 1: An Introduction to Twenty-First Century Latin America
- “Rethinking Latin America,” *Foreign Affairs* (2012)

#### Week 2: Tuesday, August 29

IR concepts and theories

- Smith, preface and Introduction

Colonial experience as precursor to modern Latin American IR

- Michael J. LaRosa and Frank O. Mora, “Contentious Neighbors in the Western Hemisphere” (pp. 1-4)
- Vanden & Prevost, Chapter 2: Early History

#### *Recommended*

- Vanden & Prevost, Chapter 3: Democracy and Dictators: A Historical Overview from Independence to the Present Day (pp. 42-54)

### Week 3: Tuesday, September 5

Interstate conflict and state development in Latin America

- Bruce D. Porter, *War and the Rise of the State*, Prologue and Chapter 1 (pp. 1-6)
- Miguel Angel Centeno, *Blood and Debt*, Chapter 1
- David R. Mares, *Latin America and the Illusion of Peace*, Introduction

Economic characteristics of Latin America

- United Nations Development Program, “About Latin America and the Caribbean” here: <http://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/rblac/en/home/regioninfo/>

*Recommended*

- Vanden & Prevost, Chapter 7: The Political Economy of Latin America

## **II. U.S.-Latin American Relations**

### Week 4: Tuesday, September 12

U.S.-Latin American relations – “The European Game”

- **Identify a policy paper topic and country/ies**
- Smith, Chapters 1-2
- Dexter Perkins, “The Monroe Doctrine, 1823-1826” (pp. 65-75)
- LaRosa and Mora, eds. “The Platt Amendment of 1901” (pp. 77-78)

**\*Guest talk from Marlina Davidson of the UNO Speech Center**

### Week 5: Tuesday, September 19

U.S.-Latin American relations – the Latin American “response”

- Smith, Chapters 3-4
- Jose Martí, “Our America” (pp. 33-40)
- Gaston Nerval, “Autopsy of the Monroe Doctrine” (pp. 87-91)

**\*Class will meet in Criss Library Room 231; Library Research Session today**

### Week 6: Tuesday, September 26

U.S.-Latin American relations – The Cold War in Latin America

- **1-page policy paper proposal due in class**
- Smith, Chapters 5-8
- Roger T. Trask, “The Impact of the Cold War on U.S.-Latin American Relations, 1945-1949” (pp. 129-144)
- Cole Blasier, “The Hovering Giant: U.S. Responses to Revolutionary Change in Latin America” (pp. 157-170)
- Alan Luxenberg, “Did Eisenhower Push Castro into the Arms of the Soviets?” (pp. 171-186)

**\*Visit from Dr. Travis Adams of the UNO Writing Center**

Week 7: Tuesday, October 3

U.S.-Latin American relations – Post-Cold War, post-9/11

- Smith, Chapters 11-12
- Frank O. Mora, “Post-Cold War U.S. Latin American Policy: The Clinton, Bush, and Obama Administrations” (pp. 243-263)

Week 8: Tuesday, October 10

Assessing, reframing, reflecting on contemporary U.S.-Latin American relations

- Brookings Institution, “Better than You Think: Reframing Inter-American Relations” (2015)
- Review from Week 1: “Rethinking Latin America,” *Foreign Affairs*

**\*Guest talk from Dr. Jonathan Benjamin-Alvarado (Cuba)**

Week 9: Tuesday, October 17 (UNO Fall Break – No Classes Held)

**III. Inter-American Politics**

Week 10: Tuesday, October 24

U.S.-Latin America Migration; Film – *Harvest of Empire*

- **Policy paper due in class**
- Smith, Chapter 13
- Lance R. Ingwersen and Michael J. LaRosa, “Waiting on Reform: A Brief History of U.S.-Latin American Immigration” (pp. 277-297)

*Recommended*

- Office of Latino/Latin American Studies (OLLAS) - University of Nebraska Omaha, “Economic Impact of Latin American & Other Immigrants: Iowa, Nebraska & the Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area”
- “How an Undocumented Immigrant from Mexico Became a Star at Goldman Sachs,” *Bloomberg Business*
- “Killers on a Shoestring: Inside the Gangs of El Salvador,” *The New York Times* (November 20, 2016)

Week 11: Tuesday, October 31

U.S.-Latin America Drug Wars

- Smith, Chapter 14
- Bruce Bagley, “Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in the Americas: Major Trends in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” (pp. 215-238)

#### **IV. Latin America in Contemporary International Relations**

**\*\* WEEK 12/13: REQUIRED CONSULTATION WITH UNO SPEECH CENTER\*\***

Week 12: Tuesday, November 7

China-Latin American relations

- Evan Ellis, *China in Latin America: The Whats and Wherefores*, Chapters 1-2
- “Taiwan Works to Keep Its Central America Friends (Among Its Few),” *The New York Times* (January 13, 2017)
- “Panama cuts ties with Taiwan in favour of China,” BBC News (June 12, 2017)

Russia, India, Iran, the EU-Latin American relations

- Woodrow Wilson Center, “Iran in Latin America: Threat or ‘Axis of Annoyance?’”
- Evan Ellis, “The New Russian Engagement with Latin America”

**\*Guest talk from Marlina Davidson of the UNO Speech Center**

Week 13: Tuesday, November 14

Contemporary geoeconomics and Latin America

- Smith, Chapters 9-10
- J. F. Hornbeck, “U.S.-Latin America Trade: Recent Trends and Policy Issues” (pp. 205-214)
- Evan Ellis, “The New Strategic Environment of the Trans-Pacific – A US Perspective”

Week 14: Tuesday, November 21

- **Student Presentations**

Week 15: Tuesday, November 28

- **Student Presentations**

Week 16: Tuesday, December 5

- **Student Presentations**

Summary and conclusions

- Smith, Chapters 15-16
- Michael J. LaRosa and Frank O. Mora, “By Way of Conclusion” (pp. 343-346)