



Government and Politics of
Latin America
POL 453
Fall 2018
MW, 3-4:15pm, FH 509

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Department of Political Science & Sociology

Credit Hours: 3

1 Government and Politics of Latin America

2 Course Description and Prerequisite(s):

The dynamics of change in the political systems of Latin America, focusing on the problems and patterns of political and economic development.

Prerequisite(s): None

3 Course Objectives

By the end of the semester the student should be able to do the following.

- A. Understand the historical development of Latin America
- B. Analyze the political and economic development of the region in the last century
- C. Utilize political science and political economy theories to grasp democratization, authoritarianism, and economic changes in the region's transition

4 Course Outline

This course will help orient students with major theories of comparative politics—including democratization, party politics, authoritarian regimes, and political economy—to better understand the politics of Latin America. Comparative politics is both a field and a method used to analyze differences in the domestic structures between countries. Comparative politics helps us answer grand questions and debates, such as: *Why do some countries democratize while others remain oppressed under a dictator?*; *Why do some countries remain persistently underdeveloped?*; and *Which factors explain to the variability in the development of political institutions?* We will address these debates within the field by exploring Latin America and its evolution over time. The Latin American experience has generated a microcosm of our theories of political

development from which we can analyze the rise of authoritarianism to the “Third Wave of Democratization” in the 1980s-1990s. We will also see how theories of development influenced the economic progression of Latin America, including its close relationship with Marxist theories and the more recent rise—and social conflict—surrounding neoliberal transition.

The topics of this course are quite diverse, and I aim to explore a great deal in the course of the semester. However, before we can begin exploring the region, we need to know how to engage in this analysis scientifically. As such, we explore the basic concept of political science, including examining the “science” behind political science, early in the semester. We will then explore specific themes within Latin America including the struggle for independence, the emergence of the Golden Age of Free Trade, the region’s struggles with coups, the “Third Wave of Democratization”, resurgence of liberalism, social movements, and a more critical analysis of indigenous and women’s issues.

5 Field, Clinical, and/or Laboratory Experiences: None

6 Text(s) and Resources

There is one required text for this course. Please be sure to get it as soon as possible. In addition to the one required text, there will be additional required readings.

- Vanden, Harry E. and Gary Prevost. 2017. *Politics of Latin America: The Power Game*, 6th Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

Additional readings will be made available on the course’s *Canvas* site. It is important to note that the readings are to supplement the lectures, and therefore, they are not identical to the lectures. It is the responsibility of the student to read all of the necessary materials as well as to attend each lecture. Both the readings and lectures are fair game for exams.

7 Evaluation and Grading Procedures

Students’ grades will be comprised of three main parts. The first part is made up of three exams (two during the semester and a final), with **each** exam worth 20% of the student’s final grade. The exams are not cumulative *per se*, but there are some foundational items that we will discuss earlier in the semester that will be applied in subsequent sections.

The second part of students’ grades is class participation, which will comprise 15% of the final grade. I will evaluate your performance in this course based on your performance in weekly discussions. Students will each be asked to pick a week in which they will serve as discussion leader (more on this later). Additionally, during discussions, I want to see that students are actively engaging in the readings, addressing discussion leaders’ questions, commenting on others’ statements, and not simply restating previous comments. Readings will be assigned each week, and it is the responsibility of the student to read these materials *before* each lecture.

The final part of students’ grades is a final paper worth 25% of final grades. More details on this paper will be given later, but this grade will be spread across a paper proposal, first submission, and a final draft. Breaking up the paper in this way will help students keep up with the assignment and avoid rushing a paper together at the end.

No curve will be given in this course; the grade you earn is the grade you receive. I will use the following grading scale in this course:

Grade Components:

Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Exam 3	20%
Class Participation/Discussion Leader	15%
Final Paper	25%

A (Excellent): 90-100%

B (Good): 80-89%

C (Satisfactory): 70-79%

D (Poor): 60-69%

E (Failure): 0-59%

8 Attendance Policy

Your attendance grade will be based upon your participation in class discussions. Class participation is dependent upon you being in class, actively listening to others, and, perhaps most importantly, your performance as discussion leader. This means that you are actively listening to others' comments, providing thoughtful discussion, and demonstrating that you have been doing the readings as they are assigned. If you do miss class, please make sure you make alternative arrangements to receive the material you missed.

