Political Science 695-003
Pro Seminar: Gender, Race, and Sexuality in Latin American Politics
Professor Christina Ewig
Fall 2013
Mondays 1:20-3:15PM, Ingraham 224

Professor Information:
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Office Hours: Wednesdays and Thursdays 11:00AM-12:00PM

Course Description:
Three women lead Latin American countries today and there are more women in most Latin American congresses than in the US Congress. In Bolivia, a massive social movement of indigenous peoples brought that country’s first indigenous president to power in 2006, while in several countries in the region indigenous peoples have the right to reserved seats in their countries’ parliaments. Meanwhile, in this traditionally Catholic and socially conservative region, LGBT activists have achieved equal rights in the new constitutions of Ecuador and Bolivia and same sex marriage rights in Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay. At the same time, in other countries in the region, sexual and reproductive rights have been rolled back (Nicaragua and El Salvador) while racism against afro-decent and indigenous peoples remains a stumbling block for these groups’ advancement. What explains the rise of these new political actors in the Latin American region? How do their paths to power compare – across groups and across countries? And why do we see so many contradictions across the region – with some countries embracing greater equalities while others are stagnant or are moving backwards? This undergraduate capstone seminar will offer students an opportunity to begin to answer these questions through an in-depth exploration of the politics of gender, race and sexuality in Latin America in a small class environment. The course will begin with background on how gender operates in Latin America, distinct attitudes toward sexuality, and how understandings of race in this region contrast with conceptions of race in the United States. We will then compare and contrast the different strategies used by women, indigenous peoples and LGBT activists to obtain political power, including social movement action and their distinct paths to formal political representation.

Prerequisites: Open to Juniors and Seniors in the Political Science major. Others may enroll by consent of instructor. Background or interest in Latin America is useful.

Honors/Writing Intensive: This is an honors credit and writing intensive course. You will write three, 3-4 page analytical papers that reflect on the readings for a particular day. You will also write a 20-page research paper that will be work-shopped over the course of the seminar with your peers in the class.

Format: This is a seminar; each week will be a class discussion of the readings of the week and/or work-shopping of student research papers. There will not be a formal lecture. In a seminar, the success of the class depends on students keeping up with the
readings, and coming to class ready to engage with the readings and with each other. The more you engage with the course materials, and your peers, the more we all learn, and the more you are able to shape the course around your insights and interests. The reading load for this course is about 100-130 pages per week.

**Special Needs:** I wish to include fully any students with special needs in this course. Please let me know if you need any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or evaluation procedures in order for you to participate fully. The McBurney Center provides useful assistance and documentation regarding physical, learning, sensory, or psychological disabilities: 263-2741, 263-6393 (TTY); 1305 Linden Drive or www.mcburney.wisc.edu. If you have a “visa” from the McBurney Center for special accommodations I will need a photocopy of this so that I know how best to support you.

**Books:** The required texts are available at A Room of One’s Own Bookstore, 315 W. Gorham St. Tel: 608-257-7888. (Books are also on reserve at College Library.)


de la Dehesa, Rafael. 2010. *Queering the Public Sphere in Mexico and Brazil: Sexual Rights Movements in Emerging Democracies.* Durham: Duke University Press.


*Because Roberta Rice’s book is still in hardcover, it is costly. Therefore, I have arranged for you to receive a 20% discount if you order directly from the publisher. Go to [www.uapress.arizona.edu](http://www.uapress.arizona.edu) and enter the promotion code FLR to receive a 20% discount on that book.*

**Articles/Book Chapters:** Articles and chapters are on the course Learn@UW site.

**Assignments & Evaluation:**

30% Participation
30% 3 Analytic Response Papers (10% each)
40% Final Research Paper

**Participation:** Participation includes active contributions in class, attentive listening to your peers, discussion with your peers (not just me), and responses that demonstrate an active engagement with the readings and lectures. An atmosphere of respect for differing views is expected. Some people find it hard to participate. If you are having trouble participating, come see me, and we can talk about strategies to help you feel more comfortable. Regular attendance will count toward your class participation grade based on the logic that if you are not in class, you are not participating. Since we meet only once a week, missing a day means you miss a lot. Try to attend every class meeting. By the same token, just warming a seat will earn you only a C for participation; active engagement is crucial.

**Religious Holidays:** Absence due to observance of a religious holiday will not be counted as an absence. Students who will miss class due to religious holidays must
inform me during the first two weeks of class whether they will miss class during the semester for religious reasons.

Analytic Response Papers: You will write 3 analytic response papers of 3 to 4 double spaced pages each over the course of the semester. You may choose when to write them, but one must be in September, another in October, and the last one in November. Your paper should do four things: 1) understand descriptively the major points of each reading – that is, clearly recap the main theses; 2) critically engage with the readings (e.g. does the author present a convincing argument? Is the evidence sound? Is the methodology appropriate? Is there a blind spot in the author’s reasoning?); 3) relate the argument of at least one reading to the other readings for the day (e.g. how does it build on or respond to the other readings?); OR discuss how the reading relates to broader scholarly traditions (e.g. is this an institutionalist or pluralist approach and why might that matter?); OR discuss how the reading relates to other readings from previous class meetings (e.g. how does this author’s argument on women’s movements compare to another’s on indigenous movements?); 4) raise 3 effective questions for discussion. These should be a mix of both clarification questions – e.g. how do cultural and biological approaches to race differ? And substantive questions – e.g. what factors are most important for getting gender equality policies on the political agenda? Effective questions help us to better understand the new ideas, improve our critical thinking skills, and generate debate. Papers will be graded on both content (does the paper include all four required elements? how well are these executed?) and on writing (is the paper clear, organized, with topic sentences and free of surface errors?).

These essays are due by 9PM the night before class and posted on Learn@UW, in the discussion area (as an attachment please, not pasted). This is so all of us can read the essays prior to coming to class. I encourage you to read your peers’ essays, as they will serve as a launching point for discussion for all of us.

Final Research Papers: You will write a 20-page research paper on a topic of your choosing related to the class material. Your paper should identify a research question related to gender, race or sexuality in Latin American politics. You may focus on one or compare two countries. Examples of topics include: the rise and fall of the Pachakutik indigenous party in Ecuador; the politics of the approval of same-sex marriage in Argentina; Uruguay’s recent legalization of first trimester abortions; the incorporation of LGBT rights into the Ecuadoran and Bolivian constitutions; a comparison of gender quota laws and their impact in two countries, Afro-Brazilian political organizing… you get the idea! The paper will present a literature review of the scholarly work relevant to the topic, and demonstrate at least some original research that addresses the central research question. You will work on this paper throughout the semester, and should identify a topic early. We will be work-shopping the papers in class throughout the semester starting with 1) your research question presented in 2-3 pages, consisting of a draft introduction leading up to the central question DUE October 6; 2) a revised question and literature review DUE November 18. This should be about 8 to 10 pages and present the revised research question, review the key literature and outline the sources you have started to use for your original research; 3) your final paper due Friday, December 13.
**Writing Center:** I encourage you to visit the campus writing center for help on writing your papers. The Center offers workshops, handouts, and consultations with writing instructors. Stop by 6171 Helen C. White, call for an appointment (263-1992), or consult the Center’s resources online at [http://www.writing.wisc.edu/](http://www.writing.wisc.edu/).

**Late, Missed or Incomplete Work:** Since analytic response papers are intended to generate class engagement, **late response essays will not be accepted and you are expected to be in class the day you turn in a response essay**. If you cannot turn a response paper in on time, or cannot make class that day, choose another day to write your response essay. If you do not come to class, the paper will not count. Final research papers will be downgraded 3 percentage points on a scale of 100 for each day they are late.

**A note on cheating and plagiarism:** DON’T DO IT. If you feel a need to cheat or plagiarize, come see me before you do, and we can talk about other ways to succeed in the class. If you are caught attempting to represent someone else’s work as your own or cheating in any other manner you will be subject to university discipline under rules published by the Board of Regents (UWS 14). If you have any questions regarding University policy, or what constitutes plagiarism, you can refer to the University Code of Conduct at this website: [http://www.wisc.edu/students/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html](http://www.wisc.edu/students/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html).

The writing center also provides a guide on proper acknowledgement of sources. If you are at all unsure of how to properly use sources, to avoid plagiarism please download and read this guide, available at this link: [http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/Acknowledging_Sources.pdf](http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/Acknowledging_Sources.pdf).

**Final grades** will be determined according to the following official UW grading scale:

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<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>88-92</td>
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If you have questions about a grade, please talk to me!

**Schedule of Readings & Assignments:**
I suggest that you read the readings in the order that they are listed on the syllabus – they are organized logically. All readings listed are required, unless it is specifically marked as optional.

*I reserve the right to modify this schedule of readings and assignments as needs arise in the class.*

**PART I: CONTEXTS AND MEANINGS**

**September 9: Organizational Meeting**
In class: introductions, explanation of syllabus, brief lecture with general background on Latin America.

**September 16: Conceptions of Gender and Sexuality in Latin America**
September 23: The Meanings of Race in Latin America


PART II: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

September 30: Women’s Movements
In class: will assign partners for critiquing research questions.


October 7: Indigenous Movements
*Research Questions Due Sunday 7PM!
In class: discussion of half of the research questions.


October 14: Indigenous & Women’s Movements Tensions and Intersections
In class: discussion of other half of the research questions.


October 21: Afro-Latin American and Indigenous Movements Compared (Colombia)


**October 28: LGBT Movements**


**PART III: FORMAL POLITICS**

**November 4: Women and Formal Political Power**


**November 11: Indigenous Peoples and Formal Political Power**

In class: form trios for critique of research paper drafts.


November 18: Institutionalizing the Politics of the LGBT Movement
*Revised research questions and literature reviews due - bring 3 copies.

• De la Dehasa, Rafael. 2010. *Queering the Public Sphere in Mexico and Brazil: Sexual Rights Movement in Emerging Democracies.* Durham: Duke University Press. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

November 25: Paper workshop

• Before class: Read the draft introductions and literature reviews of your two partners. Prepare comments on content, writing, and provide ideas for sources.

• In class: Paper trios to constructively critique each other’s papers. Optional sign up for paper meetings with the professor.

December 2: Day to advance on research and writing of papers.

• Optional meetings on papers with me in my office. Sign-up in advance.

December 9: Paper Presentations in class.

• Short presentations of final paper findings. Class to provide feedback for final draft.

December 13: Final Research Papers due