Political Science 962  
Latin American Politics Graduate Seminar  
Fall 2014  
Fridays 1:20-3:15PM, Sterling 3304  

Professor Christina Ewig  
Office Hours: Tuesdays 3:30-4:30 & by appointment  
Office: 3301 Sterling Hall  
E-Mail: cewig@wisc.edu  
Phone: 262-9622

Overview: This course is intended to provide a graduate-level introduction to the principal issues in the study of Latin American politics. The course readings include classic works that provide students with grounding in the trajectory of the field while linking these to contemporary debates. The course is organized thematically, attempting to capture a range of significant themes in Latin American politics. Of course, no course can ever cover all the important themes. Nor does the course pay sufficient attention to individual country experiences. Yet, country-level knowledge is essential. For this reason, students are encouraged to read outside the course to familiarize themselves with the historical and contemporary empirical realities of specific Latin American countries.

Requirements: This course combines intensive study of the literature with training in research. Given that most ideas for research come from discussions of existing literature, these two tasks should be seen as symbiotic. Thus, the core graded aspects of the course: seminar participation, reaction papers and research paper all work together.

1) Seminar Participation  
Each student is expected to attend and participate in every seminar. The success of any seminar depends on the efforts that students put into it. In order to have stimulating classroom discussions, we must all do the required readings prior to class and come prepared with comments and questions. The recommended readings are intended to give you a sense of where to start, should you desire more information on a given topic. My job as an instructor is to provide contextual background, yours is to provoke and create discussion and debate based on careful, critical reflections of the readings. When completing the readings, consider questions like: What is the theoretical contribution? How does it compare to similar works in the same field in terms of contribution or theory? What is useful about this particular methodological approach? How might it contrast with another approach to the same topic? What kind of evidence does the author use, is it appropriate to the question and is it convincing? Is the selection of variables appropriate? Do the comparisons add to the argument, or would it benefit from comparison? Is the argument historically accurate? You should come to class prepared with at least one discussion question or comment per article or book chapter assigned.

2) Weekly Reaction Papers  
During the course of the semester, each student must write a total of five reaction papers. Reaction papers should be 3-5 pages in length (double spaced). They should begin with a succinct summary of the readings followed by briefly placing the readings into the broader
context of academic literature (e.g. relating to previous readings or knowledge from other courses and readings). They should then critically discuss the central arguments by highlighting the theoretical contributions, methodological approaches, and evidence and evaluate the overall strengths and weaknesses of the articles or book. Each paper – most importantly - should also raise questions for discussion. Papers should be posted as an attachment on the course Learn@UW site (discussion module) by the Friday of class by 9AM.

3) More Reaction Papers OR a Final Research Paper OR a Review Paper

Students may choose to write either: a) five additional reaction papers (total of 10); b) a research paper; or c) a review paper. In the case of the research paper, it should focus on some aspect of Latin American politics. This 20-30 page paper (double spaced, one-inch margins) should reflect independent research, and should connect to the student’s own research ambitions, e.g. related to a MA thesis, dissertation, conference paper, or article. The paper should center on a theoretical puzzle, outline its case selection, and advance its argument with convincing evidence and analysis. In the case of the review paper, this is a paper modeled on substantive reviews found in such journals as the Latin American Research Review, or on occasion, World Politics and Comparative Politics. A review paper will review four to five books on a given theme and go beyond summary to analysis. For an example see:


In either case, topics are to be chosen in consultation with the instructor. To facilitate this decision, a brief abstract and preliminary bibliography (2-3 pages) is due October 10. The final paper is due the last day of class, December 12.

Grading
Final paper: 45%
Reaction papers: 25% (5% each)
Seminar Participation: 30%

Required Books:


Optional Books:

We will be reading several chapters of the following books, so you may want to purchase a copy, though scanned copies of the chapters will be posted on Learn@.


Pribble, Jennifer. 2013. Welfare and Party Politics in Latin America. New York: Cambridge University Press. (This will be released in paperback in October)


Required books have been ordered at A Room of One’s Own Bookstore, 315 W. Gorham St. Tel: 608-257-7888. I have placed the library link next to most articles for easy storage in your Zotero or other reference manager software. Chapters are scanned and uploaded to the course Learn@UW site.

September 5: Introduction: Studying Latin American Politics


September 12: Development: Modernization Approaches


September 19: Development: International Economic System Approaches


Recommended:


**September 26: State Formation and Capacity**


• Soifer, Hillel. Book Manuscript, *State Building in Latin America.* Chapters 1-4 (On Learn@UW)

**October 3: Democratization: Short, Long and Middle-Range Explanations**

*You should be familiar with O’Donnell & Schmitter and Reuschemeyer, Huber and Stephens – which represent classic short and long-term approaches to democracy respectively. I expect our discussion to center on Mainwaring et. al.*


(This is essentially a summary of Reuschemeyer, Huber and Stephens 1992, for those who have not read it.)


**Recommended:**


**October 10: Hybrid Regimes and Authoritarianism**  
- Paper Abstracts and Initial Bibliography Due -


  [http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_democracy/v024/24.3.levitsky.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_democracy/v024/24.3.levitsky.html)


**Recommended:**
• Schedler, Andreas. 2006. *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner. Chapter 1 “The Logic of Authoritarianism” (pp. 1-23 by Andreas
Schedler) and Chapter 13 “Beyond Electoral Authoritarianism: The Spectrum of Non-Democratic Regimes” (pp. 219-231 by Richard Snyder).


October 17: Market Reforms


Recommended:
• Articles by Huber and Solt; Weyland; Walton assessing neoliberalism in *Latin American Research Review*. 2004 39(3).

**October 24: Political Parties and Party Systems**


**Recommended:**


October 31: Social Movements and Civil Society


• Simmons, Erica. “Water, Community and Privatization in Cochabamba, Bolivia” article manuscript. (on Learn@)


• Díez, Jordi. 2013. “Explaining Policy Outcomes The Adoption of Same-Sex Unions in Buenos Aires and Mexico City.” *Comparative Political Studies* 46 (2): 212–35. [http://cps.sagepub.com.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/content/46/2/212](http://cps.sagepub.com.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/content/46/2/212)

Recommended:
• Keck, Margaret and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*.

November 7: NO CLASS. ATTEND THE LAND AND WATER CONFERENCE Friday and Saturday at the Law School.

November 14: Ethnic Politics: From Social Movements to Parties


November 21: Gender, Representation and Policy


Recommended:


### November 28: Thanksgiving Break

### December 5: Poverty, Social Policy and Inequality


**Recommended:**

### December 12 The State of the Field

* Papers Due in Class*