

# **POLI 238: CONTEMPORARY LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS**

*Spring 2018*

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<b>Instructor:</b> Federico Fuchs	<b>Time &amp; Place:</b> TBD
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## **Course Overview**

This course provides an introduction to the study of Latin American politics. It is aimed at students with no prior knowledge of the area, but a desire to understand how Latin American societies and governments are organized and what major problems these societies face. The course focuses particularly on two interrelated issues: democratic consolidation and economic development. Throughout the semester, students incorporate conceptual tools that allow them to understand both the common trends and the diverse paths followed by countries in the region.

The first part of the course explores the broad trends that guide political and economic development in the region. The second part of the course applies the analytical tools developed in the first part to selected cases that display diverse historical paths: Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Brazil and Cuba. Each country case is also used to present one contemporary issue in democratic consolidation or economic development: electoral politics and clientelism, socioeconomic inequality, organized violence and democracy, race and politics, and relations between Latin America and the United States.

During the course, students will gain specific knowledge about the region as a whole, and certain cases in particular; acquire analytic tools that can be transferred to the understanding of world and domestic politics; and develop general skills, such as disposition for team work, collaborative problem solving and public speech.

## **Your Instructor**

### **Federico Fuchs**

Department of Political Science

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## **Course Organization**

The course will meet twice a week in plenary sessions for one hour and fifteen minutes. These meetings will combine lectures by the instructor with active participation of students in individual and group activities. Students are expected to read assignments in advance and to actively engage in the discussion of assigned materials.

## Course Requirements

### Participation (25%)

#### Attendance and Individual Participation in Lectures

Attendance is just a part of what is required of you in this course. I also expect you to come prepared to actively and critically discuss the issues raised by lectures and readings on the topic at hand. This entails being familiar with all assigned materials. Active and informed participation is the only way in which I can assess your performance other than written exams, and is thus a crucial component of your final grade in the course.

For everyone to get the chance to participate and share their views, I expect you to show respect for the opinions of other participants and to collaborate in maintaining an orderly discussion. By all means, if you feel that your opinions are not being respected, or if you feel mistreated in any way, do not hesitate to contact me.

#### Discussion Question (Part I of the course, must sign up during the first class)

As part of the regular activities for this course, I will ask you to submit a question for general discussion once in the semester, during the first part of the course. Students must sign up for predetermined slots during the first week. You must submit a discussion question at least once in the semester. The objective here is to improve students' capacity to understand and engage challenging material. I will use the submitted questions to guide general discussion after each lecture.

Some ideas on what to consider while coming up with discussion questions: What are the main concepts introduced by the readings? How do they relate to issues presented in the lectures and other readings? Are there any aspects of the readings that are unclear or hard to grasp? I also encourage you to take advantage of the opportunity to submit questions to clear any doubts, don't wait until the midterm. It is perfectly ok to ask if you do not understand something from the readings or the lectures, and it will not hurt your grade if you ask about it (if anything, it will improve it since you'll have a better understanding of the subject). This is also a good chance for you to suggest the topics that you find interesting, and to anticipate possible exam questions.

In order for me to plan the class ahead, discussion questions are due by 5 pm on the day previous to the class for which you are scheduled to submit a question. I encourage you to present them earlier at your convenience, but any late submissions will impact your grade. If you submit your questions so late that I am unable to consider them for that week, you will receive zero credit for them.

#### Group Presentation (Part II of the course, must sign up during week 3)

During the second part of the course, students will also develop their capacity for teamwork and collaborative problem solving, as well as their public speech skills, besides gaining specialized knowledge on a country through a case study. Each student will select a country and work together with other 4-5 students on a presentation due sometime during weeks 10 to 15 (see schedule below). Groups are expected to produce a presentation of about 30 minutes on the selected country, using one or several of the concepts analyzed during

Part I of the course. The objective is to give other students an idea of the current political and/or economic situation of the selected case, while showing command of analytical tools developed throughout the course.

I will pass a sign-up sheet during the first week of classes for you to select convenient dates to submit discussion questions and the same procedure will take place during the third week to sign up for group presentations. You will be able to change these dates afterwards (we will use the Sign-up tool available on Sakai), but only with previous consent on my part and respecting the maximum number of slots available to present (I will set this limit during our first session depending on enrollment).

### **Midterm Exam (25%)**

An in-class midterm exam will be given on February 27th. The exam will cover all topics discussed during the first half of the semester. You are responsible for mastering all course materials, including aspects of the required readings that may not have been discussed during class. Further information about the format of the exam will be provided during the semester.

