Politics 140C: Latin American Politics
Summer 2017, Session 2 – July 31-September 1
Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:00-4:30 p.m., Soc. Sci. 2 room 167

Instructor: Michael Wilson Becerril, miswilso@ucsc.edu
Office Hours: Wednesdays at noon, or by appointment

Course Description

Since the end of colonialism, Latin American countries have experienced rapid political changes. This course studies some of this dynamic region’s most important shifts—from independence, the legacies of colonialism, and the challenges of state formation, to the onset of authoritarian and revolutionary regimes, the return to liberal democracy, the adoption (and rejection) of market reforms, and the rise of “new” social movements led by youth, femmes, and indigenous peoples.

By studying patterns of continuity and change across cases, we will gain a strong grasp of the region’s history as well as its ongoing challenges—namely, severe inequality, poverty, and violence.¹

Learning Objectives

The course is designed to ensure students meet the following central goals:

• Gain a solid understanding of Latin American politics and the challenges of deepening democracy that the region has faced historically and faces contemporarily. By the end of the course, students should be able to accurately describe the chronology and import of key political developments in Latin America. In addition to understanding these broad patterns, students will also develop a complex view of the region’s heterogeneity and distinctive features (histories, institutions, societies, cultures, economies, and so on).

• Develop the conceptual tools and theoretical knowledge to better understand political phenomena in the region and beyond. Latin America presents an ideal scenario to study and explain the causes and consequences of global phenomena such as democratization, military coups, market reform, social movements, and participatory budgeting.

• Improve your writing and the accompanying skills that it requires, such as thinking critically, analyzing methodically, and arguing persuasively. Writing skills are at a premium today. Cultivating your ability to make compelling and convincing arguments, and to write papers that are well organized and supported with empirical evidence, will be immensely valuable for you well beyond this course.

¹ This is a summer adaptation of a syllabus developed by professor Kent Eaton (Professor of Politics, UCSC).
Student Rights and Responsibilities

Attendance and late submissions:
Attendance is mandatory, as are your active listening and participation. Because we only have 10 lectures, your absence from one means that you have missed 10% of the course, and your grade will reflect that: each unexcused absence will drop your maximum grade by 10%. Arriving late will also hurt your participation grade, so please plan accordingly and always arrive on time. Your grade for any work submitted after its deadline will drop by one letter for each day it is late.

Electronic devices etiquette:
You are required to keep hand-written notes, and no devices will be tolerated in class.

Accommodations:
Students who qualify for disability accommodations should register with the campus Disability Resource Center and submit their Accommodation Authorization Letter to me in person, at office hours of via appointment, by the end of the second week of the quarter. Contact the DRC for more information via phone: 831-459-2089, or email: drc@ucsc.edu.

Academic integrity:
All students enrolled at UCSC are expected to read, and must abide by, the student code of ethics. I encourage you to review the policies on issues like academic honesty and misconduct (available here: http://deanofstudents.ucsc.edu/pdf/santa-cruz-campus-code-of-student-conduct.pdf). Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and not worth the risk. Your work for this course must be original, i.e., your own and not previously created or submitted for different courses. You may borrow others’ ideas as long as you follow proper attribution. Feel free to ask me about these expectations.

Citation styles:
Proper attribution of all borrowed ideas and information, in a consistent style, is crucial to academic honesty. The Politics department accepts either of two formats: MLA in-text citation or Chicago Style footnote citations. Please familiarize yourself with these two style guides, which can be found on the Politics department website at: http://politics.ucsc.edu/undergraduate/citation.php.

Course materials:
One for-purchase text: Daniel C. Hellinger’s *Comparative Politics of Latin America* (Taylor and Francis, 2011; from here on, “CPLA”). All other course readings will be made available via Canvas.

