

## **GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS IN LATIN AMERICA (POL236)**

**Time:** Mon. & Wed. 12:30-1:45pm

**Classroom** Kirby 109

**Instructor:** Mart Trasberg, [trasbem@wfu.edu](mailto:trasbem@wfu.edu)

**Office Hours:** Thursday 11am-1pm or by Appointment, Kirby 308

### **Course Description and Objectives**

This is an introductory lecture course to the politics and political economy of Latin America. It examines the dynamics of political, economic and social change in Latin America. The course will provide a combination of empirical exploration of different countries and a variety of explanations for the general processes of change across the region. We would not be treating Latin America as a whole, but explore and explain variation across countries. Why did Southern Cone countries develop different patterns of inequality, economic development and political systems than Andean countries, Central America and Mexico? Which factors explain other early success stories in development and democracy in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, such as Costa Rica and Venezuela?

The course is divided into two overarching modules. The first module focuses on historical and macrostructural patterns of development in Latin America. We will be covering the role the colonialism, racial inequality, ethnicity, civil conflict, and early state development. We will examine Latin American politics from the rise of industrialization and populism in the 1930s and 1940s to the collapse of democracy and establishment of military regimes in the 1960s and 1970s, to the return of democracy in the 1980s and the economic liberalization of the 1990s. We also look at the developmental and distributional effects of major economic ideologies, such as Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI) and neoliberalism.

The second part centers on the more contemporary scene, focusing on the institutions and development challenges of Latin American new democracies. By the 1990s, democracy had taken root in most of the countries in the region. We review pressing contemporary issues, such as unequal state capacity, differing policy agendas of left and right wing governments, political violence, income inequality, corruption, clientelism, discrimination, and the promise of participatory institutions. We also analyze the advantages and drawbacks of particular policies that governments have put in place to mitigate inequalities in recent decades. Lastly, we finish the course by analyzing the distributional effects and government responses to COVID-19 pandemic in Latin America.

### **Learning Outcomes**

After completing this course, students should be able to:

1. Have a good understanding of historical development issues of Latin America and comprehension of the most pressing political, social and economic challenges faced by Latin American nations today.
2. Discuss, evaluate and compare the different arguments in the Latin American literature about phenomena such as colonialism, state development, populism, ISI, authoritarianism, democratization, neoliberalism, political representation, clientelism, corruption, criminal violence and the resurgence of the left.
3. Discuss, evaluate, and compare different solutions (e.g. government policies) that have been proposed to address the issues of inequality, poverty and lacking political representation in Latin America.

### **Grading (and weighting in final grade):**

1. **Active, informed participation** in class discussion and debates; attendance, and any reading quizzes will be counted towards this total (15%). I expect all students to come to class having read the assigned reading for the day and ready to comment and/or ask questions. Remember, no question is too small or too obvious. Chances are your classmates will be wondering the same thing.
2. **Two short papers** of 900 words on topics to be assigned by the instructor (20% each, altogether 40%). Prompts will be posted on Canvas and more specific information is provided two weeks before papers are due (see course schedule). Papers must be submitted via Canvas by 9:00 PM on the due date and should be saved and uploaded in MS Word .docx format as, for example, SMITH\_RP1. Each response paper should be double-spaced and no longer than 900 words. It is the responsibility of the student to submit a readable file. Each paper must include the word count on the top right-hand corner. The student's name, course title, and headings are excluded from the word count. Points will be deducted for all late assignments!
3. In-class **midterm examination** (20%). This exam will consist of a mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions. More information about this exam will follow in the first few weeks of class.
4. **Final examination**, covering the material from the second half of the course (25%).

**Letter grades** are determined on the following scale: A: 92 – 100, A-: 90-91, B+: 88-89, B: 82-87, B-: 80-81, C+: 78-79, C: 72-77, C-: 70-71, D+: 68-69, D: 62-67, D-: 60-61, F: 59 and below.

