

Latin American Politics
PS 3302 Fall 2019
Dr. Gregory W. Saxton

Course Information:

Course Number: PS 3302—001
Location: Science 010
Lecture: MWF 9:00–9:50AM

Instructor Information:

Instructor: Gregory W. Saxton, PhD
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Office Hours: MW 10-11:30 AM, OBA

Overview:

Over the last four decades, Latin America has experienced great political transformations. By the mid-1970s, there were only three democracies in the region: Colombia, Costa Rica, and Venezuela. Meanwhile, other countries cycled through periods of democracy and authoritarian rule. By 2000, the overwhelming majority of Latin Americans were living under electoral democracies, although old and new problems continue to challenge democratic consolidation in the region. In this course, we will take an in-depth examination of three of the most pressing issues facing Latin America today: contentious politics, economic inequality, and the representation of historically marginalized groups. Moreover, we will learn how weak political institutions, crime, violence, and corruption challenge states' ability to address these issues. In investigating these issues and challenges, we will answer three questions:

- 1) In democracies with weak political institutions, how do citizens get representation?
- 2) Poor people often have less access to political resources that allow them to hold elected officials accountable. How do the poor achieve political representation?
- 3) In democracies where not all groups have equitable access to power, how do representatives from historically marginalized groups work within institutions to accomplish their goals?

To answer these questions, we will take an in depth look at three countries: Bolivia, Honduras, and Argentina. Then, we will use a variety of data sources to understand the generalizability of the problems facing Latin America and the solutions to these problems. We will supplement our core class texts with recent political science research on Latin America, as well as current events readings. Articles from the *Economist* and other reputable news sources will help students gain a broader understanding of modern-day Latin America and challenge students to consider the generalizability of class content.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes:

This course is an introduction to contemporary politics in Latin America. It is designed to expose you to many of the central questions in the current study of Latin American politics and the key theories that scholars have developed to answer these questions. More specifically, the class will address questions related to democracy and representation, political institutions, political engagement and participation, and economic inequality. Moreover, this class is designed to make you a more informed citizen of the world. By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of concepts and methods of political science in the Latin American context.
2. Critically assess the validity of major theories in Comparative Politics in explaining political events in contemporary Latin America.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the political history of Latin America and current political events.
4. Critically assess the main challenges and opportunities for the continuity of democracy in various Latin American countries.
5. Use quantitative data to assess the generalizability of core case studies to the rest of Latin America.
6. Communicate trends and patterns in quantitative data to a general audience.

Course Materials

Required Text

We will be reading two academic monographs in this class. Both books are available in paperback at the bookstore or through online retailers such as Amazon.

- 1) *NGOs, Political Protest, and Civil Society* by Carew Boulding (paperback ISBN 9781107659384)
- 2) *Gendering Legislative Behavior: Institutional Constraints and Collaboration* by Tiffany D. Barnes (paperback ISBN 9781316507650)

In addition to the required text, you will be responsible for a variety of additional readings. Most of these readings are short current events stories from the *Economist*. You will also be responsible for reading a handful of recent political science journal articles and book chapters. All of these readings are listed in the course schedule and will be made available on Blackboard.

It is your responsibility to do all of the readings associated with each day in the course schedule *before coming to class*. Rather than using a traditional lecture-based format, this class will revolve heavily around critical discussions of the readings. If I get the sense that students are not completing the readings, I reserve the right to base the day's participation grade on a pop reading quiz.

If you have any sort of problem obtaining either of the required books – either financial or otherwise – please come see me as soon as possible. ***It is my goal for everyone to succeed in this class***, and I do not want issues accessing the books to hinder anyone's progress or success!

Electronic Resources

Blackboard (Bb in course schedule) will be used to post course announcements, course materials, assignments, and grades. Students should access this course on Blackboard as soon as possible, so that problems do not compromise course performance. Students should also make sure they have a current TTU email address on file so that they will receive any emails sent through Blackboard. Students who have problems accessing Blackboard are encouraged to consult:

<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/lms/>

Students are also reminded that all email communication with the instructor must come from a TTU email address.

Earning Your Grade

The grading and assignments for this course have been designed to offer you *a variety of ways to succeed*. Below is a breakdown of how your grade for this course will be assessed.