Discussion Leader:

I want this course to be a mixture of lecture and structured discussion. As class is only two days a week, I will reserve a portion of most Wednesday classes as a structured discussion. Students will each sign up for a week based on their interest in the week's topic and availability. On that week, students will lead a discussion on the week's topic and the corresponding reading. I will have a more detailed assignment guide on *Canvas*, but the bulk of the assignment will require discussion leaders to have closely read the material and provide thoughtful questions that will lead classmates in a thoughtful discussion. Other students will be required to make comments based on these questions that will progress discussion forward and not simply echo others' statements. If an unforeseen emergency occurs on the day that you are to be discussion leader, you will need to take the initiative to meet with me to make alternative arrangements (and provided that it is an excused absence in which you provide written documentation).

Make-up Exams:

Unforeseen emergencies do occur. Only approved absences will be accepted for an alternative exam date. This includes University-sanctioned events or illness. If either occurs, I require written documentation of the absence. **This documentation is required within one week of the exam/discussion leader date. After that, the grade will be marked as a zero. No exceptions!** Keep in mind that alternative/make-up exams may be of a different format than the original exam provided on test day. Without appropriate documentation, the student will receive a **zero** for the exam. **No exceptions.**

9 Classroom Conduct

Students are to be respectful of both other students and the instructor. To be respectful of others, please refrain from talking or whispering during class time. Any inappropriate or disruptive

behavior by a student may result in the student being asked to leave the classroom and a reduction in the student's overall grade. Be respectful of one another and each other's ideas.

Electronics Policy: Studies have found that handwritten notetaking is better for the retention of information than taking notes on a computer or other electronic device. Further, electronic devices provide a great disturbance to other students, and at times, the instructor. **Therefore, students will not be allowed to use electronic devices in this course, which includes laptops, tablets, or phones.** This is to ensure that all students have access to lecture material without interruption or disturbance from others. Please ensure that your phones are placed on silent *before* class starts, and all other electronics are turned off. If you are seen using any of these devices, you will automatically lose points for your participation grade, regardless of current performance in the course. If you have an extenuating circumstance or need some accommodation for usage of an electronic device, please see me before or after class so we can make alternative arrangements.

10 Academic Honesty Policy

Murray State University takes seriously its moral and educational obligation to maintain high standards of academic honesty and ethical behavior. Instructors are expected to evaluate students' academic achievements accurately, as well as ascertain that work submitted by students is authentic and the result of their own efforts, and consistent with established academic standards. Students are obligated to respect and abide by the basic standards of personal and professional integrity.

Violations of Academic Honesty include:

Cheating - Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized information such as books, notes, study aids, or other electronic, online, or digital devices in any academic exercise; as well as unauthorized communication of information by any means to or from others during any academic exercise.

Fabrication and Falsification - Intentional alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification involves changing information whereas fabrication involves inventing or counterfeiting information.

Multiple Submission - The submission of substantial portions of the same academic work, including oral reports, for credit more than once without authorization from the instructor.

Plagiarism - Intentionally or knowingly representing the words, ideas, creative work, or data of someone else as one's own in any academic exercise, without due and proper acknowledgment.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the accuracy of your material, please see me immediately! It is best to come have a conversation with me before an assignment is due, than to wait until afterwards and risk disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to the following:

- 1.) Requiring the student(s) to repeat the exercise or do additional related exercise(s).
- 2.) Lowering the grade or failing the student(s) on the particular exercise(s) involved.

- 3.) Lowering the grade or failing the student(s) in the course.

If the disciplinary action results in the awarding of a grade of E in the course, the student(s) may not drop the course.

Faculty reserve the right to invalidate any exercise or other evaluative measures if substantial evidence exists that the integrity of the exercise has been compromised. Faculty also reserve the right to document in the course syllabi further academic honesty policy elements related to the individual disciplines.

A student may appeal the decision of the faculty member with the department chair in writing within five working days. Note: If, at any point in this process, the student alleges that actions have taken place that may be in violation of the Murray State University Non-Discrimination Statement, this process must be suspended and the matter be directed to the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Access. Any appeal will be forwarded to the appropriate university committee as determined by the Provost.