### **Term Paper (30 %)**

Students will write an analytical research paper on a topic of their choice. This is an opportunity for them to learn more about a topic that they find interesting. A one-page proposal is due on March 30th (there will be a class devoted to this assignment on February 13th). I expect students to meet with me before November 1st in order to receive feedback on their proposal. Papers should be written in an academic style and should be 10 pages long (Times New Roman, 12pt font size, double spaced, 1 inch margins). They are due at the beginning of class on April 24th. A late paper will result in a letter-grade reduction per day late. Turning the proposal late will lead to a 3-point decrease per day of your paper grade.

### **Final Exam 30%**

An in-class final exam will be given on Tuesday May 1<sup>st</sup>, at 8am. The exam will cover the material discussed during the *entire semester*. Further information will be provided later in the semester.

*If you have any problems complying with these requirements, please let me know before the end of the second week of classes.* If you have a valid concern or impediment, we will figure out a solution together as long as you let me know by then, but **I will not accept any late excuses.**

## Important Dates

<b>Sign up for discussion question:</b>	<b>January 18<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Sign up for group presentations:</b>	<b>January 30<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Midterm:</b>	<b>February 2<sup>nd</sup></b>
<b>Term paper due:</b>	<b>April 24<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Final Exam:</b>	<b>May 1<sup>st</sup></b>

## Other Class Policies and Rules

### Honor Code

You are welcome to study and discuss course materials in groups, but all work you submit *must* be your own (except of course for the group assignments, where collaboration is expressly required). Involvement in any form of dishonest conduct prohibited by the Code will be severely penalized. This means that you may fail the course, and probably be subject to further disciplinary actions (for more information visit <http://studentconduct.unc.edu/>). We will discuss citation rules and related topics when we address the issue of midterm papers in class. If at any point during the course you have doubts about this subject, please contact me.

### Punctuality

Please be on time, late arrivals are disruptive and distracting and so I appreciate your cooperation.

### Makeups

There are **no makeup exams**. Examinations, if missed, can only be made up if (1) a student confronts sickness or medical emergency, or (2) if there are other extenuating circumstances that the instructor deems justifiable. In the case of sickness/medical emergency, the student will be **required** to justify the absence according to University policy.

### Extra Credit

Students may not, under any circumstances, retake an exam or repeat an assignment, nor can they turn in work for “extra credit.”

## Computers in class

I **strongly** encourage everyone to stick to pen and paper in note taking and to leave your computers outside the classroom. If, however, you decide to bring one, I will remove that privilege as soon as I find that it is preventing you from fully engaging in the discussion.

## Contacting your instructor

I prefer to be contacted by email whenever possible, or during office hours. I will try to answer all emails as soon as possible, but please allow for 48 hours unless it is an emergency. In order to facilitate my prompt response, **please make sure to include the name of the class (Poli 238), this will guarantee that the email is not sent to the junk mail folder, and that I will see it and reply.** If you are emailing because you believe there is an error with your grade, please write one paragraph explaining why you think your grade is inadequate. I will not consider cases in which the student does not have an explanation to support his or her claim. If we arrange a meeting to discuss this issue, please make sure to bring the paper/quiz/exam that raises your concerns. Finally, you must understand that reevaluation of your work means you can get a higher grade, but also a lower one.

## Changes to the Syllabus

I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus, including project due dates and test dates (excluding the officially scheduled final examination), when unforeseen circumstances occur or when otherwise necessary. I will announce these changes as early as possible so that students can adjust their schedules. Announcements made through the Sakai site and via email are considered part of the policies of the course, and cannot be ignored or disregarded in any way without consequences to your grades.

## Grading Policy

Letter grades will be assigned using the following scale:

A	95 or greater	C	73-76.9
A-	90-94.9	C-	70-72.9
B+	87-89.9	D+	67-69.9
B	83-86.9	D	63-66.9
B-	80-82.9	D-	60-62.9
C+	77-79.9	F	less than 60

## Recommended Course Books

Skidmore, Smith and Green. *Modern Latin America*. 8th Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Additional reading materials will be made available electronically on the Sakai webpage for the course.

## Class Schedule and Assignments

### PART I: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL TOOLS

#### Global Trends

##### Week 1

1/11 – Introduction: Syllabus Review - Student feedback

##### Week 2

1/16 – From Conquest to Independence I: Colonial Rule

Skidmore, Smith and Green. *Modern Latin America*. 8th Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013, Chapter 2: “The Colonial Foundations”.

1/18 – No Class

##### Week 3

1/23 – From Conquest to Independence II: Historical Legacies

Skidmore, Smith and Green, 2013, Chapter 2: “The Colonial Foundations”.

1/25 – Politics of Development

Skidmore, Smith and Green, Chapter 12, up to, but not including, “Revolutionary Movements” (pages vary by edition).