Grading System:
We will use this rubric to evaluate your progress in the course. Please familiarize yourself with it.
- A = 92-100 Reserved for original, flawless, and above-the-mark work
- B = 80-91 Good-to-great work, despite minor flaws or errors
- C = 70-79 Satisfactory but significantly flawed work
- D = 60-69 Demonstrates dismal effort and contains too many errors
- F = 0-59 Incomplete, plagiarized, or no work submitted


Requirements and Grade Distribution

Participation (20%)
Students must attend all meetings and are expected to be active participants in our discussions. This course relies on our collective learning, so you must be attentive and prepared to contribute to our conversations. It is therefore mandatory to complete all assigned readings by their respective dates, and to attend meetings ready to discuss them (see the detailed week-by-week schedule below).

Weekly Quizzes (4% each, 20% total)
We will start our second meeting of each week with a short quiz, beginning on the first week of class. These brief exercises are not difficult, but they are designed to test your reading comprehension. You will not succeed in these by relying only on lecture notes, so you must do the readings. On the other hand, if you stay up to date with your readings, writing these quizzes will be a walk in the park.

Research Project (30%)
You will prepare a research essay in stages, with guidance from the instructor and TA.

- Précis and annotated bibliography (due in class on Tuesday of week 3, Aug. 15)
- First draft of the paper (due in class on Thursday of week 4, Aug. 24)
- Final essay (due for upload to Canvas at 11:59 p.m. on September 3)

Final exam (30%)
The final exam will be cumulative, will require you to think across themes and cases, and will ensure that you have gained a strong grasp of the material covered in class.

Additional Resources:

You are expected to keep up with current events about the region, and I encourage you to bring these to my attention during our class discussions or via email. Please explore the following sources at least once, and subsequently use them to stay up to date on Latin America during and after the course.

News briefings:

Critical and in-depth coverage:

Research organizations:
Weekly Schedule

Week 1: Colonialism, Independence, and Development

Meeting 1 (August 1): Course introduction; colonialism, revolution, and independence
Required Readings:
- Introduction, Chapter 3, and Chapter 5 of CPLA, pp. 1-10, 67-92, and 119-139.
Recommended Readings:
- Gabriel García Márquez, *Cien Años de Soledad [One Hundred Years of Solitude]* (any edition).
Screening: TBD.

Meeting 2 (August 3): Theories of development
Required Readings:
Screening: TBD.

Week 2: Industrialization, State Formation, and Authoritarianism

Meeting 3 (August 8): Industrialization, populism, and corporatism
Required Readings:
- Chapter 6 of CPLA, pp. 140-167.
Screening: TBD.

Meeting 4 (August 10): Military coups and authoritarian regimes
Required Readings:
Recommended Readings:
- Chapter 7 of CPLA, pp. 171-206.
Screening: TBD.
Week 3: Revolution and Democratization

Meeting 5 (August 15): Revolutionary movements and governments
Required Readings:
• Chapters 11 and 12 in CPLA, pp. 283-338.
Screening: TBD.

Meeting 6 (August 17): Democratization, liberalization, and decentralization
Required Readings:
Recommended Readings:
• Chapter 8 in CPLA, pp. 207-229.
Screening: TBD.

Week 4: Institutions and Social Movements

Meeting 7 (August 22): Presidentialism, parties, electoral rules, and clientelism
Required Readings:
• Chapter 16 in CPLA, pp. 421-450.
• Short section on clientelism in CPLA, pp. 50-53.
Recommended Readings:
• Juan Linz, The Failure of Presidential Democracy: The Case of Latin America (Johns Hopkins University, 1994), pp. 3-22.
• John Carey, “Presidentialism and Representative Institutions,” in Jorge Domínguez and Michael Shifter, eds., Constructing Democratic Governance (2003), pp. 11-42.
Screening: TBD.
Meeting 8 (August 24): Social movements, the “left turn,” and elite responses

Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:
- Chapter 14 in CPLA, pp. 365-385.

Screening: TBD.

Week 5: Ongoing Challenges and Promising Currents

Meeting 9 (August 29): Authoritarian legacies, organized crime, and drug cartels

Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:

Screening: TBD.

Meeting 10 (August 31): Radical and participatory democracy?

Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:
- Chapters 17, 18, and 19 in CPLA, pp. 451-473, 477-513 (especially 512-513, the short section on democracy outside of the state), and 514-550.

Screening: TBD.