

San José State University
Department of Political Science
Pols 146-01: Latin American Politics, Spring 2018

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Sergio Béjar-López
Office Location:	Clark 402C
Email:	Sergio.Bejar@sjsu.edu (preferred method of contact)
Office Hours:	TTR 9:00-10:00 AM, and by appointment
Class Days/Time:	T 18:00- 20:45 PM
Classroom:	DMH 161

Course Description

Survey of the political systems of Latin American countries. Places Latin American countries in a global perspective. Major themes include: civil-military relations, democratization, economic development, social movements, and foreign relations both within and outside Latin America.

Political Science Learning Outcomes

The Political Science Department has the following objectives for its students:

- 1) Breadth: Students should possess a broad knowledge of the theory and methods of the various branches of the discipline.
- 2) Application: Students should be able to apply a variety of techniques to identify, understand, and analyze domestic and international political issues and organizations.
- 3) Disciplinary methods: Students should be able to formulate research questions, engage in systematic literature searches using primary and secondary sources, have competence in systematic data gathering using library sources, government documents, and data available through electronic sources, should be able to evaluate research studies, and should be able to critically analyze and interpret influential political texts.
- 4) Communication Skills: Students should master basic competencies in oral and written communication skills and be able to apply these skills in the context of political science. This means communicating effectively about politics and/or public administration, public policy, and law.

- 5) Citizenship: Students should acquire an understanding of the role of the citizen in local, state, national, and global contexts and appreciate the importance of lifelong participation in political processes.

Course Learning Outcomes

- 1) Survey of the political systems of Latin American countries.
- 2) Place Latin American countries in a global perspective.
- 3) Understand major themes in Latin American politics such as civil-military relations, democratization, economic development, social movements, and foreign relations both within and outside Latin America.

Course Workload Expectations: Succeeding in a Four-Unit Course

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. Because this is a **four-unit course**, you can expect to spend a minimum of nine hours per week, in addition to time spent in class, on scheduled tutorials, assignments, or activities. This additional unit will allow for more in-depth investigation and engagement with course topics. Careful time management will help you keep up with readings and assignments and enable you to be successful in all of your courses. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

Policy on Technology in the Classroom

1. This classroom is a tech-free zone. Laptops are not permitted unless you have an accommodation from AEC. If you want to refer to assigned readings during class discussions, bring hard copies of articles to class or notes that you've taken on assigned readings.
2. Students should not use text or use cell phones in class. Violations of this rule will result in a deduction in your participation grade for each observed incident.

Reading Material

The book listed below is required and may be purchased from the campus bookstore.

- (1) Harry E. Vanden and Gary Prevost. *Politics of Latin America: The Power Game*. 5th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- (2) *The Massacre at El Mozote (1994)* by Mark Danner

In addition students are expected to read several journal articles listed below, nearly all of which are available through JSTOR and which, when possible, may be posted as PDFs on CANVAS. Students are expected to complete the required readings for each topic by the date of that lecture and be prepared to discuss and ask questions about them.

During the course of the class, students are strongly encouraged to read the online version of the *Latin American Weekly Reports* as a way to supplement the readings with knowledge of current events in the region.

Course Requirements

Grades in the course will be based on the following items:

- **Two take-home midterm exams (30% each).**
They will cover material from the readings, lectures, and class discussions. The exam will consist of a series of short identification questions, followed by one essay question. **No make-up exams** will be given, please plan accordingly.
- **Final exam (30%)**
The final exam will be cumulative. It will take place on **May 17th**. The format of the final exam will be discussed in class. No exceptions.
- **Participation (10%).**
Your participation in class discussions is expected. Students are required to read all of the assigned readings and be prepared to speak about the main arguments/points in the readings. A significant portion of your grade will be based on your participation in class discussions and demonstrated familiarity with the readings. You should feel free to express your opinions and make comments during class discussions, but students who score highly in this realm are able to effectively reference information presented in the readings. If you come to class every day but never participate in class discussions, you will receive a “C” for your participation grade.

Political Science Departmental Writing Policy

Students of political science should develop the ability to write in clear, grammatical English. Spelling and grammar count! Students must take care that appropriate citations are used. Direct quotations must be so indicated with quotation marks and a specific reference to the page in the source from which it was taken. Failure to cite your sources constitutes academic misconduct which carries with it serious sanctions. A tutorial on citations is available at the library website at http://www.sjlibrary.org/services/literacy/info_comp/citing.htm. For assistance with writing, please see me or visit the SJSU Writing Center located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every

semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>.

Policy on Submitting Written Work in this Course

I expect my students to submit written work that fits the grammatical, stylistic and citation expectations for college-level work in English. All written assignments in this course are therefore graded in two ways: both in terms of content (information in terms of logic, quality of evidence, etc.) and in terms of writing. If you are at all uncomfortable with writing at the college level, you need to take steps to rectify this.

Late Paper Policy

Hard copies of all papers are to be turned in to me personally on the announced due date during the first 10 minutes of class. Any paper turned in after this period expires will be considered one day late. I will deduct one letter grade for each day that the paper is late. **No exceptions.**

Grading and Written Work Policies

A+ = 97-100%; A = 93-96.9%; A- = 90-92.9%
B+ = 87-89.9%; B = 83-86.9%; B- = 80-82.9%
C+ = 77-79.9%; C = 73-76.9%; C- = 70-72.9%
D+ = 67-69.9%; D = 63-66.9%; D- = 60-62.9%
F = 59.99% or lower

University Policies

Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs **maintains university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc.**”

You may find all syllabus related University Policies and resources information listed on GUP’s Syllabus information web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>

Disclaimer

All information in this syllabus may be subject to change with fair notice by the instructor, the Department of Political Science or San Jose State University.

Course Schedule

INTRODUCTION

Week 1 – January 25

Panorama of Latin American • pp. xiv-18 (VP)

1. POLITICAL INSTABILITY, AUTHORITARIANISM, AND ECONOMIC UNDERDEVELOPMENT

Week 2 – February 1

(1) Colonial Legacy • pp. 18-53, 82-113 (VP)

Week 3 – February 8

(1) Dependency Theory • Valenzuela and Valenzuela (CANVAS)

(2) Modernization Theory • pp. 164-167 (VP)

Week 4 – February 15

(4) U.S. Intervention • pp. 286-311 (VP)

Film: Missing

Week 5 – February 22

Example: The Case of El Salvador • pp. 261-266 (VP)

• pp. 3-162 (Massacre)

Film: Romero

Week 6 – March 1

Exam.

2. ISSUES IN DEMOCRATIZATION AND DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION

Week 7 – March 8

Democracy and Democratization • Huntington (CANVAS)

(1) Religion • pp. 135-152 (VP)

• “Lighting on new faiths...” in Economist (CANVAS)

Week 8 – March 15

(1) Market Liberalization • pp. 172-186 (VP)

• “Adios to Poverty ...” in Economist (CANVAS)

Week 9 – March 22

(1) The Military Legacy • “Slaking a thirst for justice” in Economist (CANVAS)

(2) “Delegative Democracy” • O’Donnell (CANVAS)

Week 10 – April 3

Exam.

3: HOW DO WE UNDERSTAND AND INTERPRET THE NEW LATIN AMERICAN LEFT?

Week 11 – April 10

Understanding Latin American Political Institutions • pp. 210-244 (VP)

Populism • “The Return of Populism” in Economist (RES)

Week 12 – April 17

The Left Turn • TBD

Week 13 – April 24

The Face of the New Left: • pp. 469-495 (VP)

Week 14 – May 1

Selected topics

Week 15- May 8

Selected topics

FINAL EXAM

May 17th.