

INTA 2241. INTRODUCTION TO LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT
Fall 2020

There are no prerequisites for this course
This course fulfills the Social Science requirement at Georgia Tech
Prof. Alberto Fuentes (alberto.fuentes@inta.gatech.edu)

Overview

This course introduces students to the political economy of Latin America. It is divided into three parts. In the first part, students will examine current similarities and differences across the region's socio-economic and political landscape. In the second part, they will review the political dynamics that have swept across the region's countries over the past century. In the third part, students will explore the strategies of economic development pursued over this same period. This introductory course will prepare students to better understand and evaluate Latin America's political and socio-economic achievements and failures. Students will also be ready for more advanced courses on Latin American politics and government.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence social behavior
2. Use this knowledge in a practical problem-solving way to analyze and address issues of immediate international concern (Problem-solving in International Affairs)
 - a. Understand relevant political, economic and social concepts and debates
 - b. Assess different approaches and frameworks to interpret and evaluate key questions and problems in contemporary Latin American politics and government
3. Enhance their awareness of the diversity of ethical systems in the world (Cultural and Ethical Awareness)
4. Express their arguments clearly and effectively both in written reports and class discussions (Professional Development)

Teaching Mode

This course is taught in a fully remote mode. Lecture recordings will be posted on Canvas on a weekly basis. All requirement instructions will similarly be posted on Canvas, and students will submit all assignments through Canvas.

Readings:

Required text: Skidmore et al. "Modern Latin America," Eighth Edition. Oxford University Press, 2014.

All additional readings will be available on the class website on Canvas.

Requirements

Assignment	Due Date(s)	% Final Grade
Responses to Discussion Board Questions (x 11, lowest one dropped)	Weekly (see below), by noon ET on Sunday	20%
Worksheets (x 11, lowest one dropped)	Weekly (see below), by noon ET on Friday	40%
Short essay	September 11, by noon ET	10%
Midterm exam	October 30, by noon ET	10%
Final project	December 3, by noon ET	20%

Description of Requirements

1. **Discussion Board Questions.** On most weeks, the professor will post one or more discussion questions on Canvas in connection with the lectures. Questions will invite students to take sides on a debate, explore the possible implications of a particular argument, react to a reading, etc. Students are expected to (1) provide a thoughtful response to the discussion question(s); and (2) respond to peers' discussion threads. Grades will be based on both the quantity and quality of the responses. There will be 11 weekly discussion board questions throughout the semester. The lowest-graded response will be dropped, and the remaining ten will account for 20% of the final grade (2% each).
2. **Worksheets.** On most weeks, students will complete a worksheet covering a prominent case related to the week's topic. While students will submit each worksheet individually, they are strongly encouraged to discuss responses with members of their assigned group, and some responses must incorporate other group members' inputs. All worksheets require both specific assigned readings, as well as additional independent research. There will be 11 worksheets throughout the semester. The lowest-graded worksheet will be dropped, and the remaining 10 will comprise 40% of the final grade (4% each).
3. **Short essay.** At the end of Part I (Current Political and Socio-Economic Patterns) of the course, students will receive a prompt for a short essay (3 double-space pages, 12-point font, 1-inch margins). Students will have 72 hours to complete the essay. The essay will account for 10% of the final grade.
4. **Midterm take-home exam.** At the end of Part II (Political Dynamics) of the course, students will receive four prompts. They will select two of those prompts, and write short responses for each one (1.5 double-spaced pages, 12-point font, 1-inch margins for each response). Students will have 72 hours to complete the exam. The exam will account for 10% of the final grade.
5. **Final group project.** At the end of the course, students will be assigned to groups to work on a joint project combining individual and group products. Instructions will be provided on November 20. The products will be due on December 3. The project will account for 20% of the final grade.

Grading Scale

Final grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	65-69%
F	0-64%

Policy for Late Assignments

Late assignments are strongly discouraged, except in the event of an illness or emergency (documentation will be requested). Any major scheduling conflicts – including those that arise due to participation in “approved Institute activities” – should be discussed with the professor at least two weeks before the assignment due date. For assignments turned in 24 hours late or less, the penalty will be a deduction of 20% off the assignment grade. No assignments turned in over 24 hours late will be accepted.

Feedback and contact with the faculty

1. **Online Lecture Recordings and Responses.** The professor will post pre-recorded lectures for each week on the Canvas website. Those lectures, alongside the week’s discussion question(s) and worksheet, will be available each Monday by 6 a.m. ET. Where appropriate, the professor will also post video recordings responding to student questions and comments.
2. **Virtual Office Hours.** The professor will meet with students during virtual office hours to answer any questions or concerns. To schedule a meeting, students should email the professor to make the necessary arrangements. All meetings will be conducted using BlueJeans.
3. **Email Policy.** Email is the best way to contact the professor. Students should expect responses within a 24-hour period during weekdays, and 48 hours during the weekend. In every email, students should include the course number in the subject line (i.e. INTA 2241).

Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities

The professor will work with Office of Disability Services so that all students have an equal opportunity for success. For information, call (404)89-2563. Information is also available at:

<http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>

Academic integrity and Honor Code

While students are encouraged to work together and collaborate with each other, they should clearly differentiate their work from that of others, including their peers and bibliographical sources. Complete and accurate representation of all direct quotations and paraphrased material is required. Plagiarizing or cheating will be addressed in accordance with the Georgia Tech Honor Code. For information, please visit:

<http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/>

<http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>

Week	Topic	Readings
PART I. CURRENT POLITICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC PATTERNS		
Week 1 August 17-23	Lecture 1. Introduction	
	Lecture 2. Political Patterns: Varieties of Democracy	<p>Goñi, U. "Uruguay Quiet Democratic Miracle." <i>The New York Times</i>, February 9, 2016.</p> <p>Robles, F. "Nicaragua has a simple message for protesters: Don't." <i>The New York Times</i>, December 26, 2019.</p>
	Worksheet 1. The Oldest Running Democracy (due August 21)	<p>SSG. "Politics and Policy: Costa Rica," pp. 108-110.</p> <p>Bello. "The ills of Latin American democracy." <i>The Economist</i>, February 18, 2018.</p> <p>"Costa Rica Country Report: Outlook for 2020-2024." <i>The Economist Intelligence Unit</i>, February 20, 2020.</p>
Week 2 August 24-30	Lecture 3. Political Patterns: The Ideological Spectrum (and Actors)	<p>De la Jara and Taj. "An election that defines the two faces of Chile." <i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i>.</p> <p>Paley, D. "The Honduran Business Elite one year after the coup." <i>NACLA</i>, November 30, 2017.</p>
	Lecture 4. Political Patterns: Non- Democracies	<p>VICE NEWS. "Behind the protests in Caracas: Venezuela rising." (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PwQcVx9-bpw)</p> <p>Gilsinan, M. "How Did Fidel Castro Hold On to Cuba for So Long?" <i>The Atlantic</i>, November 26, 2016.</p>
	Worksheet 2. Sliding Democracies? (due August 28)	<p>Bello. "Does Jair Bolsonaro threaten Brazilian democracy?" <i>The Economist</i>, June 11, 2020.</p> <p>Economist. "Bolivia needs an election, but covid-19 makes that hard." May 16, 2020.</p> <p>"Bolivia Country Report: Outlook for 2020-2024." <i>The Economist Intelligence Unit</i>, February 20, 2020.</p> <p>"Brazil Country Report: Outlook for 2020-2024." <i>The Economist Intelligence Unit</i>, February 20, 2020.</p>

Week 3 August 31 – September 6	Lecture 5. Socio-Economic Patterns: Output	Economist. “Latin America’s Economies: Learning the lessons of stagnation.” June 27, 2015.
	Lecture 6. Socio-Economic Patterns: Poverty and Inequality	Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC). <i>Social Panorama of Latin America, 2018</i> . Santiago, Chile, 2019. (read “Summary,” pp. 17 – 32). Newman, L. “The other side of Chile’s economic miracle.” <i>Al Jazeera</i> , November 16, 2013.
	Worksheet 3. The Argentine Stagnation (due September 4)	Economist. “The Tragedy of Argentina: A century of decline.” February 17, 2014. Beattie, A. “Argentina: The superpower that never was.” <i>Financial Times</i> , May 22, 2009. “Argentina Country Report: Outlook for 2020-2024.” <i>The Economist Intelligence Unit</i> , March 17, 2020.
Week 4 September 7 - 13	Lecture 7. Socio-Economic Patterns: Human Development and Covid-19	Goñi, U. “Uruguay and Paraguay buck Latin America coronavirus trend,” <i>The Guardian</i> , June 25, 2020. Friedman, U. “The Coronavirus-Denial Movement Now Has a Leader,” <i>The Atlantic</i> , March 27, 2020
	SHORT ESSAY (due September 11)	
PART II. POLITICS		
Week 5 September 14 – 20	Lecture 8. Oligarchic Democracy	SSG pp. 370 – 373 SSG “Argentina” pp. 236 – 247
	Lecture 9. Co-optative Democracy	SSG “Chile” pp. 268 – 277 SSG “Brazil” pp. 296 – 314
	Worksheet 4. Colombia’s unstable regimes (due September 18)	SSG “Colombia,” pp. 184 – 201
Week 6 September 21 – 27	Lecture 10. The Strongmen	SSG “Venezuela” pp. 212 – 224
	Lecture 11. The Mexican Revolution	SSG “Mexico,” pp. 47 – 60
	Worksheet 5. The Great Depression as a Critical Juncture (due September 25)	SSG 373 – 380 Collier, Ruth Berins, and David Collier. “Critical junctures and historical legacies.” (1991)

