
Washington University in St. Louis
Department of Political Science

PS 326B. Latin American Politics.

Fall 2011
T Th 2:30-4:00 (Seigle Hall 304)

Instructor

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Introduction

This course aims to provide students with a basic understanding of Latin America's quandaries in the road towards political and economic development. In particular, we explore why Latin American societies have undergone cycles of democracy and dictatorship, why they have failed to find paths toward sustainable development, and why they have been unable to correct dramatic economic disparities. In the course of this overview, we will look at structural, cultural, and institutional theories that purport to explain Latin America's endemic political and economic malaise. The course is divided into three parts. Part One is a historic overview of Colonial political and economic institutions, the nineteenth-century liberal order, and the political mobilization of disenfranchised sectors that accompanied industrialization during the twentieth century. Part Two provides a glimpse into the causes of democratic breakdown in the 1960s and 1970s, the policy-making record of military dictatorships, and the dual transition to democracy and markets in the 1980s. Part Three adopts an institutional view to further our knowledge of how Latin American democratic systems have worked in the recent past, starting from an analysis of the varied ways in which democratic regimes were eventually rebuilt. We will then look into the main features of presidential regimes, electoral laws, and party systems throughout the region in order to account for differences in the inner workings of Latin American democracies.

No survey of Latin America can claim to cover the ample diversity of historical experiences and contemporary political systems that coexist throughout the region. In order to impose some structure on the vast amount of information potentially available to the student of Latin American politics, we will focus mainly on the political development of Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico. However, we will devote time to the analysis of circumscribed historical episodes in other countries. These episodes shed broader light upon political phenomena of paramount importance throughout the region, such as revolution, democratic breakdown, the rise of neoliberalism and the recent re-appearance of a populist left. Hence, our survey will touch upon the 1973 military coup in Chile, the success of revolutionary movements in Cuba and Nicaragua, the turmoil of widespread guerrilla activity in Colombia and Peru, and the recent re-appearance of a populist left in Venezuela and other countries.

Requirements and Grading

Please read this section carefully: Registration in this course implies that you agree with *all* elements of evaluation.

Two partial exams (October 6 and November 10) and one final exam (December 21) provide the main basis for evaluation (30% each). The exams will test your recollection of historical facts, but seek mainly to assess your ability to “make sense” of Latin American politics. Consequently, you should expect to write short essays and define important concepts and ideas in these exams, aside from replying to shorter “multiple choice” items. The remainder of the grade (10%) will be based on my assessment of your participation in class, *including attendance and informed participation in class discussions*. Since the amount of reading for this class is not trivial and since I will on occasion ask questions in class that are related to the readings, the optimal strategy is to keep up with the reading schedule.

Testing your knowledge about any subject-matter is, at best, an exercise in futility: If you know the material well, you will ace most exams, regardless of their design; you will also flunk any exam if you have not mastered the material. In between these two extremes, exams are per force imprecise ways to gauge your knowledge and ability. I will make every effort to grade your exams fairly and in a timely manner. If you consider that I have made a gross mistake in grading any exam, you should address your concerns to me within three days of receiving your grade by e-mail. I expect you to substantiate any claim you make, to be respectful, and to avoid the frivolous pursuit of extra points. Finally, note that I adhere to the following number-to-letter grade conversion chart:

100-97=A+	87-89=B+	77-79=C+	67-69=D+
93-96=A	83-86=B	73-76=C	63-66=D
90-92=A-	80-82=B-	70-72=C-	60-62=D-

Students who take this class under the Pass/Fail option must receive a grade of

B- or better in order to qualify for the Pass on their final grade. Students who take the Pass/Fail option should be aware that only courses taken for a letter grade may be used toward the major or minor. The College of Arts and Sciences will handle issues pertaining to academic integrity. The academic integrity policy is available [here](#).

Extra Credit: There are NO EXTRA CREDIT opportunities in this course.

Readings

John C. Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire: A Concise History of Latin America*, W.W.Norton, third edition, 2011 (BBF)

James A. Wood and John C. Chasteen (eds.), *Problems in Modern Latin American History. Sources and Interpretations*, Rowman and Littlefield, third edition, 2009 (PMLA)

Washington University's bookstore carries copies of these texts. If you cannot find a copy in the bookstore, please procure one elsewhere. We will complement these books with readings available at [Telesis](#), [Jstor](#), and [Project MUSE](#).

Course Schedule

I. Introduction (Aug. 30–Sept. 1)

Chasteen, BBF, Chapter 1: “First Stop, the Present”

Chasteen, BBF, Chapter 2: “Encounter”

II. Modes of Colonization (September 6–8)

Chasteen, BBF, Chapter 3: “Colonial Crucible”

Stanley L. Engerman and Kenneth L. Sokoloff, “Factor Endowments, Institutions, and Differential Paths of Growth Among New World Economies”, in Stephen Haber (ed.), *How Latin America Fell Behind: Essays on the Economic Histories of Brazil and Mexico*, Stanford UP, 1997, 260-304; reprinted in *Economía*, Fall 2002 ([Telesis](#))

Chasteen, BBF, Chapter 4: “Independence”

Wood and Chasteen, PMLA, Chapter 1: “Independence and Its Consequences”

III. The Liberal Order (September 13–15)

Chasteen, BBF, Chapter 5: “Postcolonial Blues”

Wood and Chasteen, PMLA, Chapter 3: “Caudillos”

