This course examines the politics of the states and peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean. Our objectives are to focus on the major political issues concerning the region, such as development, revolution, democratization, and inter-American relations. We will also look at the history behind current politics and policies.

This course will involve lecture, discussion, and film, as well as reading and writing assignments. Each offers a different way to approach the subject matter, and each provides something different to your understanding of events and ideas. Your success depends on your involvement.


Assignments: Article outlines are due in class every other Wednesday. Country reports are due April 13 and May 9. The paper/policy memo is due on May 18. The mid-term exam will be on April 27. The final exam is on June 7.

Course requirements:

- **Country Reports**: 10%
- **Chapter/Article responses**: 15%
- **Mid-term examination**: 25%
- **Policy Memo or Paper**: 25%
- **Final exam**: 25%

Please notify me on the first day of class if you have any alternative needs as a result of a disability.

---

### Week 1

**Mar. 28**  
**Introduction**

**Mar. 30**  
**History and Context**


### Week 2

**Apr. 4**  
**Development and Democracy – Chile**


**Apr. 6**  
**Development and Democracy – Mexico**


### Week 3

**Apr. 11**  
**Development and Democracy – Argentina**


**Apr. 13**  
**Development and Democracy – Peru**

CHAPTER/ARTICLE RESPONSES

Your assignment is to complete a response to one of the assigned chapters and articles each week. There is a great deal of information in each reading assignment. You cannot cover it all, but you can respond to a few of the main points and topics covered by the authors. The idea is for you to gain an understanding of some of the arguments and main ideas of the readings. The goal is not for you to summarize, but to offer a brief analysis and/or critique regarding what you read.

Each response should be about a page in length (single spaced). The summaries are due every other Wednesday in class, with the first set of two due on April 6.

EXAMS

The exams will consist of several questions based on readings and lectures. The format will include short answers and short essays.
COUNTRY REPORTS

Each of you will be assigned a country to track during the course of the term. Twice you will turn in a brief summary and analysis of current events in the country you are covering (1 to 1.5 pages, single spaced). One will be due on April 13 and the other on May 9. You will also be expected to talk about your country and provide updates to the class periodically during the term. There is no set schedule for these brief (1-2 minute) updates, so you need to be prepared to say something at anytime.

POLICY MEMO OR PAPER

For this assignment, you may choose to complete either a standard research paper or a policy decision memo. The guidelines of each are below. The assignment is due on.

Policy Memo

For this assignment your job is to take the role of a policy advisor in the one of the governments in Latin America. You will write a decision memo advising the President of that country on a matter of domestic policy. The topics will be chosen by the you and approved by the instructor. Topics must be contemporary (nothing before 2000).

The format of the memo is specified below.

MEMORANDUM TO ……..
FROM ……
SUBJECT: ……..

Background

In this section you will identify and introduce your topic, explain what the problem or issue is, and identify the decision that needs to be made. After this, you also need to provide some background information to enhance the reader’s understanding of the issue at hand. Provide context—how did the situation arise, who has done what to date? (There is no need to state the obvious in your background, e.g., “There is a war going on in Vietnam.” You can assume that the President or other high-ranking official knows the basics, and then some.)

Options

In this section you must identify at least three options on how to respond or proceed. Each must include an analysis of the advantages and drawbacks of the policy choice. What would be the effect of the actions (or inaction)?

Recommendation

Select one of the options and explain why this one is preferable to the others.

Paper

Your will select a topic of your choosing involving Latin American politics. (The topic must be cleared by the instructor.) Your assignment is to write a paper that offers a thesis and develops an argument to support that thesis. The paper cannot simply be a history or description of an issue or event. It must be an analysis.

For Both Assignments:

Sources—You are required to use at least four sources outside of the class readings, and to provide a bibliography. (Feel free to use as many course readings as you want; be certain to include them in the bibliography.) Sources can include books, journals, newspapers, etc. Material from the internet can be cited as a source only if it is an electronic version of a published work (e.g. Foreign Affairs, The Economist). There may be exceptions to this rule, but they are rare. (As we all know, there are a number of dubious sources on the internet. Don’t rely on them.)

Citations – You must provide documentary citations, in the form of in-text notes, when appropriate. Include the author and the year. Example: (Jones, 2002).