Week 7 September 28 – October 4	Lecture 12. Populist Alliances	SSG “Brazil,” pp. 314 – 332 SSG “Mexico” pp. 60 – 75
	Lecture 13. Bureaucratic Authoritarianism	SSG “Argentina” pp. 247 – 261 SSG “Chile” pp. 277 – 293
	Worksheet 6. Human Rights under Military Rule in Argentina (due October 2)	Goldman, F. “Children of the Dirty War.” <i>The New Yorker</i> , March 19, 2012
Week 8 October 5 – 11	Lecture 14. The Revolution in Plantation Economies	SSG pp. 380 – 384
	Lecture 15. Cases of Revolution: Nicaragua and El Salvador	SSG “Central America” pp. 79 – 111
	Worksheet 7. The Cuban Revolution (due October 9)	SSG “Cuba” pp. 112 – 141
Week 9 October 12 – 18	Lecture 16. Long- standing democracies	SSG “Colombia” pp. 201 – 211 SSG “Venezuela” pp. 224 – 228
	Lecture 17. The Third Cycle of Democracy	SSG pp. 384 – 395 SSG “Argentina” pp. 262 – 265 SSG “Chile” 293 – 295 SSG “Brazil” pp. 332 – 339
	Worksheet 8. Mexico’s return to democracy (due October 16)	SSG “Mexico” pp. 76 – 78
	Lecture 18. Rise and Fall of the New Left	SSG “Venezuela” pp. 228 – 235 Anderson, J. “Post-script: Hugo Chavez, 1954 – 2013.” <i>New Yorker</i> , March 5, 2013.
Week 10 October 19 – 25	Lecture 19. Conservative Alternatives	Miroff, N. “Juan Manuel Santos: The risk-taking Colombian president who lost a peace vote but won a Peace Prize.” <i>The Washington Post</i> , October 7, 2016.
	Worksheet 9. The rise of the nationalists (due October 23)	Anderson, J. “Jair Bolsonaro’s Souther Strategy,” <i>The New Yorker</i> , March 25, 2019. Krauze, E. “Mexico’s Ruinous Messiah,” <i>New York Review of Books</i> , July 2, 2000.

Week 11 October 26 – November 1	Lecture 20. Democracies under stress in the era of COVID-19?	Bello. “Lessons from history.” <i>The Economist</i> , June 27, 2020. Bello. “The Inca trail leads to Populism.” <i>The Economist</i> , July 25, 2020. Economist. “Gimme Shelter.” July 18, 2020.
	MIDTERM EXAM (due October 30)	
PART III. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
Week 12 November 2 – 8	Lecture 21. The Liberal Era	SSG pp. 343 – 349 Economist. “Raul Prebisch: Latin America’s Keynes.” March 5, 2009.
	Lecture 22. Import-Substitution Industrialization	SSG pp. 350 –354 Kandell, J. “José López Portillo, President When Mexico's Default Set Off Debt Crisis, Dies at 83.” <i>The New York Times</i> , February 18, 2004.
	Worksheet 10. The PETROBRAS Case (due November 6)	Petrobras. “Our history.” (http://www.petrobras.com.br/en/about-us/our-history/) Priest, T. “Petrobras in the History of Offshore Oil” in ed. Schneider, B. <i>New Order and Progress: Development and Democracy in Brazil</i> . Oxford University Press, 2016. (pp. 53-77) Review: Economist. “Latin America’s Economies: Learning the lessons of stagnation.” June 27, 2015.
Week 13 November 9 – 15	Lecture 23. The Socialist Alternative	SSG, pp. 354-358 Frank, A.G. <i>Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution</i> . MR, New York, 1969. (read pp. 3-9)
	Lecture 24. The Turn to Neoliberalism	SSG pp. 358 – 364 Anderson, J. “How Mexico deals with Trump.” <i>The New Yorker</i> , October 9, 2017. Felter and Renwick. “Mercosur: South America’s Fractious Trade Bloc.” <i>Council on Foreign Relations</i> , September 13, 2017.
	Worksheet 11. Neoliberalism on the southern Pacific coast (due November 13)	Review: Newman, L. “The other side of Chile’s economic miracle.” <i>Al Jazeera</i> , November 16, 2013. SSG “The Andes” (section on Peru), pp. 155 – 166 (especially 162 – 164).

Week 14 November 16 – 22	Lecture 25. The Great Recession of 2008: A Challenge to Neoliberalism	Cypher, J. “Mexico’s economic collapse.” <i>NACLA</i> , July/August 2010. “Lessons from Brazil: Why is it bouncing back while other markets stumble?” <i>Knowledge@Wharton</i> , November 11, 2009.
	Lecture 26. New Alternative Strategies	De Sousa Santos, Boaventura. “Can Rafael Correa deliver his citizens’ revolution for Ecuador?” <i>The Guardian</i> , May 29, 2014. Neuman, W. “Turnabout in Bolivia as Economy Rises from Instability.” <i>New York Times</i> , February 16, 2014. Bello. “How Deep is their love?” <i>Economist</i> , March 12, 2015. SSG “The Andes” (sections on Bolivia, Ecuador), pp. 165 – 183
	Lecture 27. The Covid-19 Collapse: A critical juncture?	Economist, “A new era of economics: starting over again.” <i>The Economist</i> , July 25, 2020. FINAL PROJECT INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED