

Latin American Politics

Instructor: Patrick Cunha Silva

Class Meetings:
Tuesdays and Thursdays
10-11:30 AM
Seigle L003

Office Hours:
Wednesdays, 10-12pm
Seigle 255
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Course Description

This course focuses on Latin American politics after the democratization of the region in the 1980s. We will not devote each week to one specific country. Instead, we will study topics and issues that are common to countries in the region. Specifically, we will explore the effects of political institutions on representation, governability, parties, and elections. We will also learn about the changes in political orientation and policies that occurred in the period. Lastly, we will also examine social and political issues, such as violence and corruption. After taking this class, students should be able to answer questions like “Why are there more female legislators in some Latin American countries than in others?”, “Does the colonial legacy affect Latin America today?”, “What led voters in Latin America to elect left-wing presidents in the early 2000s?”

This course is an introduction to different topics in Latin American politics. Hence, it does not require any background knowledge about the region.

Course Requirements

Participation: Students are encouraged to participate actively. Participation will be judged based on your engagement in discussions and questions asked/answered. Participation will be worth 10% of your total grade.

Quizzes: Almost every week, we will do a short quiz at the beginning of class. Questions included in the quizzes will be T/F and multiple-choice. Quizzes will cover the assigned reading for the day. Your three worst scores will be discarded. The remaining quiz scores will be worth 15% of your total grade.

Response Papers: Each student is expected to submit two response papers during the semester. These papers must contain a critical summary of three of the articles assigned in a specific week. Apart from the critical summary, students should pay particular attention to the following questions when writing their essays:

- Is the argument believable?
- What evidence has convinced you? Or, what evidence would convince you?
- Do the readings raise questions that are not addressed?

Each response paper will be worth 25% of your total grade (50% in total). Your topics will be randomly assigned to you on the second day of class. Response papers are due at the beginning of

class on Thursdays.

Exams: We will have two exams. Exams will contain T/F, multiple-choice, short, and long essay questions. The first exam will come after week seven, and the second one will be at the end of the semester. The first exam will cover content from weeks 1 to 7, and the second exam will cover the remaining weeks. Each exam will be worth 12.5% of your final grade (25% in total).

Course Policies

Attendance: I will not take attendance for this class. However, I want to emphasize that your attendance will affect your final grade, given that 25% of your grade is composed of participation and quizzes.

Late Assignments: Late assignments will not be accepted. If you have any conflict related to your due dates for your response papers, please let me know at the beginning of the semester.

Use of Technology: The use of cell phones and tablets is not allowed. Students can use their laptops only to take notes or when asked to do so by the instructor. Any use of technology that does not follow this policy will count against your participation grade.

Students with a disability: Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation must submit a letter from the office of Disability Resources indicating the need for accommodation and its type. Students must submit this letter during the first three weeks of class.

Religious observances: Students who anticipate that a religious observance will conflict with their participation should contact me in the first two weeks of class to arrange an accommodation.

Grading

Letter grades will be assigned using the following scale (in %):

A : ≥ 94	B+: ≥ 87	C+: ≥ 77	D+: ≥ 67	F: ≤ 60
A-: ≥ 90	B: ≥ 83	C: ≥ 73	D: ≥ 63	
	B-: ≥ 80	C-: ≥ 70	D-: ≥ 60	

Course Readings

Students are expected to do the readings before the lecture. Readings will be available via Canvas. Readings were chosen based on theoretical motivation as much as current events.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Democracy in Latin America

- Tuesday:
 - Class introduction
 - Munck, Gerardo. “The Origins and Durability of Democracy.” In: *Routledge Handbook of Latin America Politics*. (2015).

- Thursday:
 - Przeworski, Adam. “The mechanics of regime instability in Latin America.” *Journal of Politics in Latin America* 1, no. 1 (2009): 5-36.
 - Mainwaring, Scott, and Aníbal Pérez-Liñán. “Lessons from Latin America: Democratic breakdown and survival.” *Journal of Democracy* 24, no. 2 (2013): 123-137.

Week 2: Historical Legacy

- Tuesday:
 - Buonanno, Paolo, and Juan F. Vargas. “Inequality, crime, and the long run legacy of slavery.” *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 159 (2019): 539-552.
- Thursday:
 - Guardado, Jenny. “Office-selling, corruption, and long-term development in Peru.” *American Political Science Review* 112, no. 4 (2018): 971-995.
 - Osorio, Javier, Livia Isabella Schubiger, and Michael Weintraub. “Legacies of resistance: mobilization against organized crime in Mexico.” *Comparative Political Studies* (2019)

Week 3: Executives and Legislatures

- Tuesday:
 - Morgenstern, Scott, John Polga-Hecimovich, and Sarah Shair-Rosenfield. “Tall, Grande, or Venti: Presidential Powers in the United States and Latin America.” *Journal of Politics in Latin America* 5, no. 2 (2013): 37-70.
- Thursday:
 - Cheibub, José Antonio, Zachary Elkins, and Tom Ginsburg. “Beyond presidentialism and parliamentarism.” *British Journal of Political Science* 44, no. 3 (2014): 515-544.
 - Arnold, Christian, David Doyle, and Nina Wiesehomeier. “Presidents, policy compromise, and legislative success.” *The Journal of Politics* 79, no. 2 (2017): 380-395.

Week 3: Electoral Rules and their Consequences

- Tuesday:
 - Crisp, Brian F., and Patrick Cunha Silva. “Electoral Systems and System Reforms in Latin America.” In: *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. (2020).
- Thursday:
 - Crisp, Brian, and Rachael E. Ingall. “Institutional engineering and the nature of representation: Mapping the effects of electoral reform in Colombia.” *American Journal of Political Science* (2002): 733-748.
 - Motolinia, Lucia. “Electoral Accountability and Particularistic Legislation: Evidence from an Electoral Reform in Mexico.” *American Political Science Review* 115, no. 1 (2021): 97-113.

Week 4: Political Parties

- Tuesday:
 - Rosas, Guillermo. “The ideological organization of Latin American legislative parties: An empirical analysis of elite policy preferences.” *Comparative Political Studies* 38, no. 7 (2005): 824-849.
 - Harbers, Imke, Catherine E. de Vries, and Marco R. Steenbergen. “Attitude variability among Latin American publics: how party system structuration affects left/right ideology.” *Comparative Political Studies* 46, no. 8 (2013): 947-967.
- Thursday:
 - Lupu, Noam. “Brand dilution and the breakdown of political parties in Latin America.” *World Politics* 66, no. 4 (2014): 561-602.
 - Cohen, Mollie J., Facundo E. Salles Kobilanski, and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister. “Electoral volatility in Latin america.” *The Journal of Politics* 80, no. 3 (2018): 1017-1022.

Week 5: Clientelism and Elections

- Tuesday:
 - Holland, Alisha C., and Brian Palmer-Rubin. “Beyond the machine: Clientelist brokers and interest organizations in Latin America.” *Comparative Political Studies* 48, no. 9 (2015): 1186-1223.
- Thursday:
 - Hidalgo, F. Daniel, and Simeon Nichter. “Voter buying: Shaping the electorate through clientelism.” *American Journal of Political Science* 60, no. 2 (2016): 436-455.
 - Cantú, Francisco. “Groceries for votes: The electoral returns of vote buying.” *The Journal of Politics* 81, no. 3 (2019): 790-804.

Week 6: Distributive Politics and Elections

- Tuesday:
 - De La O, Ana L. “Do conditional cash transfers affect electoral behavior? Evidence from a randomized experiment in Mexico.” *American Journal of Political Science* 57, no. 1 (2013): 1-14.
 - Corrêa, Diego Sanches. “Conditional cash transfer programs, the economy, and presidential elections in Latin America.” *Latin American Research Review* (2015): 63-85.
- Thursday:
 - Bueno, Natália S. “Bypassing the enemy: Distributive politics, credit claiming, and nonstate organizations in Brazil.” *Comparative Political Studies* 51, no. 3 (2018): 304-340.

Week 7: Corruption and Elections

- Tuesday:
 - Ferraz, Claudio, and Frederico Finan. “Electoral accountability and corruption: Evidence from the audits of local governments.” *American Economic Review* 101, no. 4 (2011): 1274-1311.
- Thursday:
 - Davis, Charles L., Roderic Ai Camp, and Kenneth M. Coleman. “The influence of party systems on citizens’ perceptions of corruption and electoral response in Latin America.” *Comparative Political Studies* 37, no. 6 (2004): 677-703.
 - Zechmeister, Elizabeth J., and Daniel Zizumbo-Colunga. “The varying political toll of concerns about corruption in good versus bad economic times.” *Comparative Political Studies* 46, no. 10 (2013): 1190-1218.

Week 8: Mid-Exam, State v. Market

- Tuesday:
 - *Mid-Term Exam*
- Thursday:
 - Flores-Macías, Gustavo A. “Statist vs. pro-market: Explaining leftist governments’ economic policies in Latin America.” *Comparative Politics* 42, no. 4 (2010): 413-433.
 - Biglaiser, Glen. “Mandate and the market: policy outcomes under the left in Latin America.” *Comparative Politics* 48, no. 2 (2016): 185-204.

Week 9: Redistribution and Taxation

- Tuesday:
 - Morgan, Jana, and Nathan J. Kelly. “Market inequality and redistribution in Latin America and the Caribbean.” *The Journal of Politics* 75, no. 3 (2013): 672-685.
 - Fairfield, Tasha, and Candelaria Garay. “Redistribution under the right in Latin America: Electoral competition and organized actors in policymaking.” *Comparative Political Studies* 50, no. 14 (2017): 1871-1906.
- Thursday:
 - Castañeda, Néstor, David Doyle, and Cassilde Schwartz. “Opting out of the social contract: Tax morale and evasion.” *Comparative Political Studies* 53, no. 7 (2020): 1175-1219.

