

POLS 4339: U.S.-Latin American Relations (24844)

Spring 2017, UGLC 216: TR 10:30-11:50 a.m.

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This class provides an overview of almost two hundred years of interaction between the United States and other sovereign states in Latin America and the Caribbean. Before Spring Break we will examine the origin of U.S.-Latin American relations and their evolution through the Good Neighbor policy and World War II. After the break we will focus on the Cold War and the contemporary context of globalization and post 9/11 security.

Learning Objectives: By the end of the course students should have a good grasp of the major issues in U.S.-Latin American relations, appreciate the dynamics of cooperation and conflict from the perspective of different actors, and be able to relate key issues in the hemisphere to alternative theoretical perspectives in international relations.

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 have only one recorded absence, I will add two extra points, I will add one extra point if you have only two recorded absences. 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 the exams on the basis of the power point slides and questions on the videos (see below). There is no required textbook for the class, but short readings on contemporary issues may be assigned; these would be posted on Blackboard or handed out in class.

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 most videos will be posted on Blackboard. You should print out the questions and answer them in class as the video is playing. Some videos may simply reinforce material given in class and not have any specific questions.

4. Quizzes. I will give about 10 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 three or four 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 a question based on this syllabus! ***Please bring a blue or black pen to class for the quizzes.***

5. Exams. The first exam will be given on March 7. A second exam will be given on May 4, the last day of class. Each exam will contain multiple choice and true/false questions. The first exam will also have a map identification section. Each exam will cover a discrete section of the course, though some of the material has a cumulative character. ***There is no final exam for this course!*** 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 (gdschmidt@utep.edu; 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 6-7 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. Seating and Determination of Attendance. Beginning in the second week of class, all students will sit in permanently assigned seats to facilitate the checking of attendance and so that I can learn your names.

9. 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.

10. 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 refrain from chatting, drinking, eating, and disruptive behavior.
- Please do not leave class early, except in an emergency.

11. 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

January 17

Introduction to Class

January 19

The Americas: Land and Peoples

Overview and Framework for Analysis

January 24

Quiz 1

The U.S. Enters the European Game

January 26 & 31

Texas and the War with Mexico

Video, *U.S.-Mexican War 1846-1848* (selected parts)

February 2 (Happy Groundhog Day!)

Quiz 2

From War with Mexico to War with Spain

February 7, 9

The Spanish American War

Video: *Crucible of Empire: The Spanish American War* (selected parts)

February 14 (Happy Valentine's Day), 16

Quiz 3

The Era of Intervention, Panama, and the Mexican Revolution

Video: *Latin America: Intervention in Our Backyard* (short clip)

Video: *Panama Canal: Gateway to the American Century* (selected portions)

February 21

Quiz 4

Nicaragua and Retreat from Intervention

Video: *Yankee Years* (selected portions)

February 23

The Good Neighbor Policy and World War II

Video: *Yankee Years* (short clip)

Video: *Latin America: Intervention in Our Backyard* (short clip)

February 28

Quiz 5

Latin American Responses

March 2

Catch-Up and Review

March 7

First Exam

Spring Break!!!

March 21

Go Over Exam

The Cold War and Latin America

March 23

Intervention in Guatemala and Backlash

Video: *Yankee Years* (selected parts)

March 28

Quiz 6

The Cuban Revolution and Its Aftermath

Video, *Castro's Challenge* and *The Last Communist*

March 30

From JFK's Alliance for Progress to Human Rights Under Carter

April 4

Quiz 7

Reagan, Central America, and Grenada

Video, *The US in Latin America: Yankee Go Home* (segment on Grenada)

April 6

The End of the Cold War and Geoeconomics

Video, *The Americas in the 21st Century* (selected portions)

April 11

Quiz 8

Latin America: Playing the Geoeconomic Game

Post 9/11: Bush, Obama, and Trump

April 13

Latin American Responses: Democracy, the Resurgence of the Left, and a Right Turn?

April 18

Quiz 9

Dilemmas of Immigration

Video, *The US in Latin America: Yankee Go Home* (segment on Haiti)

April 20

Drug Trafficking, Drug Wars

Video, *The US in Latin America: Yankee Go Home* (segment on Panama)

April 25, 27

Quiz 10

Video, Drug Lord: The Legend of Shorty

May 2

Catch-Up and Review

May 4

Second Exam (There is no final exam for this course!)