Preparation and Participation (25%): In lieu of an official grade for attendance, we will have a variety of preparatory and in-class activities/discussions throughout the course of the semester. **This means that you will not earn credit for simply attending class – rather, you must actively participate in the course.** *Sometimes in-class activities will be announced in advance, and at other times they will not.* Examples of preparation/participation assignments include, but are not limited to: pop reading quizzes, short reading/writing assignments, discussion activities, sharing notes with another student, etc. There is no official attendance policy for this class, but students are strongly encouraged to attend lecture. *If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get notes from one of your colleagues.* In-class participation will account for 16 points of your course total. The other 9 points will come from online participation. Specifically, we will have 3 **asynchronous discussions** throughout the course of the semester. Each discussion is worth 3 points of your participation grade.

Country Profile (25%): Each student will have the opportunity to investigate the issues discussed in the course overview through an in-depth country analysis. To do this, we will take a data-driven approach. Students will analyze data from a number of different sources to develop a fuller understanding of democracy, politics, and representation in their country. There will be 5 short assignment due over the course of the semester. Each assignment is worth 5% of your grade. In total, this assignment is worth 25% of your grade. Due dates are outlined in the course schedule.

Midterm Exams (30%, 15% each): Students will take **two midterms** throughout the semester—listed as Exam I and Exam II in the syllabus. These exams are each worth 15% of the student’s final grade. Students will have 50 minutes for each exam, which will be administered in class.

Final Exam (20%): The final exam is comprehensive, meaning it will cover content from the entire semester. The final exam will be administered in-person during the university-scheduled exam time for this class.

Calculating Your Grade

Each assignment will receive a percentage grade and both midterm and final grade formulas will result in a percentage, which will translate into a letter grade using the following scale:

Points	Letter Grade
97-100%	A+
93-96%	A
90-92%	A-
87-89%	B+
83-86%	B
80-82%	B-
...	
59% or below	F

Please do not contact me requesting an arbitrary grade increase. If you have an appeal about an assignment grade besides a simple clerical error, you must type a formal appeal describing the problem. Your appeal should clearly explain why you believe that your original work correctly answered the question and make a cogent argument for improving your grade. Attach a copy of the original work to your appeal. This appeal will not be accepted within two days of the return of the assignments or exam, as the intention of this rule is to allow you time to consider and formulate your appeal and let any emotions cool.

Policies

Attendance and Excused Absences

This course does not have a formal attendance policy. Recall that in lieu of a grade for attendance, students will earn 25% of their grade through preparation and participation activities throughout the course of the semester. Given that most of the concepts introduced in this class are foreign to many students, even students of American politics, there is usually a high correlation between good attendance and high final grades.

Make Up Opportunities

Students who anticipate missing class or an exam can make arrangements **in advance** for an alternate time/date. It is at the instructor's discretion to determine what constitutes a reasonable request for an alternate exam time/date (e.g., "The final exam is on December 9 and I want to leave campus by December 6" is **not** a reasonable request). Students who miss an exam on the day it is given will only be granted a make-up opportunity if they miss because of a documented medical emergency involving themselves or an immediate family member. More specifically:

- In case of an illness that will require an absence from class for more than one week, the student should notify her/his academic dean. The dean's office will inform the student's instructors through the departmental office. In case of class absences because of a brief illness, the student should inform the instructor directly. OP 34.04
- A student must submit any written documentation supporting an excused absence within **one week** after the absence, except when the absence is for the observance of a major religious holiday.
- The Texas state legislature has passed rules governing absences for **religious observances**. TTU OP 34.19 stipulates the following:
 - A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence.
 - A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.
 - A student who is excused under section 2 may not be penalized for the absence; however, the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete the assignment satisfactorily.

Academic Accommodations

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor's office hours. Please note, instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information you may contact the Student Disability Services office in 335 West Hall or 806-742-2405.

LGBTQIA Support

I identify as an ally to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA) community, and I am available to listen and support you in an affirming manner. I can assist in connecting you with resources on campus to address problems you may face pertaining to sexual orientation and/or gender identity that could interfere with your success at Texas Tech. Please note that additional resources are available through the Office of LGBTQIA within the Center for Campus Life, Student Union Building Room 201, www.lgbtqia.ttu.edu, 806.742.5433.