##### Week 4

1/30 – Politics of Development II

Duncan Green, “State versus Market: The Rise and Fall of Import Substitution,” pp. 75-83 [6]; John Williamson, “What Washington Means by Policy Reform,” pp. 83-89 [6] in Kingstone, Peter R., *Readings in Latin American Politics: Challenges to Democratization*.

2/1 – Crisis of ISI

Skidmore, Smith and Green, Chapter 13 up to, but not including, “The Revolutionary Path”].

**Week 5**

2/6 – Neoliberalism

Skidmore, Smith and Green, Chapter 12, sections: "Neoliberalism", "Free Trade" and "Countermeasures", (pages vary by edition). - TBD

2/8 – Neoliberalism

Evelyn Huber and Fred Solt, "Successes and Failures of Neoliberalism" in *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 39, No. 3, October 2004.

**Week 6**

2/13 – The Politics of Democratic Breakdowns

Collier, David. 1979. "Overview of the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian Model," in David Collier (ed.) *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

– Authoritarianism and Democracy. The Long Run: Cycles of Democracy (Intro)

Peter Smith. 2005. *Democracy in Latin America: Political Change in Comparative Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). Chapter 1

2/15 – Authoritarianism and Democracy. The Long Run: Cycles of Democracy (Continued)  
+ The Short Run: Transitions (Intro)

Peter Smith. 2005. Chapter 1 & Chapter 2

**Week 7**

2/20 – Authoritarianism and Democracy II. The Short Run: Transitions (Continued)

Peter Smith. 2005, Chapter 2

– **Final Paper Topics / Group Presentation Discussion**

2/22 – Midterm review

**Week 8**2/27 – **MIDTERM**

3/1 – Latin America's Left Turn

Roberts, Kenneth – "From the 'End of Politics' to a New 'Left Turn': The Re-politicization of Social Exclusion in Latin America," Manuscript, pp. 1-25.

**PART II: CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES TO DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT****Case Studies****Week 9**

3/6 – Introduction to Part II: Contemporary Challenges to Democracy and Development

3/8 – Lecture by guest speaker

**Week 10**

3/13 – NO CLASS (Spring Break)

3/15 – NO CLASS (Spring Break)

**Week 11**

3/20 – Argentina. The Shadow of Peronism: Political and Economic Instability in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Skidmore, Smith and Green, Chapter 9, “Argentina: Progress, Stalemate, Discord”. (Selection)

3/22 – Argentina (continued). **Student Presentations: Group 1.**

Special topic: Clientelism.

Auyero, Javier. 2000. “The Logic of Clientelism in Argentina: An Ethnographic Account” in Latin American Research Review Vol.36, No.1, pp.55-81.

**Week 12**

3/27 – Chile: Repression and Democracy

Skidmore, Smith and Green, Chapter 10, “Chile: Repression and Democracy”. (Selection)

3/29 – Chile (continued). **Student Presentations: Group 2.**

Special topic: Inequality.

Zimmerman, Seth. 2017. “Making the One Percent: The Role of Elite Universities and Elite Peers”. Working Paper.

**Week 13**

4/3 – Mexico: The Long Road Between Revolution and Democracy

Skidmore, Smith and Green, Chapter 3, “Mexico: The Taming of a Revolution.” (Selection)

4/5 – Mexico (continued). **Student Presentations: Group 3.**

Special topic: Violence and democracy.



Trejo, Guillermo and Sandra Ley. 2017. "Why Did Drug Cartels Go to War in Mexico? Subnational Party Alternation, the Breakdown of Criminal Protection, and the Onset of Large-Scale Violence." *Comparative Political Studies*.

#### **Week 14**

4/10 – Brazil: Electoral Democracy and Ethnic Cleavages

Skidmore, Smith and Green, Chapter 11, "Brazil: The Awakening Giant". (Selection)

4/12 – Brazil (continued). **Student Presentations: Group 4.**

Special topic: Race and politics.

Edward E. Telles, "Racial Ambiguities among the Brazilian Population" (2010)

#### **Week 15**

4/17 – Cuba: The Socialist Alternative

Skidmore, Smith and Green, Chapter 5: Cuba: Key Colony, Socialist State. (Selection)

4/19 – Cuba (continued). **Student Presentations: Group 5.**

Special topic: US-LA relations.

Schoultz, Lars. "Latin America and the United States" in *Latin America after Neoliberalism. Turning the Tide in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?* Edited by Eric Hershberg and Fred Rosen, pp. 49-71 [22].

#### **Week 16**

4/24 – Special Topic Selected by Students

4/26 – *Final Review*

#### **Week 17**

5/1 – **Final Exam**