Wood and Chasteen, PMLA, Chapter 4: “Liberalism and the Catholic Church” (selections 1–4)

John Coatsworth, “Obstacles to Economic Growth in Nineteenth-Century Mexico”, *American Historical Review*, 83 (1), 1978 ([Jstor](#))

Robert H. Dix, “Cleavage Structures and Party Systems in Latin America”, *Comparative Politics*, 22 (1), October 1989, pp. 23-27 ([Jstor](#))

IV. Populism (September 20–22)

Chasteen, BBF, Chapter 6: “Progress”

Chasteen, BBF, Chapter 7: “Neocolonialism”

Wood and Chasteen, PMLA, Chapter VI: “Neocolonialism” (selections 1–3)

V. ISI or Revolution? (Sept. 27–29)

Chasteen, BBF, Chapter 9: “Revolution”

Wood and Chasteen, PMLA, Chapter 9: “Populism and the Working Class” (selections 1–5)

Wood and Chasteen, PMLA, Chapter 10: “Social Revolution” (selections 1, 4, 5)

Albert Hirschman, “The Political Economy of Import Substituting Industrialization in Latin America”, *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 84, February 1968 ([Jstor](#))

Review and First Partial Exam (October 4–6)

VI. Military Rule (October 11–13)

Chasteen, BBF, Chapter 10: “Reaction”

Wood and Chasteen, PMLA, Chapter 11: “Latin America, the United States, and the Cold War”

James Mahoney, “Radical, Reformist and Aborted Liberalism: Origins of National Regimes in Central America”, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 33 (2), May 2001, pp. 221-256, ([Jstor](#))

VII. Policy Switches (October 18–20)

Wendy Hunter, “Continuity or Change? Civil-Military Relations in Democratic Argentina, Chile, and Peru,” *Political Science Quarterly* 112 (3), Fall 1997, pp. 453-475 ([Jstor](#))

Susan C. Stokes, “What Do Policy Switches Tell Us About Democracy?”, in Adam Przeworski, Susan C. Stokes, and Bernard Manin, eds., *Democracy, Accountability, and Representation*, Cambridge University Press, 1999 ([Telesis](#))

Gregg B. Johnson and Brian F. Crisp, “Mandates, Powers, and Policies”, *American Journal of Political Science*, 47 (1), 2003, 127-141 ([Jstor](#))

VIII. Neoliberalism (October 25–27)

Chasteen, BBF, Chapter 11: “Neoliberalism”

Wood and Chasteen, PMLA, Chapter 12: “Globalization”

Evelyn Huber and Frederick Solt, “Successes and Failures of Neoliberalism”, *Latin American Research Review* 39 (3), 2004 ([Jstor](#))

Michael Walton, “Neoliberalism in Latin America: Good, Bad, or Incomplete?”, *Latin American Research Review* 39 (3), 2004 ([Jstor](#))

IX. Presidents and Legislators (November 1–3)

Arturo Valenzuela, “Latin American Presidencies Interrupted”, *Journal of Democracy* 15 (4), October 2004 ([Project Muse](#))

Scott Mainwaring, “Presidentialism, Multipartyism, and Democracy: The Difficult Combination”, *Comparative Political Studies*, 26 (2), July 1993 ([Sage-CPS](#))

Jose A. Cheibub, Adam Przeworski, and Sebastián Saiegh, “Government Coalitions and Legislative Success under Parliamentarism and Presidentialism”, *British Journal of Political Science*, 34(4):565–587, 2004 ([Jstor](#)).

Gary Cox and Scott Morgenstern, “Latin America’s Reactive Assemblies and Proactive Presidents”, *Comparative Politics*, 33 (2), 2001 ([Jstor](#))

Review and Second Partial Exam (Nov. 8–10)

X. Political Parties and Elections (November 15–17)

Michael Coppedge, “The Dynamic Diversity of Latin American Party Systems”, *Party Politics*, 4 (October 1998) ([Sage-PPQ](#))

Erika Moreno, “Subnational Determinants of National Multipartyism in Latin America”, *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 28(2), 2003 ([Jstor](#))

Donna Lee Van Cott, “Latin America’s Indigenous Peoples”, *Journal of Democracy*, 18(4), 2007, ([Project Muse](#))

XI. The New Federalism (Nov. 22)

Christopher Garman, Stephan Haggard and Eliza Willis, “Fiscal Decentralization. A Political Theory with Latin American Cases”, *World Politics*, 53 (2) ([Jstor](#))

Please fill out [course evaluations](#) at your earliest convenience.

XII. Old and New Left I (Nov. 29–Dec. 1)

Wood and Chasteen, PMLA, Chapter 13: “The New Left Turn”

Hector Schamis, “Populism, Socialism, and Democratic Institutions”, *Journal of Democracy*, 17 (4), October 2006 ([Project Muse](#))

Mitchell Seligson, “The Rise of Populism and the Left in Latin America”, *Journal of Democracy*, 18 (3), 2007 ([Project Muse](#))

XIII. Old and New Left II (December 6–8)

Andy Baker and Kenneth Greene, “The Latin American Left’s Mandate. Free-Market Policies and Issue Voting in New Democracies”, *World Politics*, 63(1), 2011 ([Jstor](#))

Peter Kingstone and Joseph Young, “Partisanship and Policy Choice: What’s Left for the Left in Latin America?”, *Political Research Quarterly*, 62(1), 2009 ([Sage-PRQ](#))