

LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS
PS 344
SPRING 2005

Professor David Bernell
Gilkey Hall 314
Office Hours: Monday 1:30-3:00; Thursday 3:00-4:30
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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.

Readings: There are three books you will need to purchase: Howard Wiarda and Harvey Kline, *Latin American Politics and Development* (5th Edition, 2000); Harry Vanden and Gary Prevost, *Politics of Latin America: The Power Game* (2002); and Peter Smith, *Talons of the Eagle* (2nd Edition, 2000). These are all available in the bookstore. Other assigned readings will be available on reserve in the library.

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

Vanden and Prevost, *Politics of Latin America: The Power Game*, Chapters 1-3.

Week 2

Apr. 4 Development and Democracy – Chile

Wiarda and Kline, *Latin American Politics and Development*, Chapter 8.
Vanden and Prevost, *Politics of Latin America: The Power Game*, Chapter 7.

Apr. 6 Development and Democracy – Mexico

Wiarda and Kline, *Latin American Politics and Development*, Chapter 16.

Week 3

Apr. 11 Development and Democracy – Argentina

Wiarda and Kline, *Latin American Politics and Development*, Chapter 6.
Vanden and Prevost, *Politics of Latin America: The Power Game*, Chapter 8.

Apr. 13 Development and Democracy – Peru

Wiarda and Kline, *Latin American Politics and Development*, Chapter 10.

Week 4

Apr. 18 Development and Democracy – Venezuela
Wiarda and Kline, *Latin American Politics and Development*, Chapter 11.
Vanden and Prevost, *Politics of Latin America: The Power Game*, Chapter 6.

Apr. 20 Development and Democracy – Brazil
Wiarda and Kline, *Latin American Politics and Development*, Chapter 7.

Week 5

Apr. 25 Development and Democracy – Colombia
Wiarda and Kline, *Latin American Politics and Development*, Chapter 9.
Wiarda and Kline, *An Introduction to Latin American Politics and Development*, Chapters 8 & 9.

Apr. 27 Midterm exam

Week 6

May 2 Revolution – Cuba
&
May 4
Vanden and Prevost, *Politics of Latin America: The Power Game*, Chapters 9 & 12.

Week 7

May 9 Revolution – Nicaragua
Vanden and Prevost, *Politics of Latin America: The Power Game*, Chapter 13.

May 11 Revolution – Other Paths

Week 8

May 16 The United States and Latin America
&
May 18
Peter Smith, *The Talons of the Eagle*, Part II, “The Cold War”

Week 9

May 23 The United States and Latin America
&
May 25
Peter Smith, *The Talons of the Eagle*, Part III, “Age of Uncertainty”

Week 10

May 30 Holiday – no class today

Jun. 1 The Future of the Americas
Robert Pastor, *Exiting the Whirlpool*, Chapters 13 & 14.

Final Exam: Tuesday, June 7, 12:00

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.

Date

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

You 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).

Style – Double-spaced, 1-inch margins, 12 pt. font, 7-8 pages.