

San Jose State University
Department of Political Science
Pols 146-01: Latin American Politics, Spring 2020

Course and Contact Information

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| Instructor: | Dr. Sergio Béjar-López |
| Office Location: | Clark 402C |
| Email: | Sergio.Bejar@sjsu.edu (preferred method of contact) |
| Office Hours: | T & TH 1:30pm-2:45pm |
| Class Days/Time: | T & Th 12:00-1:15 pm |
| Classroom: | DMH 160 |

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.

Detailed Course Description

Latin American nations are endowed with enormous natural wealth. Yet, at the same time, they suffer from persistent poverty, income inequality, and low levels of political development. They have endured colonialism, authoritarianism, and a variety of projects for economic development. Events in the region continue to raise questions about the effect of political institutions like democracy, presidentialism, and political parties; the role of the state in economic development; and how we think about democracy and its benefits.

Political Science Learning Outcomes

Breadth: Students should possess a broad knowledge of the theory and methods of the various branches of the discipline.

Application and Disciplinary Methods: Students should be able to formulate research questions, engage in systematic literature searches using primary and secondary sources, evaluate research studies, and critically analyze and interpret influential political texts. Students should be able to apply these techniques to identify, understand, and analyze domestic and international political issues and organizations.

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.

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 (Participation, Midterm exams, and Policy Memo).
- 2) Place Latin American countries in a global perspective (In-class activities, Policy Memo).
- 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 (Participation, In-class activities, Midterm exams, Policy Memo).

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. Computers, tablets, cell phones, etc. may be used for note-taking only in lecture, or to look something up at the request of the professor. Please do all of your emailing and Facebook and twittering and snapchatting and so on outside of lecture.
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

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 (2) In-Class Exams (30% each)
- Policy Memo (20%)
- Participation (10%)
- In-Class Group Activities (10%)

Two In-Class Exams (30% of final grade each).

The exams 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.

Research Design (10% of final grade)

In this assignment, students are asked to formulate a viable and relevant research question drawing from the research discussed in the first section on the state. In just one page, students will (1) state their research question, which must address an actual empirical puzzle of the region or country in the region; (2) formulate one hypothesis to be tested; (3) make explicit whether the DV and main IVs are political, economic, or societal variables (one must be state or regime-related); and (4) identify two sources of data (with full reference and corresponding online link). This exercise will test the causal thinking of students, their skills in designing a research project, and their understanding of the salience and relevance of contemporary Latin American problems. It is due on **February 11th**. Instructions will be posted on CANVAS one week before the assignment is due.

Policy Memo for the president elect of the United States (20% of final grade)

This final assignment gives students the opportunity to carry out research on a Latin American country of their choosing. Students will pick one issue (LGBT, Gender, Indigenous, or Environmental politics) to be explored in one country of the region. Drawing from the concepts and theories covered in the course, they will write a two-page memo to the new US president. The objective is to inform the new US president of the top two issues/problems in this policy area and recommend two policy proposals for the US to pursue through foreign policy. The memo is due on **December 15th**. I will provide specific guidelines for this assignment mid-semester.

Your participation in class is very important. 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 or answer questions and/or if your name is called and you can't answer the question you will receive a "zero" for your participation grade.

Disclaimer 1: I usually know who is in class and who's not, and I have a tendency to call the names of students who are not present. So you can be sure (99.9999%) that if you miss class, you will also miss participation points that session.

Disclaimer 2: Unless you have a medical note, I DO NOT want to receive emails telling me that you will not be in class.

In-class Group Activities (10%)

There will be at least five (5) in-class group activities during the semester. The only task you need to do in order to earn these points is to show up to class and participate in those exercises. The dates for these activities will not be announced, so you need to attend classes regularly if you'd like to earn these "free" points.

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 Work

Missed exams may be re-taken under the following circumstances only:

- 1) Death in the immediate family (parent, spouse, sibling, or child) within 2 weeks before the exam.
- 2) Unforeseeable medical emergency affecting yourself, your spouse, or your child (something beyond feeling under the weather--car accident, major sickness, or the like).
- 3) Participation in an official SJSU-sponsored academic or sporting event.

In the case of reasons (1) or (3), you must give me at least 24 hours advance notice (such as an e-mail or phone call) that you will miss the exam or it may not be made up. I may require supporting documentation. Conflicts with a work schedule and leaving for a non-academic trip or vacation are not an excuse to miss an exam or any other assignment in this class; I suggest that you consult the course schedule in advance and drop the course if you cannot be present for the classes and assignments.

Each day a paper is late will result in a drop of 5 percentage points, e.g., 95% to a 90%, etc.

All work is late if submitted after the date and time specified as the due date, **even if only one minute late**. The number of days late is counted from the due date and time. To ensure fairness (particularly in a large class), this policy will be strictly enforced.

