Introduction to Latin American Politics  
Revised 11/18/03

Amherst College  
Political Science 31  
Spring 2003  
Tue and Thu 2-3:20pm  
http://www.amherst.edu/~jcorrales

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Clark House 202  
542-2164  
Office Hours: W 2-3:15p; Th 3:30-4:30p  
jcorrales@amherst.edu

Description of the course

This is an introduction to the study of modern Latin American politics. The overriding question is: why have democracy and self-sustained prosperity been so difficult to accomplish in the region? We will focus on Argentina, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, and Venezuela, and to a lesser extent on Brazil, Colombia and Peru.

The course is divided into four parts. The first part focuses on common historical and institutional legacies that might have hindered democratic and economic development in the region. This part also examines similarities in the way that Latin American nations have responded to this legacy. For example, almost all Latin American countries developed intense economic nationalism, an overexpanded state bureaucracy, and corporatist-populist methods of political control. We will ask why Latin American countries adopted these similar political features.

The second part of the course looks at some differences among our cases. Despite their similar traditions, the countries of the region developed very different political systems after World War II. Why? Hypotheses will be formulated to explain, for instance, why some countries became democratic while others did not; why some countries remained stable while others did not; and why some societies resisted authoritarianism successfully, while others did not. This part of the course also examines the role of political institutions, pressure groups (such as business, labor, the military and the Catholic Church), and cultural traits (such as machismo) in shaping these responses.

The third part of the course examines the transition to democracy. What explains the odd combination of democratic rebirth and economic chaos in the 1980s? We will survey several theories of democratization.

The last part of the course focuses on globalization pressures in Latin America. To what extent does globalization and market reforms lead to convergence of values and institutions among nations? To what extent does globalization lead to a rebirth of old traditions and greater conflicts? To what extent has Latin America become more democratic and market-oriented?

Readings

If you are not prepared to read approximately 120-130 pages per week, you should not take this class. It is essential that you complete the reading assignments prior to class meetings. The readings can be classified into two categories. The first consists of theoretical and interpretative readings. These readings present arguments that seek to explain Latin American politics. They often contradict each other. The second category consists of case studies. The purpose of these case studies is to allow you to evaluate the theoretical readings. A fundamental goal of the course is to teach you how to use empirical evidence to test the validity of theoretical arguments.

Most of the readings can be found in the books ordered for the course (see below) and a multilith, which has been prepared by the Department of Political Science for your convenience. The books and the multilith are available for purchase. You can purchase the books at Amherst Bookstore (formerly Atticus Bookstore). You can buy the multilith from the Department of Political Science (contact Vicki Farrington, Clark House, x2318).

The required books are:


For more historical background on Latin America, you may want to consult (optional):


Films:

You are required to watch the following films

Eva Perón (Argentina)
Mexico: From Boom to Bust (US)
The Official Story (Argentina)
Don’t Tell Anyone (Peru)

Films will be shown at 4 and 7:30pm on dates specified in the list of assignments. If you cannot make the scheduled showings, you are responsible for making your own arrangements to watch the movie.

Participation:

In addition to lectures, readings, and films, this course relies heavily on class participation. You must come to class prepared to discuss the readings and movies. The format of the class will combine lecture and discussion: on some days, I will mostly lecture, on others, I will mostly lead a discussion.

Class attendance is mandatory. Attendance, however, is not the same as participation. The latter is the extent to which you make a qualitative contribution to the discussion in progress. It entails addressing the issues raised by me and your classmates, as well as raising your own issues when pertinent. Your class participation will play a significant role in case of borderline averages.

I will never call on you to participate; it is ultimately your responsibility to be heard in class. The point is not to speak for the sake of speaking (or to impress me), but rather to contribute with a different or a supplementary perspective.

At the beginning of the semester, you will be assigned to one of five groups of “lead discussants.” On designated class meetings, lead discussants will be expected to participate more actively and be better prepared than the rest of the class. The list of assignments indicates what days each group is expected to take the lead.