**Canvas:** Class logistics will be managed via Wake Forest Canvas system. All announcements, assignments, readings, relevant course materials, presentations for the lectures, etc. will be posted on Canvas (<https://canvas.wfu.edu/>). Canvas will be updated regularly, and students are responsible for checking any posted announcements, updates, materials, etc.

**Readings:** All course reading is expected to have been completed by the class session in which that material is listed on the syllabus. Readings will be available on Canvas under Files tab. The amount of weekly reading for this class is significant and the expectation is that you will take the time to reflect carefully on each reading. When you read an article or book chapter, think about

the following questions: What's the main argument? Do you believe it? Why? Why not? Is the evidence presented convincing?

**Attendance policy:** Regular attendance is required. I will mark you as absent if you attend class but cannot or will not participate or are obviously unprepared. If absences, tardiness, or under-preparation becomes a problem, your participation grade will suffer. Students are permitted two absences over the course of the semester. Any additional absence for non-medical reason or other emergency justification will result in the subtraction of one whole point out of your final grade. For medical/other emergency absence, you will need to provide a signed note justifying your absence.

**Make-Up Exams:** Students should make every effort to take exams with the rest of the class. Make-up exams will only be given if the student is absent from the exam because of a university-approved activity or an emergency. For university-approved activities: I require advance notice that you will not be taking the exam. For emergencies: I will require verification of the reason behind the absence. Make-up exams will be scheduled at my discretion and may take a very different form from the exams given in class.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism or cheating in any way, shape, or form will NOT be tolerated and accepted. If you are caught cheating or plagiarizing, the minimum penalty is an "F" in this class. Abiding by the Honor Code gives us all an opportunity to practice the kind of integrity that will inform our work in this class and beyond. For more information, please consult WFU's Honor Code and Student Code of Conduct:

<https://studentconduct.wfu.edu/undergraduate-student-handbook/honor-code-and-conductsystem/>

**Laptops:** The policy of the Department of Politics and International Affairs is that laptop computers only be used in classrooms for note taking and other academic purposes as designated by the instructor. Individual faculty members further reserve the right to ban computer use in their courses, should this policy be violated.

### **Course Schedule**

*\*Readings and assignment dates are subject to change. I will inform students of any changes in the syllabus.*

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNED READINGS
August 23 (Mon)	Introduction	No reading
August 25 (Wed)	Dilemmas of Development in Latin America	Kingstone, Peter. 2011. <i>The Political Economy of Latin America: Reflections on Neoliberalism and Development</i> . New York: Routledge, Chapter 1.

		Sánchez-Ancochea, Diego. 2020. <i>The Costs of Inequality in Latin America</i> . Bloomsbury, Chapters 1-2.
August 30 (Mon)	Colonial Roots of Development and Inequality	Lange, Matthew, James Mahoney, and Matthias vom Hau. 2006. "Colonialism and Development: A Comparative Analysis of Spanish and British Colonies." <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> , 111(5): 1412-1444.
September 1 (Wed)	Patterns of Post-Colonial State Development	Centeno, Miguel Angel. 1997. "Blood and Debt: War and Taxation in Nineteenth-Century Latin America." <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> , 102 (6): 1565-1605.
September 6 (Mon)	Ethnic Diversity and Development	Lieberman, Evan. 2001. "National Political Community and the Politics of Income Taxation in Brazil and South Africa in the 20th Century." <i>Politics &amp; Society</i> . 29(4): 515-555.
September 8 (Wed)	Corruption and Weak States	Movie: <i>La ley de Herodes</i> (1999), Mexico
September 13 (Mon)	Theories of Development in Latin America	Valenzuela, J. Samuel and Arturo Valenzuela. 1978. "Modernization and Dependency: Alternative Perspectives in the Study of Latin American Underdevelopment." <i>Comparative Politics</i> 10(4): 535-557.  Higginbottom, Andy. 2013. "The Political Economy of Foreign Investment in Latin America: Dependency Revisited", <i>Latin American Perspectives</i> , Vol. 40 (3), pp. 184-206.
September 15 (Wed)	Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI)	Kingstone, "Chapter 2: Import-Substitution Industrialization and the Great Transformation in Latin America."  Hira, Anil. 2007. "Did ISI fail and is neoliberalism the answer for Latin America? Re-assessing common wisdom regarding economic policies in the region?" <i>Revista de economia política</i> , Vol.27 (3), pp. 345-356

