

LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS

Department of Political Science
Carleton College
POSC 221

Tuesdays and Thursdays
3:10 PM to 4:55 PM
Willis Hall 204

Professor

Juan Diego Prieto
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Office Hours

Tuesdays, 5:00-6:30 PM, and Thursdays, 1:30-3:00 PM (Willis 407)
By appointment (Willis 407 or Zoom)

“Cinco siglos igual” [“Five centuries, all the same”]
– Argentine folk song by León Gieco

“Cambia, todo cambia” [“It changes, it all changes”]
– Chilean folk song by Julio Numhauser

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines dynamics of continuity and change in Latin American politics with a focus on historical trends of political, economic, and social inclusion and exclusion. It provides a historical perspective aimed at analyzing whether and how present-day processes and challenges may be traced back to historical legacies, as well as how various political and societal forces have transformed the course of history. The course explores Latin America’s experiences with authoritarianism and democracy, its experiments with state-led and market-oriented economic models, and its governments’ successes and failures at addressing poverty, inequality, and violence through revolutionary and reformist means.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will attain a rich understanding of many of the challenges facing Latin America in historical and comparative perspective. The goal is not to memorize dates and facts about the region’s history but to put its political, economic, and social developments in context and develop well-informed arguments about dynamics of change and continuity in Latin American politics. Through the study of key issues and themes in Latin America, students will develop a set of conceptual tools and theoretical knowledge they can use to understand political realities around the world—from the rise and fall of democracies and dictatorships to economic policies, state building processes, and social movements—through a comparative lens. Students will also cultivate their writing and verbal communications skills and strengthen their ability to make careful, compelling, and critical arguments about political, economic, and social problems and processes.

COURSE MATERIALS, REQUIREMENTS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

All required and recommended materials are available on Moodle (<https://moodle.carleton.edu>).

Course Components and Assessment

The requirements for this course involve both completing assignments on your own and contributing to class discussions and activities. All of your written work will be submitted electronically. Your grade will be based on the following requirements.

Summary

- Class Engagement: 20%
- Weekly Quizzes: 10%
- Short Argumentative Essay: 20%
- Debate and Opinion Column: 20%
- Comparative Case Study Research Project: 30%
 - Pre-proposal: Ungraded
 - Proposal: 5%
 - Outline: 8%
 - Final paper: 17%

Class Engagement

Attendance and participation in every class are required. Please arrive on time and stay until the end of each session. There is no way to “make up” a missed class (though I am understanding about family emergencies, illnesses, or other serious difficulties). Importantly, your class engagement grade requires much more than being physically present in the classroom. It requires being prepared for class, having completed all of the assigned readings, contributing actively and constructively to discussions and activities, and behaving professionally. Ask questions, answer my discussion prompts, point to passages in the reading, and share your informed opinions (even if you feel they are not yet fully formed). Constructive engagement also requires all of us to contribute to fostering a positive environment for everyone to participate, including those of us who are introverted, not as used to public speaking, or who do not feel as confident with the course material. Learning when to step back and let others speak is just as important as speaking frequently.

Weekly Quizzes

Quizzes have a bad reputation. Yet research in the psychology of learning shows that, when done right, they can have great payoffs. The quizzes for this class are not meant to stump you or force you to memorize every minute detail from the readings, podcasts, and other materials. Instead, they are designed as low-stakes opportunities to practice recalling key information, concepts, arguments, and debates. In addition, considering the negative implications of falling behind on reading assignments, these quizzes are intended to help you keep up with the readings and strengthen your reading and note-taking skills. Finally, quizzes will provide me with information about the material that students find difficult, and to uncover any gaps or problem areas early on so we can adjust your approach to reading and studying as well as my teaching methods. The questions for these quizzes will come directly from the study questions and key terms that I will post on Moodle ahead of each class meeting. If you are in quarantine, we will find an alternative assignment; otherwise, the quizzes cannot be rescheduled or made up. In addition, your two lowest scores will not count toward your total grade.

Short Argumentative Essay

You will write one short essay (between 900 and 1,100 words in length) on the contents of the first half of the class. The goal of this assignment is to make “big-picture” connections between political and economic developments of Latin America over the 20th century. Your essay must analyze a question and develop an argument that addresses that question in a critical, measured, conceptually sound, and empirically grounded manner. Options for the prompt will be provided ahead of time, along with documents providing guidelines and tips for writing assignments, as well as grading criteria. The essay will be due on October 29.