Students are prohibited from selling notes or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the express written permission of the instructor. Do not engage in any of the websites or companies that sell or distribute notes. This will be considered a form of academic dishonesty, and further administrative actions will be pursued if necessary.

11 Non-Discrimination Policy and Students with Disabilities

Murray State University endorses the intent of all federal and state laws created to prohibit discrimination. Murray State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, veteran status, or disability in employment or application for employment, admissions, or the provision of services and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal access to participate in all programs and activities.

In particular and without limiting the preceding and pursuant to and consistent with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its regulations 34 CFR 100 et seq.; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its regulations 34 CFR 104; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 USC 1681 et seq., and its regulations 34 CFR 106 et seq; and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and its regulations 34 CFR 110, Murray State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its educational programs and activities. This non-discrimination in education programs and activities extends to employment and admissions and to recruitment, financial aid, academic programs, student services, athletics, and housing. Murray State is required by Title IX and 34 CFR part 106 not to discriminate on the basis of sex and the prohibition against sex discrimination specifically includes a prohibition of sexual harassment and sexual violence.

For information regarding nondiscrimination policies contact the Executive Director of IDEA/Title IX Coordinator, Camisha Duffy, Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Access, 103 Wells Hall, Murray, KY 42071. Telephone: 270-809-3155 (Voice) 270-809-3361 (TDD).

Statement Addressing Students with Disabilities

Students with Disabilities: Students requiring special assistance due to a disability (temporary or permanent) should visit the Office of Student Disability Services immediately for assistance with accommodations. For more information, students with disabilities should contact the Office of Student Disability Services, Ken Ashlock, 423 Wells Hall, Murray, KY 42071. Telephone: 270-809-2018 (Voice) 270-809-5889 (TDD).

I am a member of a Safe Zone Project and I am available to listen and support you in a safe and confidential manner. As a Safe Zone participant, I can help you connect with resources on campus to address problems you may face that interfere with your academic and social success on campus as it relates to issues surrounding sexual orientation and gender identity. My goal is to help you be successful and to maintain a safe and equitable campus. For more information, visit the Office of LGBT Programming at 243 Blackburn Science Building or online at www.murraystate.edu/lgbt.

Weekly Schedule:

The following outline should be considered tentative. I research the right to change the syllabus as I see fit. Any and all changes will be announced in advance, both in class and electronically. Please keep up to date with Canvas, and check your University email often to be aware of any changes that occur.

<i>Tentative Weekly Schedule</i>	<i>Content</i>
Week 1: Aug 15 Introduction to Course	Purpose: First, we will briefly discuss how to make valid causal statements to develop generalizable theories about the political world. Second, we will discuss some of the basics of studying Latin American politics. Reading: Ch. 1 “An Introduction to Twenty-First Century Latin America”
Week 2: Aug 20, 22 Early History	Purpose: We will explore the early history of Latin America, focusing on colonization and its long-term effects for the political and economic development of the region. Reading: Ch. 2 “Early History”
Week 3: Aug 27, 29 The Struggle for Independence	Purpose: This week we will explore Latin America’s difficult transition to independence from their Iberian colonizers. We will also discuss the case of independence in Mexico with the rise of Porfirio Díaz, who shaped Mexico’s struggle for democracy for the next one hundred years. Reading: Ch. 3 “Democracy and Dictators” (pp. 43-55)
Week 4: Sept 3, 5 Marxism and Dependency Theory	No class Monday, Sept 3: Labor Day Purpose: This week we will discuss how Marxist ideologies permeated Latin America’s political economy in the 20th century. This includes a discussion of the tenets of Dependency Theory and how it drove the economies of the region to Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI) for many decades before crumbling under the weight of high unemployment and hyperinflation. Reading: Ch. 7 “The Political Economy of Latin America” (pp. 157-166)