Extra-Credit

There will be NO extra-credit opportunities. If you are looking for a course that allows students to make-up points lost in exams or assignments, this class is not for you.

Grading and Written Work Policies

A plus = 97-100%; A = 93-96.9%; A minus = 90-92.9%
B plus = 87-89.9%; B = 83-86.9%; B minus = 80-82.9%
C plus = 77-79.9%; C = 73-76.9%; C minus = 70-72.9%
D plus = 67-69.9%; D = 63-66.9%; D minus = 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 (January 23)

Broad Economic Trajectories (January 28)

Skidmore Thomas E., Peter H. Smith and James N. Green (2014), *Modern Latin America*, 8th edition, Oxford University Press: New York. Chap. 12.

Broad Political Trajectories (January 30)

Skidmore Thomas E., Peter H. Smith and James N. Green (2014), *Modern Latin America*, 8th edition, Oxford University Press: New York. Chap. 13.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS

Institutional Approach (February 4)

Acemoglu, Daron and James Robinson (2012), *Why Nations Fail*, Crown Publishers: New York, Chap. 3.

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson and James Robinson (2005), "Institutions as a fundamental cause of Long Run Growth" in Aghion Philippe and Steven Durlauf Eds., *Handbook of Economic Growth*, Vol 1A, Chap. 6., pp. 388-396, 421-428, 448-451.

Dependency and Modernization (February 6)

Heller, Patrick, Deitrich Rueschemeyer and Richard Snyder (2009) "Dependency and Development in a Globalized World: Looking Back and Forward", *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 44.

Conning, Jonathan H. and James A. Robinson (2009) "Enclaves and Development: An Empirical Assessment", *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 44.

Valenzuela, J. Samuel and Arturo Valenzuela (1978), "Modernization and Dependency: Alternative Perspectives in the Study of Latin American Underdevelopment," *Comparative Politics*, 10, 4.

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, James A. Robinson, and Pierre Yared (2008) "Income and Democracy." *American Economic Review*, 98:3: 808-842.

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, James A. Robinson, and Pierre Yared (2009) "Reevaluating the Modernization Hypothesis", *Journal of Monetary Economics*, 56, pp. 1043–1058.

COLONIAL LEGACIES AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE STATE

Colonial Legacies: Origins, Institutions, and Inequality (February 11)

Acemoglu, Daron and James Robinson (2012), *Why Nations Fail*, Crown Publishers: New York, Chap. 1

Coatsworth, John H. (2008) "Inequality, Institutions, and Economic Growth in Latin America," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 40: 545-569.

Coatsworth, John H. (2005), "Structures, Endowments, and Institutions in the Economic History of Latin America," *Latin American Research Review*, 40, 3, 2005: 126-144.

Emerging Markets and States: Elite Democracy (February 13)

Skidmore Thomas E., Peter H. Smith and James N. Green (2014), *Modern Latin America*, 8th edition, Oxford University Press: New York.

Safford, Frank (1992) "The Problem of Political Order in Early Republican Spanish America," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 24: 83-97.

POLITICAL INSTABILITY IN THE 20TH CENTURY: SOCIAL CONFLICT, REPRESSION, AND DEMOCRACY

Theories on Democracy and Dictatorship (February 18 & 20)

Acemoglu, Daron and James A. Robinson (2006), *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, Cambridge University Press: New York. Chaps. 1-3.

The Rise of Populism and the Incorporation of the Masses (February 25 & 27)

Skidmore Thomas E., Peter H. Smith and James N. Green (2014), *Modern Latin America*, 8th edition, Oxford University Press: New York.

Womack, John Jr. "The Mexican Revolution", 1910-1920 in Leslie Bethel, ed. *Mexico Since Independence*, Cambridge University Press: New York.

Chacon, Mario, James Robinson and Ragnar Torvik (2011), "When is Democracy an Equilibrium? Theory and Evidence from Colombia's La Violencia", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 55(3) pp. 366-396.

Whitehead, Laurence (2003), "The Bolivian National Revolution: A Twenty-First Century Perspective" in Merilee Grindle and Pilar Domingo Eds. *Proclaiming Revolution: Bolivia in Comparative Perspective*, Harvard University Press: Cambridge.

Insurgency and Revolution (March 3 & 5)

Skidmore Thomas E., Peter H. Smith and James N. Green (2014), *Modern Latin America*, 8th edition, Oxford University Press: New York.

Wickham-Crowley, Timothy (1989), "Winners, Losers, and Also-Rans: Toward a Comparative Sociology of Latin American Guerrilla Movements," In Susan Eckstein, ed. *Power and Popular Protest: Latin American Social Movements*, University of California Press.

Perez, Louis A. Jr. (1993), *Cuba c. 1930-1959 in Cuba: A Short History*, Leslie Bethell, Ed. Cambridge University Press: New York.