Academic Integrity, Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism are serious crimes and will be handled in accord with Texas Tech University policy. I have no tolerance for this type of behavior. Students caught cheating may receive a failing grade for the course, not simply for the assignment. Remember that copying from internet sources, closely paraphrasing sources, and quoting without citing sources are all forms of plagiarism. For more information on the definitions of and penalties for cheating and plagiarism, please consult the following website: <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/dos/handbook/>

Classroom Behavior, Decorum, and Civility

Please be respectful to others in this class and engage in civil discourse when we discuss topics with a diversity of perspectives. This means coming to class ON TIME and minimizing distractions by not carrying on conversations. Turn mobile phones off during class. Please help maintain the most courteous environment by using a little peer pressure if necessary. Student who violate the rules for civil behavior in class will be told to leave the class. If this is during an in-class activity the student will not receive any credit for the activity. Any personal or discriminatory remarks based on race, sex, religion, age, ethnicity, nationality, or sexual orientation made by students will also result in being asked to leave the classroom.

Laptop Policy. Research consistently shows that laptop usage in the classroom distracts *other* students. If you want to affect your own learning, that's your prerogative. However, you don't have the right to affect your peers' learning. I will not prohibit anyone from using a laptop for notetaking, but please use your best judgment. If I find that you're using your laptop for non-class purposes, I reserve the right to ask you to leave the classroom.

I reserve the right to alter the course schedule. Any changes to the syllabus will be announced in class or via email, as well as posted on Blackboard.

*A Current version of the course schedule will always be available on Blackboard.

***We will be discussing the readings listed for each day in class. Therefore, I expect that everyone will have completed the readings *prior to class*. I also recommend that you bring a copy of the assigned readings to class so that you can easily reference them during lectures and discussions.**

Course Schedule

Week	Assignments
Intro Week	<p>Monday – Welcome to Latin American Politics</p> <p>Wednesday – Latin American political development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapters 1 & 2 in <i>Modern Latin America</i> by Smith and Green - Bb <p>Friday- No in-class meeting – I will be at the American Political Science Association annual conference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “Indigenous People in South America: A Political Awakening” – Bb • Watch <i>Water Rising</i> documentary – Bb or here • Answer movie/reading questions and submit to Bb by 11:59PM on Sunday 9/1
Unit 1: Democratic Consolidation and Contentious Politics in Latin America	
Week 1: Challenges Facing Latin America September 2-6	<p>Monday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NO CLASS – Labor Day – Have a safe and relaxing weekend! <p>Wednesday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Boulding Chapter 1 • Read “The Latinobarometer Poll: When the Tide Goes Out” – Bb <p>Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Boulding Chapter 2
Week 2: Democracy in Latin America September 9-13	<p>Monday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Boulding Chapter 3 • Read “Evo Morales’ Fall from Grace” <p>Wednesday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Boulding Chapter 4 <p>Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “Mining in Latin America: From Conflict to Co-operation” - Bb • Assignment I (Democracy) due on Bb before class starts (i.e., before 9AM)

<p>Week 3: Political Efficacy and Contentious Politics in Latin America September 16-20</p>	<p>Monday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “Education and Engagement Predict Tolerance for Anti-System Protest” – Bb • Asynchronous Discussion 1 opens on Bb at 9AM <p>Wednesday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Boulding Chapter 5 • Read “Mexico and Its NGOs: The New Movers and Shakers” - Bb <p>Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Boulding Chapter 6 • Read “Bolivia on the Brink” – Bb • Read “Bolivia, After the Uprising” – Bb • Asynchronous Discussion 1 closes at 11:59PM
<p>Week 4: What’s Next for Bolivia? September 23-27</p>	<p>Monday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Boulding Chapter 7 • Read “Third Time Unlucky?” • Read “The Movement to Stop Bolivia’s President Evo Morales” – Bb • Assignment II (Protest) due before class (i.e., before 9AM) <p>Wednesday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam Review <p>Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam 1 – 50 minutes in-class
<p>Do the Poor Count? Inequality and Representation in Latin America</p>	
<p>Week 5: Poverty and Economic Inequality in Latin America September 30-October 4</p>	<p>Monday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Read “The Historical Roots of Inequality in Latin America” – Bb • Read “Poverty in Latin America: Don’t Look Down” - Bb • Read “Poverty in Latin America: The ‘Yes, but’ Syndrome” - Bb <p>Wednesday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “Brazil’s Anti-poverty Breakthrough: The Surprising Success of Bolsa Família” • Read “The Anti-Incumbent Effects of Conditional Cash Transfer Programs” (Corrêa and Cheibub 2016) - Bb <p>Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “When is ‘Delivering the Goods’ Not Enough?” (Córdova and Layton 2016) - Bb