Debate and Opinion Column

During the first part of the course, we will have two in-class debates, one about economic development strategies and one about transitions to democracy. Each student will take active part in one debate and serve as juror in the other one. Debate jurors will also turn in a brief opinion column (under 500 words) on the topic address during the debate. Your grade on this activity will be split between your active debate participation (15%) and your opinion column (5%).

Comparative Case Study Research Project

For the final project, each student will conduct a comparative case study analysis in connection with a contemporary political issue. You will select two of the following countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, or Venezuela) and address a research puzzle related to one of three themes: 1) Democratic backsliding, 2) The politics of COVID-19, or 3) A historically marginalized social group. You will work incrementally on your paper at different points throughout the term and receive multiple rounds of feedback. More specific instructions will be provided separately. The final paper will be due on the last day of the exam period.

Grading

Your grade will reflect your time, hard work, and commitment to the class. I have high standards, and my job is to work with you as you develop the skills needed to meet those standards. Each assignment will have its own grading rubric. I will be using the following grading scale:

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F
> 93	92.99-90	89.99-87	86.99-83	82.99-80	79.99-77	76.99-73	72.99-70	69.99-60	< 60

Grade complaints. Grade complaints must be submitted at least 24 hours after the assignment has been returned to you but no more than one week later. Please submit a formal written appeal via email explaining why you think your grade is incorrect and should be changed. Your appeal should be clear, specific, and based on the contents of your submitted work, the grading criteria, and the gap between them. Schedule a time to meet with me and discuss your appeal. The second grade, higher or lower, will become your grade on the assignment.

EXPECTATIONS AND NORMS

Respect. Please treat everyone in the class with respect. We will sometimes discuss politically charged issues. We must be able to think through, interrogate, and discuss these issues in a safe environment, free from judgement or fear of reprisal.

The learning process. You are expected to read, think, criticize, and develop original and sophisticated arguments. You must keep up with reading assignments and attend class regularly. You must be prepared at all times to discuss the readings and concepts from previous lectures. You should be aware that learning is a process and a social, collective endeavor, and you are encouraged—and expected—to share your thoughts and ideas as works in progress, ask questions and seek clarification, and work together with your peers to advance each other’s learning.

My commitments to you. I will return your assignments in a timely manner with thoughtful and constructive feedback. I will do my best to make this course understandable and accessible for everyone. I will be available during office hours or by appointment (see below) to answer any questions you may have about the content or structure of the course or about specific assignments, or to help you think through the course material. I will welcome any feedback you may have about the course content, my teaching, or our classroom environment.

Office hours. What are office hours for? You are always welcome to come and ask any questions you may have, both specific and broad, or just to talk and bounce ideas off, or to share your favorite Latin American music, books, or movies, or to exchange pictures of our pets. If you cannot meet me during my office hours, please contact me and we will arrange for an alternative time to meet.

Reasonable adjustments and accommodations. We live in strange, challenging, and sometimes painful times. In academic settings, the circumstances we live in often call for making certain adjustments in order to build and maintain a safe, constructive, and enriching learning experience by addressing or mitigating barriers of various kinds. Such barriers may include but are not limited to connectivity problems, inadequate access to technology, or physical and mental health issues. Please let me know if you ever require additional support or accommodations in order to have equitable conditions to succeed in this class.

- Every student in this class has one “free,” no-questions-asked opportunity to submit an *individual* assignment 48 hours after the deadline has passed, as well as one “free,” no-questions-asked unexcused absence (not applicable for classroom debate sessions).
- I urge you to make yourself, your health, and well-being a priority above all else. At Carleton, we have a wide-array of resources to support students. It is important to recognize stressors you may be facing, which can be personal, emotional, physical, financial, mental, or academic. Sleep, exercise, and connecting with others can be strategies to help you flourish at Carleton. For more information, check out [Student Health and Counseling \(SHAC\)](#), the [Office of Health Promotion](#), or the [Office of the Chaplain](#).

Electronic devices. Laptops and tablets may be used in class for notetaking, but please note that most scientific research shows that handwritten notes are far superior to digital note-taking by fostering concentration and promoting active learning. Phones are never to be seen or heard in class, unless you have a special need (in which case I ask you to discuss it with me before class).

- **Dealing with distractions.** I encourage you to use apps like FocalFilter (focalfilter.com, open source, Windows), SelfControl (selfcontrolapp.com, open source, Mac), or Freedom (freedom.to, premium, all operating systems) to block your own access to online distractions while using electronic devices in class or while reading or writing for this class (and others).