Week 5: Sept 10, 12 Authoritarianism and Democratic Transitions	<p>Purpose: This week we will explore the intense dichotomy of authoritarianism and democracy in the region. Why were there so many military juntas in the 1960s and 1970s? Why were some states particularly prone to military coups? What caused the rapid downfall of dictators and the strong wave of democratization in the 1980s and 1990s?</p> <p>Reading: Ch. 3 “Democracy and Dictators” (pp. 55-71)</p>
Week 6: Sept 17, 19 Exam 1	<p>Monday, Sept 17 - Review</p> <p>Exam 1: Wednesday, Sept 19</p>
Week 7: Sept 24, 26 The Rise of Neoliberalism	<p>Purpose: While we previously discussed how Marxist ideology took hold in the region, and continues to influence many countries to this day, we will see how the failure of socialist economies and the intervention of international financial organizations generated an environment for neoliberal restructuring. This discussion will then lead us to a discussion of the double-edged sword of having expert technocrats developing policy with limited accountability.</p> <p>Reading: Ch. 7 “The Political Economy of Latin America.” (pp. 166-188)</p>
Week 8: Oct 1, 3 Social Movements in Latin America	<p>Purpose: We will take the information that we explored last week and apply it to social movements in Latin America. We will focus on nonviolent social movements, how they form, evolve, and develop networks with international actors.</p> <p>Reading: Arce, Moises and Paul Bellinger. 2007. “Low-intensity Democracy Revisited: The Effects of Economic Liberalization on Political Activity in Latin America.” <i>World Politics</i> 60(10): 97-121.</p>
Week 9: Oct 8, 10 Presidentialism	<p>Purpose: This week we will explore the strength of Latin American presidents, especially in the legislative arena through the power of decree. This will lead us into next week’s discussion about the usurpation of power from legislators and traditional parties.</p> <p>Reading: Linz, Juan J. 1990. “The Perils of Presidentialism.” <i>Journal of Democracy</i>.</p>
Week 10: Oct. 15, 17 Legislative Politics and Parties	<p>Purpose: This week we will discuss the nature of legislative politics in Latin America and how powerful presidents compromise the system of checks and balances we associate with democratic rule. We will also discuss the basic tenets of political parties including how existing theories of political party formation in Europe may not transfer fully in the case of Latin America. Why are Latin American parties so different from other regions? When do parties develop to serve constituent concerns?</p> <p>Reading: Cox, Gary W. and Scott Morgenstern. 2001. “Latin America’s Reactive Assemblies and Proactive Presidents.” <i>Comparative Politics</i>.</p>

Week 11: Oct 22, 24 Indigenous Rights	<p>Purpose: We will explore the issue of representation of indigenous populations, including their historical struggle for rights and their recent organization into powerful social movements throughout the region. We will also connect information from last week on political parties to better understand how these social movements have been successful in forming competitive parties in some systems while being electorally unsuccessful in other environments.</p> <p>Reading: Ch 4 “The Other Americans”</p>
Week 12: Oct 29, 31 Exam 2	<p>Monday, Oct 29 - Review</p> <p>Exam 2 on Wednesday, October 31</p>
Week 13: Nov 5, 7 Women’s Rights	<p>Purpose: This week we will explore the various dimensions in which women have overcome historical struggles to become influential actors in the political world. From a discussion of the rise of women presidents in South America to a feminist analysis of the weakness of gender quotas in achieving complete substantive representation of women, we will discuss the evolution of women’s participatory rights in the region.</p> <p>Reading: Schwindt-Bayer, Leslie. 2006. “Still Supermadres? Gender and Policy Priorities of Latin American Legislators.” <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 50(3): 570-585.</p>
Week 14: Nov 12, 14 Case Study of Chile	<p>Purpose: Our first analytical case study is Chile. This exploration will combine our discussion of the influence of Marxism, coups and dictatorships, and the impact of social movements in the democratization process.</p> <p>Reading: Ch 15 “Chile.”</p>
Week 15: Nov 19, 21 Case Study of Venezuela	<p>No class Wed, Nov 21: Thanksgiving Break</p> <p>Purpose: Our second case study is Venezuela. This case hits on a few important topics that we have discussed earlier in the semester, including: how a neoliberal economic structure caused rapid development that just as quickly fell to a socialist restructuring; how this restructuring influenced politics throughout South America; and how former President Hugo Chávez developed populist party structures. While we will discuss Chávez’s rise to power, we will also see how his inability to institutionalize a competent party system has threatened his revolution after his passing.</p> <p>Reading: Chapter 17 “Venezuela.”</p>
Week 16: Nov 26, 28 Venezuela (con’t)	<p>Finish our discussion of Venezuela after Chávez.</p>
Final Exam	Final Exam Date: TBD