**Government and Politics in Latin America**

Spring 2016

Course #: 50:790:311:01

Mondays and Wednesdays 1:20-2:40pm

Rutgers University – Camden

Room: FA-110

Dr. Maureen M. Donaghy

Office: Room 109, 401 Cooper St.

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesday, 11:00-12:00 and by appointment

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**Course Description:**

This course provides a critical review of key events and concepts in modern Latin America. During the semester we will study the modern political history of the region, specifically focusing on social science explanations for economic, political and social challenges. We will then examine the process of democratization and the connections between democracy and development in Latin America. We will consider the path of political parties and institutions in the region and investigate innovations in governance in Latin America and the future for democratization and development in the region. Throughout the course, case studies will highlight current national challenges in the context of regional politics.

**Required Readings:**

*Comparative Politics of Latin America: Democracy at Last?* Second Edition, by Daniel C. Hellinger, (Routledge Press, 2015).

Articles linked through the syllabus or posted on the course Sakai site will be posted throughout the semester.

**Blogs and other Websites to consult for current events:**

Latin America’s Moment - <http://blogs.cfr.org/oneil/>

*The Economist*, Latin American Politics - <http://www.economist.com/topics/latin-american-politics>

*America’s Quarterly* - <http://www.americasquarterly.org/aqblog>

Latin American Political Opinion Project, *Insight Series* - <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights2014.php>

Latin American Network Information Center (U. of Texas) - <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/news/>

BBC, New York Times, Washington Post, Guardian, etc.

**Course Policies:**

**Disabilities**: Please advise me as soon as possible of any disability that may affect your performance in this course. I will make all necessary accommodations so that your learning, writing, and testing needs may be appropriately met. You are required by the University to provide documentation of the disability to the Student Life Office, Rutgers Learning Center, or Graduate School Dean.

**Late Papers**: Late papers will be marked down one grade for every day they are tardy. Extensions will be granted only in extreme cases.

**Academic Integrity:** All students of Rutgers-Camden are required to adhere to the University’s Academic Integrity Policy. Violations of the Policy include cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity. Should you have any questions regarding behavior that may be defined as a violation of the University’s Policy, please do not hesitate to discuss the matter with me. Please see the following link for further information: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>.

**Learning Objectives:**

For this class there are four learning objectives.

1. Students will understand political and economic development in Latin America relative to general social science explanations.
2. Students will write a policy brief, which will enable them to concisely identify a current policy problem and provide solutions to policy makers. Working in groups towards the completion of this paper will strengthen their ability to work with other team members.
3. Students will acquire an understanding of the current political and economic challenges facing the region and the impact of institutional and policy design related to regional and country-specific issues.
4. Students will understand the complex nature of the relationship between Latin America and the United States based on historical intervention and current bonds in the region.

**Grading and Assignments:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Requirement** | **Due date** | **Percentage of Final Grade** |
| Participation | Ongoing | 20% |
| Map Quiz | January 27 | 5% |
| Midterm | March 7 | 25% |
| Final Exam  | May 9 | 25%  |
| Policy Brief | Proposal – March 28Policy Brief –  | 5%20% |

**Participation**

Your participation grade will be based on your involvement in class discussions. Please note that there is not a written attendance policy for this course. Clearly you cannot participate in class, however, if you are not present. Your participation grade depends on your preparation for the class and the quality of your contribution to discussions. The following provides general guidelines for my expectations for each grade range:

A’s = speaks often in class, asks thoughtful questions, clearly engaged, always prepared

B’s = occasionally contributes to class discussion, not clear that the student has done all of the readings, may appear attentive in class

C’s = only participates in class discussions a few times during the semester, does not appear to be prepared, does not exhibit interest in the material

D’s = rarely attends class, seems not to be prepared or engaged in the material, does not ask questions or provide comments

F’s = never attends class

**Map Quiz**

The Map Quiz will be worth 5% of your course grade. You will be required to know both country and major capital names.

**Exams**

There will be a midterm and final exam in this course with both short answer identifications and essay questions. Expectations for the exams will be discussed in review sessions prior to the tests.

**Policy Brief**

All students will be required to write a policy brief for this course. The paper should address a current policy issue in the Americas and provide recommendations as to how relevant governments may approach the issue.

Students should choose their topic based on individual interests. The following is a very brief list of *potential* paper topics, though it is by no means an exhaustive list.

