POLS 3325, Peru: The Politics of Surprise (26818)
1st 8 Weeks of Spring 2024, Hybrid, M 9:00-10:20 a.m., Quinn Hall 203

Gregory D. Schmidt
gdschmidt@utep.edu or through Course Mail in Blackboard
Appointments by phone also available

This course focuses on Peru, one of the most interesting countries in Latin America and, indeed, the world. Whereas the other undergraduate courses that I teach emphasize comparisons and the building of broad explanations in the discipline of Political Science, the single country focus of this course facilitates consideration of historical contingencies and explanations from other disciplines, as well as those from Political Science. Learning objectives: By the end of the course, students should acquire a multidisciplinary understanding of Andean civilization, appreciate how geography facilitated the Spanish conquest, and grasp key themes in Peruvian history, culture, and politics. Thus, the in-depth consideration of a single country—supplemented by some key comparisons to other countries, such as Mexico—should add to the diversity of your education.

Course Organization and Policies

Course segments. The course is divided into 7 segments, as detailed in the Course Schedule on the Home Page in Blackboard. The first and last segments are slightly longer than a week, while the other segments last one week. The materials for each segment will appear in content folders on Blackboard as we reach that part of the course. Open the respective folder to access the material for the segment.

The class will meet on Mondays to review the material for each segment. Attendance is optional. Weekly quizzes are normally on Wednesdays and work on the next segment begins on Thursdays. But there is no class meeting or quiz during the first week of class—due to the MLK holiday—and the class ends on Friday, March 8, when the final quiz and second exam are due. The first exam is due on Wednesday, February 7.

Each segment has power point presentations, questions for videos, videos, and a quiz. The first and second exams appear in Segments 3 and 7 respectively. These various components are color coded in the segment folders. Power point presentation appear in orange, questions for videos and the videos themselves are listed in blue, and quizzes and exams are presented in red. These components are discussed below. Other items and information appear in black on Blackboard.

Power point presentations are the core of the course. Click on the subject to access the power point slides. (These sometimes take a minute or two to load.) Then click on the slide show icon in the lower right corner of the screen. You can also advance the slides on the left side of the screen.

Videos and Video Questions. Each segment contains at least one video, and some have multiple videos. We will also watch two movies. The videos and movies are embedded into Blackboard using Yuja, a video management system.
Questions that students should answer while watching each video are posted on Blackboard in different files. You should print out the questions and answer them as you watch the video. The knowledge generated by correctly answering these questions will be the basis for questions that will appear on the quizzes and exams. The questions are for your use only; you do not have to turn them in.

**Quizzes and Exams.** Students will take 7 quizzes and 2 exams. Each assessment focuses on a discrete part of the course. Each quiz covers only the material from the respective segment (usually a week). Exam I covers Segments 1-3, and Exam II only the material from Segments 4-7. There is no final exam.

Most assessments are due on Wednesdays at 11:59 p.m. Mountain. However, the last quiz and Exam II are due by 11:59 p.m. Mountain on Friday, March 8, which is the last day of class.

The quizzes and exams are based on the power point presentations and videos. There is no required textbook for the course. The latest edition of my text, *Peru: The Politics of Surprise*, is posted in case students would like to do further reading. The power point presentations are largely based on this work.

Most of the questions on the quizzes and exams are multiple choice. There are some true/false questions. The questions appear one at a time. You must answer a question in order to move on to the next one. There is no backtracking. You should complete each assessment in one sitting. Do not save a quiz or exam in order to resume work later because the timer keeps running, even if you are logged out. If your quiz or exam is disrupted due to technical difficulties, try to log back in as soon as possible.

Each quiz will have 10 questions worth 10.5 points each, and will last a maximum of 15 minutes. Students can review the questions and their answers after taking the quiz. They may retake a quiz one time, in which case the grade will be the average of the two attempts. Some questions may be repeated on different attempts, but others will be new.

Each exam will have 42 questions worth 2.5 points each and will last a maximum of 60 minutes. Some questions from quizzes are likely to be repeated on the exams, but others will be new. Exams may be taken only once. Students can review the questions and their answers after the due date.

Please note that five points of extra credit are built into each quiz and exam. Each quiz has 10 questions worth 10.5 points, so it is possible to score a total of 105 points. Each exam has 42 questions worth 2.5 points, making the maximum possible score also 105.

The deadlines for taking the assessments are not flexible. Students may take quizzes only during the respective segments. Students will be able to take the exams only during the designated exam windows. If you begin a quiz or exam before the deadline, but finish it after the deadline, 10 points will be deducted from your score. You will receive a 0 for any missed assessment.
I must be notified immediately (gdschmidt@utep.edu) of any medical or personal emergency that prevents a student from taking an assessment by the deadline. Proof is required.

By accessing a quiz or exam, students agree not to give or accept any help in completing the assignment. Students may use printouts of power point slides and video questions, as well as their own notes, but they may not seek or accept help from others or use electronic devices. It is also a violation of academic integrity to disseminate questions or answers from quizzes or exams to other students or to post them online. Violators will face academic sanctions and will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law!

All suspected violations of academic integrity at UTEP must be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more, please see the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures: Student Conduct and Discipline.

**Course Grade.** The quiz average, Exam I, and Exam II will each count for a third of the course grade. All grades will be posted on Blackboard. Students will also be able to see their quiz average and overall average for the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Average</th>
<th>Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90% and above</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 80% but less than 90%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 65% but less than 80%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 50% but less than 65%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 50%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I cannot accept extra credit projects to compensate for poor performances on assessments because opportunities for extra credit must be available to all students on an equal basis. However, as discussed above, extra credit opportunities are built into each quiz and exam.

Incompletes will not be given for reasons other than a medical or personal emergency and then only after presentation of verifiable documentation. Academic hardship does not qualify as an acceptable reason.

**Technology.** The content for this course is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system, so you will need to have access to a computer or laptop. Make sure that your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have Internet access and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. If you have technical difficulties, try updating your browser, clearing your cache, or switching to another browser.

The most common technical problem is weak Wi-Fi signals that throw students out of a quiz or exam. If this happens, you should immediately log back into the exam. If the problem persists, you should immediately contact the Helpdesk (915) 747-4357 (HELP) and the instructor. If you
are granted additional attempts due to technical difficulties (proof required), the grade will be based on all questions answered from all attempts. Additional penalties may be imposed for repeated technical difficulties. It is your responsibility to acquire reliable Internet access.

If you encounter technical difficulties not related to a quiz or exam that are beyond your troubleshooting skills, please contact the UTEP Help Desk, whose staff is trained specifically in assisting students. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped to assist you!

If you do not have access to a computer, you may do course work and take assessments on the second floor of the UTEP Library. You may also be able to check out a laptop there. Please consult with the library regarding their hours and additional requirements for access.

**Course Communications.** I will send out announcements at least once a week and usually more often. You will receive these by e-mail, and they will also be posted on Blackboard.

UTEP e-mail is the best way to contact me. I will make every attempt to respond to your e-mail within 24 hours of receipt. Indeed, I am usually pretty prompt! When e-mailing me, please be sure to use your UTEP student account and put the course number (POLS 3325) in the subject line. In the body of your e-mail, clearly state your question. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name, and your university identification number.

You can also contact me via course mail on Blackboard, but I check this only about once a day.

**Students with Disabilities.** If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at [https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/cass/](https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/cass/)