Week 10: The Rise and Fall of The Pink Tide

- Tuesday:
 - Murillo, María Victoria, Virginia Oliveros, and Milan Vaishnav. “Electoral revolution or democratic alternation?.” *Latin American Research Review* (2010): 87-114.
 - Remmer, Karen L. “The rise of Leftist–Populist Governance in Latin America: the roots of electoral change.” *Comparative Political Studies* 45, no. 8 (2012): 947-972.

- Thursday:
 - Rhodes-Purdy, Matthew, and Raúl L. Madrid. “The perils of personalism.”” *Democratization* 27, no. 2 (2020): 321-339.
 - Rennó, Lucio R. “The Bolsonaro voter: Issue positions and vote choice in the 2018 Brazilian presidential elections.” *Latin American Politics and Society* 62, no. 4 (2020): 1-23.

Week 11: Violence and Crime

- Tuesday:
 - Trejo, Guillermo, and Sandra Ley. “Why did drug cartels go to war in Mexico? Subnational party alternation, the breakdown of criminal protection, and the onset of large-scale violence.” *Comparative Political Studies* 51, no. 7 (2018): 900-937.
 - Marston Jr, Jerome F. “Resisting displacement: Leveraging interpersonal ties to remain despite criminal violence in Medellín, Colombia.” *Comparative Political Studies* 53, no. 13 (2020): 1995-2028.
- Thursday:
 - Magaloni, Beatriz, Edgar Franco-Vivanco, and Vanessa Melo. “Killing in the slums: Social order, criminal governance, and police violence in Rio de Janeiro.” *American Political Science Review* 114, no. 2 (2020): 552-572.
 - Magaloni, Beatriz, and Luis Rodriguez. “Institutionalized Police Brutality: Torture, the Militarization of Security, and the Reform of Inquisitorial Criminal Justice in Mexico.” *American Political Science Review* 114, no. 4 (2020): 1013-1034.

Week 12: Gender Equality in Latin America

- Tuesday:
 - Jones, Mark P. “Gender quotas, electoral laws, and the election of women: Evidence from the Latin American vanguard.” *Comparative Political Studies* 42, no. 1 (2009): 56-81.
 - Barnes, Tiffany D., and Abby Córdova. “Making space for women: explaining citizen support for legislative gender quotas in Latin America.” *The Journal of Politics* 78, no. 3 (2016): 670-686
- Thursday:
 - Schwindt-Bayer, Leslie A. “Still supermadres? Gender and the policy priorities of Latin American legislators.” *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 3 (2006): 570-585.
 - Blofield, Merike, and Michael Touchton. “Moving Away from Maternalism? The Politics of Parental Leave Reforms in Latin America.” *Comparative Politics* 53, no. 1 (2020): 1-27.

Week 13: Racial and Ethnic Representation

- Tuesday:
 - Van Cott, Donna Lee. “Indigenous peoples’ politics in Latin America.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 13 (2010): 385-405.
 - Mähler, Annegret, and Jan H. Pierskalla. “Indigenous identity, natural resources, and contentious politics in Bolivia: a disaggregated conflict analysis, 2000-2011.” *Comparative Political Studies* 48, no. 3 (2015): 301-332.
- Thursday:
 - Bueno, Natália S., and Thad Dunning. “Race, resources, and representation: evidence from Brazilian politicians.” *World Politics* 69, no. 2 (2017): 327-365.
 - Johnson, Marcus. “Electoral discrimination: The relationship between skin color and vote buying in Latin America.” *World Politics* 72, no. 1 (2020): 80-120.

Week 14: The US and Latin America

- Tuesday:
 - Weyland, Kurt. “Limits of US influence: The promotion of regime change in Latin America.” *Journal of Politics in Latin America* 10, no. 3 (2018): 135-164.
 - New York Times, “President Accused of Fraud in Bolivia Election as He Opens Big Vote Lead.” Available at: <https://nyti.ms/3jZ1rhn>.
 - New York Times, “A Bitter Election. Accusations of Fraud. And Now Second Thoughts.” Available at: <https://nyti.ms/3xRcqhr>.
- Thursday:
 - Biglaiser, Glen, and Joseph L. Staats. “Do political institutions affect foreign direct investment? A survey of US corporations in Latin America.” *Political Research Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (2010): 508-522.
 - Benton, A.L. and Philips, A.Q., 2020. Does the @realDonaldTrump really matter to financial markets?. *American Journal of Political Science*, 64(1), pp.169-190.

Week 15: The Future of Democracy in LA and Final Exam

- Tuesday:
 - New York Times, “Latin America Is Facing a ‘Decline of Democracy’ Under the Pandemic” Available at: <https://nyti.ms/3yGYQ1w>
- Thursday:
 - *Final Exam*.