LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS
Political Science 630
Fall 2014
Tues & Thurs 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM, Ingraham 120

Professor Christina Ewig
Office: 3301 Sterling Hall
Office Hours: Tuesdays 3:30-4:30PM
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Overview: This course will provide the student with a theoretical basis for understanding the challenges of economic and political development in Latin America and an overview of the major political issues faced by the region from the mid-20th century to the present. The course is designed comparatively around three pairs of Latin American countries: two Central American (Guatemala and Nicaragua), two Southern Cone (Argentina and Chile) and two Andean (Peru and Bolivia). As we cover each pair, we will survey the major political issues of the region, including identifying the factors that lead to successful or failed revolutions; the impact of US influence on the politics of the region; the rise of populism and “neo-populism”; the institutional and economic factors behind political instability; the reasons for the rise of military dictatorships in the 1980s; democratization and democratic consolidation in the 1990s and 2000s; and the political economies of neoliberalism and extractivism. As we cover these major issues, we will be attentive to the roles of the state, political institutions, political parties, and civil society. Specific groups in civil society that we will focus on include workers’ unions, women’s organizations and indigenous movements.

Prerequisites: This is an upper-level Political Science course. You must have sophomore standing to register. No prior knowledge of Latin America is necessary. Some prior exposure to comparative politics concepts may be useful.

Texts: 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.)


On-Line Articles and Chapters (OL): Additional readings are posted on the course Learn@UW webpage. These are marked “OL” on the syllabus.

Reserve: Books and films are also on reserve at College Library, Helen C. White.

Learn@UW: In addition to readings, I will post hand-outs and Power Point lecture slides on Learn@UW after each lecture. You can access Learn@UW from the UW home page.

Special Needs: I wish to include fully any students with special needs in this course. Please let me know if you need 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 to best serve you.

**Evaluation:** Your final grade will be based on the following:
In Class Participation: 15%
Midterm Exam: 25% - October 23
Research Paper: 30% - November 20
Final Exam: 30% - December 14

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

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
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<td>AB</td>
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<td>F</td>
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If you have questions about a grade, please talk with me.

**Participation:** This semester this course is unusually small, giving us an opportunity to have more discussion. Moreover, academic discussion is a critical skill for you to practice. Your participation will be evaluated based on the *quality* of your verbal commentary in class.

What do I mean by quality? Here is a rough guide to quality participation, from worst to best:

1) no participation: did not participate in discussion;
2) good participation: answered a question when directly asked or volunteered an item for a board list;
3) better participation: asked a question, participated in small groups discussion, voluntarily offered an interpretation of an event or reading or voluntarily offered a summary of a reading;
4) best participation: advanced the conversation by building on the efforts of your peers, brought two comments or articles in conversation with each other, helped clarify a confusing text or claim, offered to play the devil’s advocate.

In order to create a *climate* in which everyone can participate, please follow these discussion guidelines:

- Ask me or another student for clarification on any point or term you do not understand or are unfamiliar with.
- Be ready to share and explain your opinions. Thorough completion of readings will ensure that you are prepared to share your viewpoint.
- Listen carefully and respond to other members of the class. This includes allowing others an opportunity to add to the discussion. Be willing to change your mind when someone demonstrates an error in your logic or use of the facts.
- Feel free to disagree with others, but be specific in your own assertions and back them up with evidence.
- Make your point succinctly.

I will be taking rough notes on your participation each class, based in the quality scale above, and factoring in attendance (see below). I will ask you to self-assess your participation grade midway through the course. I will then provide you with my midterm assessment. You will then be able to adjust your performance accordingly.

**Attendance:** In lectures I will cover material not covered in the readings, and which will be essential for exams. It is therefore in your interest to attend. Moreover, attendance is part of your participation grade. You cannot participate in the conversation if you are not present for it. Participation grades will be figured to allow you one absence without penalty. Any absences beyond one may affect your participation grade. If you notify me within 12 hours before class or after class that you will be unable to attend, I *may* waive any missed-class penalty.
Absence due to religious holidays will not be counted as an absence, but need to be cleared with me during the first two weeks of class. If you are truly sick, please don’t come to class and do notify me. Excessive absences from lectures, defined as more than half of all class meetings without satisfactory explanation, constitute grounds for a failing grade for the course (“F”) regardless of the grades of other work completed for the course.

**Exams:** The in-class midterm and the final will consist of essay questions and short answers. Essay questions will be distributed in advance; half of these questions will appear on the exam. Mastery of both the lecture material and the assigned readings will be necessary for the exams. *If an exam is missed, I will need an acceptable, documented excuse (such as a medical excuse) before a make-up exam will be granted. Un-excused absences from exams will result in a grade of “zero” for that exam.*

**Research Paper:** The research paper will focus on a particular political question or problem in one Latin American country. The country OR the problem, however, must be substantially different from any that are already covered on the syllabus. You might, for example, focus in President Rafael Correa in Ecuador – a country we don’t cover in the course – and draw on theories of populism covered in the course materials to analyze the populism of Correa’s government. Or, you might focus on a problem not covered in the class, but a country we do cover. For example, you could write a paper on Michele Bachelet, and whether her first Presidency of Chile made a substantive difference for women in that country. Although comparisons to other countries can be used in your paper to enrich your understanding of the country or problem, the paper should primarily focus on one country. The final paper will be 10 to 12 double-spaced pages. You will submit it in the following steps: 1) research question and initial bibliography; 2) revised question, literature review, and extended bibliography; 3) draft to share with peers for peer review; 4) final paper. You will need to turn in each piece on their appropriate due date or lose 5 percentage points per day late from your final paper grade. A component shall be considered a day late if it is not received by me within one hour of the normal deadline. Your grade will be based on your final paper, minus points for late work on any previous component. A paper-writing guide that outlines specific paper writing expectations, including reference requirements and grading criteria will be distributed in class and on Learn@UW. In addition, a list of library sources for papers on Latin America will be posted on Learn@UW.

**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 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).

**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://writing.wisc.edu/](http://writing.wisc.edu/).
Schedule of Assignments:
The course is divided into five units. The questions that appear below the title of each unit or day are intended to help provide focus as you complete the required readings. Sometimes they also relate to the major themes or questions that will be raised in lecture that day.

I. History & Theories of Development
This section provides a broad overview of historical trends in the Latin American region and the basic theories of development. The questions we will address include: How do we explain “underdevelopment” in Latin America? What are the main components of “modernization theory”? How would a “dependency theory” theorist explain underdevelopment? What are the relative merits of cultural versus structural theories of development and underdevelopment?

Tuesday, September 2: Introduction
• Vanden and Prevost Chapter 1

Thursday September 4: Major Concepts and Historical Background
• Vanden and Prevost Chapters 2 and 3

Tuesday, September 9: Theories of Economic & Political Development

II. Comparative Revolutions in Guatemala and Nicaragua: What Accounts for Success and Failure?
What leads to a successful revolution? In this unit we explore this question through comparison of Nicaragua and Guatemala and an introduction to the major theories of revolution. A key issue will be the role of the US in each country’s political history. We also consider the role of civil society groups such as organized women, students, the Catholic Church and indigenous groups in revolutions. Finally, we will assess these countries’ politics today in relation to each country’s past revolutionary struggles, including the contemporary migration crisis.

Thursday September 11: A Theory of Revolution and the Failed Case of Guatemala
What are the origins of political revolution? What elements in Guatemala’s history, economy and politics helped to foment revolutionary movements? The chapter by McClintock is assigned to give you an overview of theories of revolution. Put those ideas to work as you read about Guatemala and Nicaragua throughout this unit.
• Vanden and Prevost Chapter 20 “Guatemala”.

Tuesday, September 16: Guatemala: US Intervention & Human Rights
What was the role of the US in Guatemalan political development? Do cultural, structural or other kinds of theories (e.g. state-centric) better help us to understand Guatemala’s reality?
Thursday, September 18: Guatemala: Peace Process and Beyond

Research Country, Question and Initial Bibliography Due

What is the state of Guatemalan politics today? Readings and lecture will give a sampling of some current issues.

In Class: Visit By Feminist Activist from Nicaragua, Juanita Jiménez

Tuesday, September 23: Nicaragua: Somoza’s Dictatorship, Revolution & Counter-Revolution

What was the role of the US in Somoza political history? Why did revolution succeed in Nicaragua, but not in Guatemala? What groups in civil society were key actors in supporting the revolution?
- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 21, “Nicaragua”.

Thursday, September 25th: Gangs and Crime in Central America

What are the historical, political and structural factors behind the violence in some Central American countries today? Why is Nicaragua relatively peaceful in comparison to Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras?

Tuesday September 30th: Understanding the Central American Child Migration Crisis

How can the political histories of Central America help us to understand the contemporary child migration crisis?
- OL Enrique’s Journey (as written originally for the LA Times): http://www.pulitzer.org/works/2003-Feature-Writing Read each link.

Thursday, October 2 : Nicaragua: Sandinismo, Then and Now

What difference did a revolution make? Compare the politics of the first and second Sandinista administrations.

In Class: Visit By Feminist Activist from Nicaragua, Juanita Jiménez

III. Democratic Incorporations and Military Crackdowns: Argentina & Chile

In this unit we turn to two Southern Cone countries. We trace their historical processes of gradual democratization, cut short by brutal military interventions. We explore the phenomenon of populist incorporations and its relationship to political instability. We also learn theories that attempt to explain the rise of military dictatorships in the Southern Cone. Finally, we begin to consider the issue of human rights raised by these regimes.

Tuesday, October 7: Argentina: History and the Rise of Peronist Populism

What is populism? How was Perón a “populist”? What was the significance of Perón’s leadership in Argentina?
- Vanden and Prevost Chapter 13 “Argentina”.
- Begin reading The Little School (pp. 1-63).

Thursday, October 9: Argentina: a “Bureaucratic Authoritarian” Dictatorship

Revised Research Question, Literature Review and Extended Bibliography Due

According to O’Donnell, what factors lead to Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism? How did Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism play out in the Argentine case? What does the rise of the military in Latin America indicate for
modernization theory? Can you differentiate the characteristics of the Somoza military regime and the Argentine one? Be prepared to discuss The Little School in class.