Drug trafficking in Mexico

Migration of minors from Central America to the US

Environmental policy in the Amazon

Housing the poor in Brazilian cities

Students should submit paper proposals to me by **March 28.** Proposals should include a brief statement of the issue you intend to research and a list of 5 potential sources with annotation (brief summary of the source). On **March 23rd** students should bring a draft of their proposals to class. We will then discuss the proposals in small groups and review examples of policy briefs to guide writing of the final paper.

Final papers should be approximately **5 single-spaced pages** in length with graphics to illustrate important points and proper citations (MLA, Chicago, or APA). Final briefs are due on the last day of class, **May 2nd**. Graphics will not be counted towards page length.

The suggested outline for the policy brief is as follows:

Executive summary

Background on the issue

Reasons why the issue is at a critical juncture for policy makers to address

Current measures to address the issue and the reasons why these measures are not sufficient

Your recommendations to relevant policy makers

Conclusion summarizing your argument

**Schedule of Lectures, Readings and Presentations**

**Why Study Latin America?**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| M Jan. 20 | Course Introduction  |  |

**Current Issues and Theories of Democracy**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| M Jan. 25 | Current Events and Issues in Latin American Politics, Economics, and SocietyConceptions of Democracy | [What a Year for Latin America! America’s Quarterly, December 2015.](http://americasquarterly.org/content/what-year-latin-america)[Year in Review, America’s Quarterly, Dec. 2015.](http://www.as-coa.org/articles/year-review-latin-america-2015-and-whats-ahead-2016)Introduction and Chapter 1 in Hellinger |
| W Jan. 27 | Inequality in Latin American Politics | Chapter 2 in Hellinger**Map Quiz** |

**Historical Governance and Development in the Region**

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| M Feb. 1 | Colonial Legacies | Chapter 3 in Hellinger  |
| W Feb. 3 | Independence | Chapter 4 in Hellinger |
| M Feb. 8 | Populism | Chapter 5 in Hellinger - **ONLINE** |
| W Feb. 10 | Dependency, Modernization, and Neoliberalism | Chapter 6 in Hellinger |

**Transitions to Democracy**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| M Feb. 15 | End of military regimes | Chapters 7, 8, and 9  |
| W Feb. 17 | Pacted transitions | Watch the “No” movie in class |
| M Feb. 22 | Chile continued | Watch the “No” movie in class |

**Revolutions in Latin America**

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| W Feb. 24 | Revolutions and Insurgencies | Chapter 10 in Hellinger |
| M Feb. 29 | Cuba | [“The Future is Coming: Observations and Reflections on Cuba.”](http://www.thedialogue.org/blogs/2016/01/the-future-is-coming-observations-and-reflections-on-cuba/) Also search the Inter-American Dialogue website for other recent articles on Cuba.  |

**Midterm Exam**

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| W March 2 | Review for Midterm | Come prepared with questions to review |
| M March 7 |  Midterm Exam | **ONLINE** |

**Drug Trafficking in the Americas**

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| W March 9 | Background and current issues | Chapter 11, pages 319-327“Rethinking the Drug War in Central America and Mexico: Analysis and Recommendations for Legislators,” The Mesoamerican Working Group (SAKAI) |

**SPRING BREAK**

**Civil Society, Social Movements, and Policy Briefs**

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| M March 21 | Social movements  | Chapter 11 in Hellinger |
| W March 23 | Workshop on policy briefs | **Bring draft of policy brief proposal to class** |
| M March 28 | Indigenous politics | **ONLINE****Policy Brief Proposal Due – Assignments tab on Sakai**Van Cott, “Latin America’s Indigenous People’s Movements” |

**Political Institutions in Latin America**

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| W March 30 | Parties and the rise and fall (?) of the left | Chapter 12 in Hellinger |
| M April 4 | Venezuela | Reading TBD |
| W April 6 | Constitutions, elections, and the rule of law | Chapters 13 and 14 in Hellinger |

**Latin America in the World**

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| M April 11 | The Environment | **ONLINE**Chapter 15 in HellingerGone Today, Here Tomorrow: How One Brazilian City is Rescuing the Amazon<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tjoCdXel70&feature=youtu.be> |
| W April 13 | Trade agreements | See Summer 2015 issue of the America’s Quarterly and choose 3 articles to read: <http://americasquarterly.org/content/trade-back> |
| M April 18 | Future directions for democracy and development | Chapter 16 in Hellinger |

**Policy in the Region**

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| April 20 | Policy Brief Presentations |  |
| April 25 | Policy Brief Presentations |  |
| April 27 | Policy Brief Presentations |  |

**Final Exam Review**

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| May 2 | Review for Final Exam | Final Policy Brief Due |

**Final Exam: Monday, May 9, 2:45-5:45**