<p>Week 6: Clientelism and Representation of the Poor October 7-11</p>	<p>Monday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Do the Poor Count?</i> (Taylor-Robinson 2010) Chapter 1 • Read “What does Authoritarianism have to do with Venezuela’s Food Fight? Everything” – Bb or here <p>Wednesday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Do the Poor Count?</i> (Taylor-Robinson 2010) Chapter 2 • Complete reading guide and bring to class for discussion <p>Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Do the Poor Count?</i> (Taylor-Robinson 2010) Chapter 6 • Read “Brokers, Clientelism and Beyond in Argentina” – Bb or here
<p>Week 7: Representation of the Working-Class October 14-18</p>	<p>Monday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Do the Poor Count</i> (Taylor-Robinson 2010) Chapter 7 – Bb • Assignment III (Inequality) due before class (i.e., before 9AM) <p>Wednesday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “Rethinking the Comparative Perspective on Class and Representation (Carnes and Lupu 2015) – Bb • Read “How Government by the Privileged Distorts Democracy” - Bb <p>Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “The Rich Get Elected – But It’s Not Because Voters Necessarily Prefer Them” – Bb or here • Read “Working-Class Legislators and Perceptions of Representation in Latin America” (Barnes and Saxton 2019) – Bb • Complete reading guide and bring to class for discussion
<p>Week 8: Crime, Violence, and Corruption in Latin America October 21-25</p>	<p>Monday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “Living in Gang-Controlled Neighborhoods: Impacts on Electoral and Nonelectoral Participation in El Salvador” (Córdova 2019) – Bb • Read “Crime in Latin America: A Broken System” - Bb • Asynchronous Discussion 2 opens on Bb at 9AM <p>Wednesday</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “Why did the Drug Cartels Go to War in Mexico?” (Trejo and Ley 2018) - Bb <p>Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “Does Corruption Information Inspire the Fight or Quash Hope?” (Chong, De La O, Karlan, and Wantchekon 2015) - Bb • Read “Brazil’s Biggest Anti-Corruption Investigation Is at a Turning Point” - Bb • Asynchronous Discussion 2 closes at 11:59PM
<p>Week 9: Exam October 28-November 1</p>	<p>Monday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “A Theory of Gender’s Role on Presidential Approval Ratings in Corrupt Times” (Reyes-Housholder 2019) - Bb • Assignment IV (Political Institutions) Due before class (i.e., before 9AM) <p>Wednesday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam Review <p>Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam 2 – 50 minutes in-class
<p>On the Margins: The Representation of Historically Marginalized Groups in Latin America</p>	
<p>Week 10: The Representation of Marginalized Groups November 4-8</p>	<p>Monday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “Gender Quotas a Net Positive for Latin America” – Bb • Read “Gender Quotas Ensure that the Best and Brightest Candidates Are Selected” – Bb <p>Wednesday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Barnes Chapter 1 <p>Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Barnes Chapter 2
<p>Week 11: How Are Groups Marginalized within Institutions? November 11-15</p>	<p>Monday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “Women on the Sidelines” (Heath, Schwindt-Bayer, and Taylor-Robinson 2005) – Bb <p>Wednesday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “Getting to the Top: Career Paths of Women in Latin American Cabinets” (Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson 2009) – Bb <p>Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Barnes Chapter 3 • Read “Wonder Women and Macho Men – Bb
<p>Week 12: How do Institutions Constrain Legislative Representation? November 18-22</p>	<p>Monday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Barnes Chapter 4 • Assignment V (Political Representation) Due before class (i.e., before 9AM) <p>Wednesday</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Barnes Chapter 5 • Read “Women’s Representation and Policy Change” – Bb • Asynchronous Discussion 3 opens on Bb at 9AM <p>Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Barnes Chapter 6
<p>Week 13: Legislative Collaboration and Women’s Representation / Thanksgiving November 25-29</p>	<p>Monday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Barnes Chapter 7 <p>Wednesday: NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Break Friday: NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Break</p>
<p>Week 14: December 2-5</p>	<p>Monday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Barnes Chapter 8 <p>Wednesday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final exam review • Asynchronous Discussion 3 closes at 11:59PM <p>Thursday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Study Day • I will be available for additional office hours
<p>Final Exam: Monday December 9, 7:30AM to 10:00AM Here is a link to the university’s official exam schedule: https://www.depts.ttu.edu/officialpublications/class_schedule/fall_times.php</p>	