Paige, Jeffery (1998) *Coffee and Power: Revolution and the Rise of Democracy in Central America*, Harvard University Press: Cambridge

Review Midterm Exam (March 10)

Midterm Exam 1 (March 12)

Breakdown of Democracy and Rise of Authoritarianism (March 17 & 19)

Skidmore Thomas E., Peter H. Smith and James N. Green (2014), *Modern Latin America*, 8th edition, Oxford University Press: New York.

O'Donnell, Guillermo (1986) "Toward an Alternative Conceptualization of South American Politics," in Peter Klarén and Thomas J. Bossert, eds., *Promise of Development: Theories of Change in Latin America*, Westview Press, pp. 239-275.

Cohen, Youssef (1987) "Democracy from Above: The Political Origins of Military Dictatorship in Brazil," *World Politics*, 40(1): 30-54.

Kornbluh, Peter (2003) *The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability*, The New Press, Chap. 1 (pp. 1-6); Chap. 2.

Democratization (March 24 & 26)

Skidmore Thomas E., Peter H. Smith and James N. Green (2014), *Modern Latin America*, 8th edition, Oxford University Press: New York.

O'Donnell, Guillermo (1999), "Notes for the Study of Processes of Political Democratization in the Wake of the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian State," in *Counterpoints*, University of Notre Dame Press.

Hagopian, Frances (1990) "Democracy by Undemocratic Means: Elites, Political Pacts, and Regime Transition in Brazil", *Comparative Political Studies*, 23(2), pp. 147-169.

Karl, Terry (1990), "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America." *Comparative Politics*, 23(1): pp. 1-21.

THE QUALITY OF DEMOCRACY IN LATIN AMERICA: TOPICS

Macroeconomic Crisis and Economic Reform (April 7)

Skidmore Thomas E., Peter H. Smith and James N. Green (2014), *Modern Latin America*, 8th edition, Oxford University Press: New York.

Williamson, John (2006) "What Washington Means by Policy Reform." In Peter R. Kingstone, ed. *Readings in Latin American Politics*, Houghton Mifflin: Boston, pp. 83-89.

Dysfunctional and Weak States (April 9)

O'Donnell, Guillermo (1993), "On the State, Democratization and some Conceptual Problems: A Latin American View with Glances at some Postcommunist Countries," *World Development*, 21(8): 1355-1369.

Mainwaring, Scott (2006) "The Crisis of Representation in the Andes," *Journal of Democracy*, 17 (3): 13-27.

Von Hau, Matthias (2008), "State Infrastructural Power and Nationalism: Comparative Lessons from Mexico and Argentina" *Studies in International Comparative Development*, 43(3/4).

Political Institutions: Presidentialism, Parties and Checks and Balances (April 14)

Power, Timothy J. (2010), "Optimism, Pessimism, and Coalitional Presidentialism: Debating the Institutional Design of Brazilian Democracy", *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 29(1), 18–33.

Mainwaring, Scott (1990), "Presidentialism in Latin America", *Latin American Research Review*, 25(1): 157-179.

O'Donnell, Guillermo (1994), "Delegative Democracy," *Journal of Democracy*, 5(1)

The Rise of Left-Wing Parties in Latin America (April 16)

Castañeda, Jorge G. (2006) "Latin America's Left Turn," *Foreign Affairs*, 85(3), 28-43.

Mazzuca, Sebastian (2013) "The Rise of Rentier Populism", *Journal of Democracy*, 24(2), pp. 108-122.

Weyland, Kurt (2001), "Clarifying a Contested Concept: Populism in the Study of Latin American Politics," *Comparative Politics*, 34(1): 1-22.

Clientelism and Vote Buying (April 21)

Stokes, Susan C., Thad Dunning, Marcelo Nazareno, and Valeria Brusco (2013) *Brokers, Voters, and Clientelism: The Puzzle of Distributive Politics*, Cambridge University Press: New York.

Gonzalez-Ocantos , Ezequiel, Chad Kiewiet de Jonge, Carlos Melendez, Javier Osorio, and David W. Nickerson (2012), “Vote buying and social desirability bias: Experimental Evidence from Nicaragua”, *American Journal of Political Science*, 56(1):202-217.

Larreguy, Horacio (2013), “Monitoring Political Brokers: Evidence from Clientelistic Networks in Mexico”, Unpublished Manuscript.

Political Resource Curse (April 23)

Monteiro, Joana and Claudio Ferraz (2010) “Does Oil Make Leaders Unaccountable? Evidence from Brazil’s Offshore Oil Boom”, Unpublished Manuscript.

Dube, Oendril and Juan-Fernando Vargas (2013). “Commodity Price Shocks and Civil Conflict: Evidence from Colombia”, forthcoming *The Review of Economic Studies*.

Current Affairs and Other Topics (April 28 & 30)

Review Midterm Exam 2 (May 5)

Midterm Exam 2 (May 7)

Policy Memo (May 13)