- Finish reading The Little School.

Tuesday October 14: Chilean Socialism: The Allende Government
What were the visions and goals of Chile’s Socialist government? How did the structure of Chilean political institutions, such as the party system and presidential system, contribute to political instability? Did Allende’s economic policies contribute to his government’s demise? What role did the US play in the overthrow of President Allende?

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 15, “Chile”.

Thursday October 16: Chile: The Pinochet Dictatorship
What made the Pinochet military regime distinctive from its counterparts in Argentina or Central America? What implications did this regime have for the daily lives of Chileans?


Tuesday October 21: Debt and Structural Adjustment
Chile was the first in Latin America to implement “neoliberal” economic policies, a model that was followed across the region and promoted by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. In class, I will lecture on neoliberal structural adjustment and the role of the IMF and the World Bank. Your readings focus on Chile. What were the implications of neoliberal economic and social policies for Chile’s economy and for its people?


Thursday October 23: MIDTERM (Covers Material through Oct 16)

IV. Transitions to Democracy and Transitional Justice: Argentina and Chile
In this unit we cover theories of transition from military to democratic rule, and apply these in a comparison of Argentina and Chile. We also focus on a key political group from civil society in transition politics: organized women. This unit also further delves in the issue of human rights, especially as human rights relate to transition politics.

Tuesday, October 28: Comparing the Argentine and Chilean Transitions
How do we define democracy? How and why did Latin America shift from military to civilian governments? How do the Chilean and Argentine transitions compare? Your reading by Loveman covers Chile, I will lecture on Argentina.


Thursday October 30: Women in Transition Politics in Argentina and Chile
Why did women play a critical role in transition politics? Your reading and the film shown in class focuses on Argentina. I will also briefly lecture on the role of women in the Chilean transition.

In Class: Screening of “Las Madres de Plaza de Mayo”.

Tuesday November 4: Human Rights & Transitional Justice in Argentina and Chile

Peer Paper Reading Groups Assigned

What are the challenges to maintaining democracy in Latin America? Should past military leaders be granted amnesty or be prosecuted for abuse of human rights? What has been the effect of “truth commissions” on democratic consolidation?


V. Peru & Bolivia: Majority Indigenous Nations with Distinct Political Trajectories

These Andean nations both have majority indigenous populations; but one has a strong indigenous movement and the other lacks such a movement. While our focus will be figuring out the reason for this distinction, along the way we will revisit some old themes, in new packages – such as the unusual revolutionary movement of the Shining Path in Peru and the resurgence of populism. We also explore the renaissance of the Left in Bolivia.

Thursday November 6: Peruvian Background/ the Shining Path

Paper Drafts due to Peer Group Members in Class

In class I will provide brief historical background on Peru and we will then focus on its civil war with the Shining Path in the 1980s. What made the Shining Path different from other rebel groups in Latin America that we have studied in this course? What factors made this particular kind of movement possible in Peru?


* Land and Water Conference on Fri & Sat at the Law school will include specialists on Latin America*

Tuesday November 11: Peer Review of Paper Drafts

Come to class having read your peers’ papers. Be ready to provide constructive feedback in small groups.

Thursday November 13: Fujicoup and Fujipopulism

President Fujimori was elected in 1990 with two major challenges: an economic crisis and a major insurgent threat. How did he deal with these issues? How did President Fujimori fit and not fit the term “populist” that we previously applied to Perón of Argentina? In lecture, we will also ask: was Peru under Fujimori a democracy or a dictatorship?


Tuesday November 18: Post-Fujimori Peru: Human Rights and Transitional Justice

The post-Fujimori years have brought broad changes in politics. Is Peru today more democratic? What makes “transitional justice” distinctive in this case?


Thursday November 20: Bolivia’s Radical History

*PAPERS DUE IN CLASS TODAY*

What is distinctive about Bolivia’s political, economic and social history? Lecture will focus on this country’s radical political history to better understand the roots of contemporary politics.
Tuesday Nov. 25: The First Indigenous President: Evo Morales in Bolivia

“Evo” is Bolivia’s first indigenous president. What factors led to this remarkable feat? What difference (if any) has an indigenous president made for Bolivia?


Thursday November 27: THANKSGIVING, NO CLASS

Tuesday December 2: The Puzzle of Indigenous Movements: Comparing Bolivia & Peru

*Why, historically, has Bolivia had such an active indigenous movement, but Peru has not? In lecture we will consider whether this is still the case today.*


Thursday December 4: From Movements to Parties: Ethnic Parties

*Are indigenous movements necessary for formal political representation of indigenous peoples?*


Tuesday December 9: Struggles over Extractivism in Peru and Bolivia.

*The last decade has been an economic boom in Latin America, largely as a result of extractive industries. What consequences has this had for government-indigenous relations in Peru and Bolivia? Does it matter that Bolivia has an indigenous president?*


December 11: Course Wrap-up

**FINAL EXAM: SUNDAY December 14, 12:25-2:25PM LOCATION TO BE ANNOUNCED**