September 20 (Mon)	Democracy and Political Incorporation <b>Short Essay 1 due</b>	<p>Smith, Peter. 2012. <i>Democracy in Latin America: Political Change in Comparative Perspective</i>. Oxford University Press. Ch. 1, “Cycles of Electoral Democracy”: 19-42.</p> <p>Conniff, Michael. 1999. “Chapter 1: Introduction.” In Michael Conniff (ed.): <i>Populism in Latin America</i>. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press: 1-21.</p> <p>Basurto, Jorge. 1999. “Chapter 4: Populism in Mexico.” In Michael Conniff (ed.): <i>Populism in Latin America</i>. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press: 86-90.</p>
September 22 (Wed)	Political Incorporation II	Yashar, Deborah. 1997. <i>Demanding Democracy: reform and reaction in Costa Rica and Guatemala, 1870s-1950s</i> . Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
September 27 (Mon)	Breakdown of Democratic Regimes	<p>Valenzuela, Arturo. 1978. <i>The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes</i>. Chapters 2 -4.</p> <p>TBD</p>
September 29 (Wed)	Authoritarian regimes in Latin America & Democratization	<p>Schamis, Hector. 1991. “Reconceptualizing Latin American Authoritarianism in the 1970s”, <i>Comparative Politics</i> 23(2): 201-220.</p> <p>O'Donnell, Guillermo and Phillippe C. Schmitter. 1986. <i>Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies</i>. John Hopkins University Press. Pp 5-41.</p>
October 4, (Mon)	Market Reforms and Neoliberalism	<p>Kingstone, “Chapter 3: Neoliberalism and its Discontents.”</p> <p>Weyland, Kurt. 1998. “Swallowing the Bitter Pill.” <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> 31(5): 539- 68.</p>
October 6, (Wed)	NO CLASS	
October 11, (Mon)	Mid-term Review	

October 13, (Wed)	MIDTERM	
October 18, (Mon)	Economic Growth, Poverty and Inequality	<p>Haggard, Stephan and Robert Kaufman. 2008. "Development, Democracy, and Welfare States: Latin America, East Asia, and Eastern Europe. Princeton University Press, Ch. 1-4.</p> <p>Fishlow, Alfred. "Commodity Booms and Growth in Latin America" Working Paper.</p>
October 20 (Wed)	Weakness of Political Institutions	<p>Mainwaring, Scott, and Christopher Welna. 2003. <i>Democratic Accountability in Latin America</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Ch. 1,</p> <p>Brinks, Daniel, Steven Levitsky and Victoria Murillo. 2019. <i>Understanding Institutional Weakness: Power and Design in Latin American Institutions</i>. Cambridge University Press. Ch. 1-3.</p>
October 25 (Mon)	Presidentialism in Latin America	<p>Hochstetler, Kathryn. 2006. "Rethinking Presidentialism: Challengers and Presidential Falls in South America." <i>Comparative Politics</i> 38(4): 401-418.</p> <p>Pérez-Liñán Aníbal. 2018. "Impeachment or Backsliding? Threats to democracy in the twenty-first century." <i>Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais</i> 33(98): 1-14.</p>
October 27 (Wed)	Corruption	<p>Winters, Matthew S., and Rebecca Weitz-Shapiro. 2013. "Lacking information or condoning corruption: When do voters support corrupt politicians?" <i>Comparative Politics</i> 45(4): 418-436.</p> <p>Sugiyama, Natasha Borges. "Pathways to Citizen Accountability: Brazil's Bolsa Família." <i>Journal of Development Studies</i> 52.8 (2016): 1192-1206.</p>
November 1 (Mon)	Social Policy and Inequality I	<p>Díaz-Cayeros, Alberto, and Beatriz Magaloni. 2009. "Aiding Latin America's Poor." <i>Journal of Democracy</i>, 20(4): 36-49.</p> <p>Sugiyama, Natasha Borges, and Hunter, Wendy. 2020. "Do CCTs Empower Women? Lessons from</p>

