

LABS 4301/POLS 3337: Latin American Politics

Fall 2016 7Wk2, MW 6:00-8:50 p.m., Fort Bliss Building #614

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This course provides an overview of politics in Latin America. The initial sessions introduce students to the region and its people, history, and contemporary political systems. These classes are broadly comparative and draw on experiences from throughout Latin America. The course then focuses successively on four key countries in the region: Argentina, Chile, Cuba, and Venezuela.

Each of the countries emphasized in the course has experienced remarkable twists and turns in its political evolution, which are so typical of Latin America. Argentina is one of the wealthiest countries in the region but has a history of populism and instability. Its newly elected president is attempting to temper some of the populist excesses of his predecessors. Long a model democracy in Latin America, Chile experienced almost two decades of authoritarian rule during the second half of the last century, and is now a showcase for free market economic policies. Paradoxically, it has been governed primarily by left of center governments for the last quarter century. Cuba emerged from a long period of intense dependence on the United States to become the region's only enduring socialist state and is now redefining its relationship with the Colossus of the North. Venezuela was dominated by dictators during most of its history, became a model two party democracy, and then evolved into the leading alternative to liberal, representative democracy in Latin America. Its beleaguered government is now clinging to power in the face of falling oil prices and rising opposition.

Course Requirements and Policies

1. Attendance and Punctuality. Regular attendance is expected. If you do not attend class regularly, you will not do well. Moreover, you risk missing frequent quizzes. **Leaving class early counts as an absence. Please use the restroom before class. I reserve the right to count students as "absent" if they are using tablets or laptops for purposes unrelated to the class, if they are using their phones, or if their behavior disrupts the learning environment.** I DO NOT DIRECTLY PENALIZE students for missing class, though you will miss quizzes and not do well in the class overall.

Extra Credit for Good Attendance: If you have perfect attendance (i.e. no recorded absences), I will add three extra points to your course average. If you miss only one class, I will add two extra points, I will add one extra point if you miss only two classes. However, I will not give any extra credit to students who leave early or walk in and out of class. I do not try to determine "excused" and "unexcused" absences because I give extra credit for outstanding attendance, rather than penalizing poor attendance.

If you arrive after roll is checked, please notify me at the end of class so that you can receive a tardy. Two tardies are excused. The third and each subsequent tardy count as absences.

2. Lectures. I will post the power point slides of my lecture before each class. Students are encouraged to print out the power point slides and bring them to class in order to facilitate note-taking. Students should be able to correctly answer the questions on the quizzes and exams on the basis of the power point slides and questions on the videos (see below). There is no required textbook for the course.

3. Videos. I will show various videos on course-related topics to the extent that time, availability, and scheduling permit. These are not "blow-off" classes; indeed, some quiz and exam questions will be based on audiovisual materials. Questions for each video will be posted on Blackboard. You should print out the questions and answer them in class as the video is playing.

4. Quizzes. I will give about 8 quizzes, following the schedule below as much as possible. Each quiz will cover the lecture, power point slides, and videos since the last quiz. There will be no make-up quizzes. However, the lowest two or three quiz grades will be dropped. Save your quizzes because they will be useful in studying for the exams. And the first quiz will likely contain one or more questions based on the syllabus!

5. Exams. The first exam will be given on Wednesday, November 2. The second exam will be given on Wednesday, November 30, the last day of class. Each exam will be comprised of multiple choice and true/false questions. The first exam will also have a map component. Each exam will cover a discrete section of the course, though some of the material has a cumulative character. If necessary, exam grades will be curved, in accordance with overall student performance. *Please do not leave the room during the exam, except in the case of an emergency.*

A make-up exam will be given only in the case of a documented medical or personal emergency. In such an event, Professor Schmidt (747-7973) or the Political Science Office (747-5227) must be notified before the exam. A make-up exam may be in a format that requires more intensive preparation.

6. Extra Credit Points. I do not accept extra credit projects to improve low quiz or exam grades because opportunities for extra credit must be available to all students on an equal basis. However, some extra credit opportunities may appear on quizzes or exams. You can also earn extra credit through good attendance, as discussed above. In addition, I reserve the right to add a point or two of extra credit for outstanding class participation. In assessing class participation, I will emphasize quality, rather than mere quantity.

7. Course Grade. The course grade will be determined as follows:

High Exam	50%
Low Exam	25%
Highest 5-6 Quizzes	25%
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	100% + any extra credit points

Course Grades will be distributed as follows:

Final Average and Extra Credit	Final Grade
90-100%	A
80-89%	B
65-79%	C
50-64%	D
Below 50%	F

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.

8. Adjustments in Course Schedule. I will do my best to follow the course schedule outlined below, but I reserve the right to make reasonable adjustments with adequate warning if unforeseeable or uncontrollable circumstances (e.g. jury duty, weather, illness, travel, fire drills) so warrant. It is not fair, however, to change the schedule or previously set exam dates simply to accommodate the preferences of some students, since other students inevitably suffer.

9. Classroom Decorum. Please respect the learning process, as well as your instructor and your fellow classmates:

- Please limit the use of laptops and tablets to taking notes for this class.
- Please turn off all phones and other electronic devices.
- Please do not leave class early, except in an emergency.

Once again, I reserve the right to count students as “absent” if they are using tablets or laptops for purposes unrelated to the class, if they are using their phones, or if their behavior disrupts the learning environment.

10. Academic Integrity. Students are expected to know and comply with UTEP policies on academic integrity in the latest online edition of the *Undergraduate Catalog*, Curriculum and Classroom Policies.

Course Outline

OCTOBER 17

Introduction to Class

Land and People

Historical Development I

Video: *Mirrors of the Heart*

OCTOBER 19

Historical Development II

Presidential Debate

OCTOBER 24

Quiz 1

Third Wave Democracy and the Quest for Development, Liberty, and Governance

Video: *The Americas in the 21st Century*

OCTOBER 26

Quiz 2

Argentina: Historical Background

Argentina: Parties, Interest Groups, and Social Movements

Argentina, Video: *Garden of Forking Paths*

OCTOBER 31

Quiz 3

Argentina: Contemporary Political Framework and Governance

Argentina: The Quest for Development and Liberty

Argentina, Video: *The Empty ATM*

NOVEMBER 2

First Exam

NOVEMBER 7

Chile: Historical Background

Chile: Contemporary Political Framework and Interest Groups

Chile, Video: *In Women's Hands*

NOVEMBER 9

Quiz 4

Chile: Parties, Elections, and Governance

Chile: The Quest for Development and Liberty

Chile, Video: *The Judge and the General*

NOVEMBER 14

Quiz 5

Cuba: Historical Background

Cuba, *Video: Castro's Challenge* (selected clips)

Cuba, *Video: The Last Communist* (selected clips)

NOVEMBER 16

Quiz 6

Cuba: Political Framework and Political Participation

Cuba: The Contemporary Quest for Development, Liberty, and Governance

Cuba: Normalization with the U.S.

Cuba Video, Anthony Bourdain in Cuba

NOVEMBER 21

Quiz 7

Venezuela: Historical Background

Venezuela, *Video: The Hugo Chávez Show*

NOVEMBER 23

No class if we are on schedule.

NOVEMBER 28

Quiz 8

Venezuela, *Video: The Hugo Chávez Show* (finish)

Venezuela: The Contemporary Political Framework and Political Participation

Venezuela: The Quest for Development and Liberty

NOVEMBER 30

Second Exam