Requirements:

The weight distribution of the course requirements is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percent of final grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analytical Paper 1 (5 pp.)</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analytical Paper 2 (5 pp.)</td>
<td>25 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analytical Paper 3 or 4 (5 pp.)</td>
<td>40 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15 percent</td>
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Papers: You are required to turn in four analytical papers on assigned topics based on the readings. However, I will only grade three papers: the first two papers and either paper three or four. You will decide at the end of the semester which of these papers (3 or 4) you would like me to grade.
Extensions: My policy is simple: no extensions (except in extreme circumstances, such as medical emergencies). Late papers will be marked down.
# Introduction to Latin American Politics

## Schedule of Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tue Sep 2</td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
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**Part I: Democracy, Corporatism and Populism**
### Part II: A Tour of Latin America, 1930s-1980s

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading/Assignment</th>
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| Tue Sep 23 | Mexico: The Hybrid Regime and the Mexican Miracle  
(P) Skidmore and Smith, pp. 217-237.  
| Wed Sep 24 | FILM: Mexico: From Boom to Bust |
| Thu Sep 25 | Mexico: Corporatism, the PRI, and Institutional Explanations for Regime Stability  
Discussion of *From Boom to Bust* |
| Tue Sep 30 | Cuba vs. Mexico: Why more radical state expansion?  
(P) Skidmore and Smith, pp. 259-288.  
Selected Speeches by Fidel Castro. |
| Thu Oct 2  | Why Radical Revolution in Cuba and Not in Venezuela?  
| Tue Oct 7  | Democratic Vices: Partyarchy in Venezuela, Party Polarization in Chile, Intra-party divisiveness in Argentina  

### Part 3: Democratization in the 1980s and 1990s

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading/Assignment</th>
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| Thu Oct 9  | Militarism prior to the 1980s  
| Fri Oct 10 | Paper No. 2  
FILM: The Official Story |
| Tue Oct 14 | Mid Semester Break |
| Thu Oct 23 | Transition to democracy (Bottom-up approaches): Argentina in the 1980s  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture Title</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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</table>
(P) Dresser in Domínguez and Shifter. |                                                            |
|            | Part 4: Globalization, Market Reforms, and Flawed Democracies               |                                                      |                                                            |
(P) Skidmore and Smith, pp. 101-113, 242-262.  
(P) Corrales in Domínguez and Shifter.  
Rodrik, Dani. 1997. “Sense and Nonsense in the Globalization Debate” *Foreign Policy*  
107 (Summer):19-37. |                                                            |
|            | Guest Speaker: Lawrence Wolf                                                | Lawrence Wolf                                        | (on education reform)                       |
| Tue Nov 4  | No Class                                                                     |                                                      |                                                            |
|            | (P) Lamounier in Domínguez and Shifter.                                     |                                                      |                                                            |
|            | (P) Murillo in Domínguez and Shifter.                                       |                                                      |                                                            |
|            | Fri Nov 7 Paper No. 3                                                        |                                                      |                                                            |
|            | Wed Nov 13 Claudio Loser (on the IMF)                                        |                                                      |                                                            |
*St. Louis Journalism Review* (February):24-25.  
*NACLA Report on the Americas* 33, 6 (May/June).  
*NACLA Report on the Americas* 36, 1 (July/August).  
|            | Tue Nov 18 Defying Globalization: Venezuela (Part 2)                         | Schedler, Andreas. 1999. “Conceptualizing Accountability.” In Andreas Schedler,  
Larry Diamond, and Marc F. Plattner, eds., *The Self-Restraining State*, Boulder,  
|            | Thu Nov 20 Drugs, Guerrillas and Criminality: Colombia and Mexico Guest Lecturer: Frank Bajak | Cepeda Ulloa, Fernando in Domínguez and Shifter.  
Colombia’s Rebel zone: Posted in Blackboard, under Course Documents. |                                                            |
<p>|            | Nov 25 and 27 No Class                                                       |                                                      |                                                            |
| Tue Dec 2  | Part 1: Newcomers and Old timers                                             | Carey, John in Shifter and Domínguez                 |                                                            |
|            | EXTENDED CLASS: 2-4pm                                                        |                                                      |                                                            |</p>
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<th>Day</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thu Dec 4</td>
<td>No Class</td>
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<td>Tue Dec 9</td>
<td>Citizenship: Women and Gay Rights</td>
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<td>Discussion of Don’t Tell Anyone.</td>
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<td>Wed Dec 5:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Film Don’t Tell Anyone</td>
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**Part I Cuba**

Kaufman Purcell. 2002.
Falcoff, Mark. 2003. “Interview with author” and “Key points from his book” in Blackboard (see also www.acei.org)

**Part II: The Future of Democracy**

(P) Domínguez in Domínguez and Shifter