		Brazil's Bolsa Família." <i>Latin American Politics and Society</i> 62.2: 53-74.
November 3 (Wed)	Clientelism	<p>Stokes, Susan, Thad Dunning, Marcelo Nazareno, and Valeria Brusco. <i>Brokers, Voters, and Clientelism: The Puzzle of Distributive Politics</i>. Cambridge University Press, 2013, Ch. 1-3.</p> <p>Auyero, Javier. 2000 "The logic of clientelism in Argentina: An ethnographic account." <i>Latin American research review</i> 35(3): 55-81.</p>
November 8 (Mon)	Criminal Violence	<p>Schedler, Andreas. "The Criminal Subversion of Mexican Democracy," <i>Journal of Democracy</i>, Volume 25, Number 1, January 2014, pp. 5-18.</p> <p>Brinks, Daniel. 2006. "The Rule of (Non) Law: Prosecuting Police Killings in Brazil and Argentina." In <i>Informal Institutions and Democracy: Lessons from Latin America</i>. Ed. Gretchen Helmke and Steven Levitsky. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP.</p> <p>"Losing Faith in the State, Some Mexican Towns Quietly Break Away." <i>New York Times</i>, Jan 7, 2018.</p>
November 10 (Wed)	New Types of Political Participation: Ethnic Politics	Madrid, Raúl. 2016. "Obstacles to Ethnic Parties in Latin America." In Levitsky, Steven, James Loxton, Brandon Van Dyck, and Jorge I. Domínguez, eds. <i>Challenges of Party Building in Latin America</i> . New York: Cambridge University Press.
November 15 (Mon)	<p>New Types of Political Participation: Women, Politics, and Policy</p> <p><b>Short Essay 2 due</b></p>	<p>Leslie Schwindt-Bayer. 2018. "The Gendered Nature of Democratic Representation in Latin America" In <i>Gender and Representation in Latin America</i>. Oxford, pp. 245-259.</p> <p>Rubio, Julia. "This is why Argentina did not legalize abortion this week." <i>Washington Post</i> (August 11, 2018).</p> <p>Díez, Jordi. 2015. <i>The Politics of Gay Marriage in Latin America: Argentina, Chile, and Mexico</i>.</p>

		Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: Ch 1 and 4.
November 17, (Wed)	The Pink Tide	Kingstone, "Chapter 4: The Two Lefts and the Return of the State"  Levitsky, Steven and Roberts, Kenneth. 2011. "Latin America's 'Left Turn': A Framework for Analysis." In Steven Levitsky and Kenneth M. Roberts (eds.). <i>The Resurgence of the Latin American Left</i> . Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press: 1-28.
November 22 (Mon)	The Political Economy of Natural Resources	Corrales, Javier and Michael Penfold. <i>Dragon in the Tropics: Hugo Chavez and the Political Economy of Revolution in Venezuela</i> . Brookings Latin America Initiative. 2010. Ch 1-4.
November 24 (Wed)	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	
November 29 (Mon)	Backsliding Democracy in Latin America	Steven Levitsky. 2018. "Democratic Survival and Weakness" <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 29 (4): 102-113.
December 1 (Wed)	Final Exam Review	
Dec. 6: Mon 2pm	FINAL EXAM	