Academic integrity. Academia relies upon the ethical conduct of scholars. Students are held to the same standards in their own work. It is assumed that a student is the author of all course work

that they submit, and that the work has not been submitted for credit in another class without the instructor's permission. Students must document all passages, paraphrases or ideas that come from other sources. Direct quotations must be placed in quotation marks. Academic misconduct will not be tolerated and will be strictly handled according to the Campus Handbook. Please familiarize yourself with these policies and consult the College's Writing Across the Curriculum website for additional guidance on plagiarism.

Confidentiality. In order to create a collaborative environment where we can grapple with difficult topics and sharpen our intellect in a trusted and secure space, please treat our course content, classroom and online discussions, and all communication (such as e-mails, discussion forums, etc.) with confidentiality.

Accommodations for students with disabilities. Carleton College is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Office of Accessibility Resources (Henry House, 107 Union Street) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, autism spectrum disorders, chronic health, traumatic brain injury and concussions, vision, hearing, mobility, or speech impairments), please contact OAR@carleton.edu or call Sam Thayer ('10), Director of the Office of Accessibility Resources (x4464), to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

Title IX. Carleton is committed to fostering an environment free of sexual misconduct. Please be aware all Carleton faculty and staff members, with the exception of Chaplains and SHAC staff, are "responsible employees." Responsible employees are required to share any information they have regarding incidents of sexual misconduct with the Title IX Coordinator. Carleton's goal is to ensure campus community members are aware of all the options available and have access to the resources they need. If you have questions, please contact Laura Riehle-Merrill, Carleton's Title IX Coordinator, or visit the Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response website: <https://www.carleton.edu/sexual-misconduct>.

The Writing Center. The Writing Center is a space with peer writing consultants who can work with you during any stage of the writing process (brainstorming to final proofreading). Hours and more information can be found on the writing center website. You can reserve specific times for conferences by using their online appointment system.

SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

I. Introduction

Thursday, September 16. Introduction

- Gabriel García Márquez, "One of These Days," handout, originally published in *Collected Stories* (HarperPerennial, 1991 [1962]).

Tuesday, September 21. Colonialism and Its Legacies

- *Review:* Paul N. Edwards. "How to Read a Book, v5.0." University of Michigan School of Information, <https://pne.people.si.umich.edu/PDF/howtoread.pdf>.

- Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, “So Close and Yet So Different,” in *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty* (Crown Publishers, 2012): 7-44.
- Francia Márquez, “Acceptance Speech: 2018 Goldman Environmental Prize,” *YouTube* (4:37), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DF8NTVV-thc>.

II. Latin America Between the State and the Market

Thursday, September 23. Context and Overview

- Harry E. Vanden and Gary Prevost, “The Political Economy of Latin America” (selections), in *Politics of Latin America: The Power Game*, 6th edition (Oxford University Press, 2018): 157-166.
- Diego Sánchez-Ancochea, “Latin America: Always the Most Unequal Region?” in *The Costs of Inequality in Latin America: Lessons and Warnings for the Rest of the World* (I.B. Tauris, 2021): 17-26.
- “There Will Be Bananas,” NPR *Throughline*, January 9, 2020 (podcast, 56:56).
 - Full audio and transcript: <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/794302086>.
 - Also available on all major podcast players.

Due date alert

Pre-proposal for research project due by
Friday, September 24, at 11:59 PM

Tuesday, September 28. The Inward-Looking Model

- Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Falleto, “Comprehensive Analysis of Development,” in *Dependency and Development in Latin America* (University of California Press, 1979): 8-28.
- Eliana Cardoso and Ann Helwege, “Import Substitution Industrialization,” in *Modern Political Economy and Latin America: Theory and Policy*, edited by Jeffrey Frieden, Manuel Pastor Jr., and Michael Tomz (Westview Press, 2000): 155-164.
- Joana de Masi Zero, “The Life of a Factory Worker” (1996), in *The Brazil Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, edited by James N. Green, Victoria Langland, and Lilia Moritz Schwarcz (Duke University Press, 2014): 383-386.

Thursday, September 30. Neoliberalism

- Peter Kingstone, “Neoliberalism and its Discontents,” in *The Political Economy of Latin America: Reflections on Neoliberalism and Development after the Commodity Boom* (Routledge, 2018): 54-101.
- Noel King and Jasmine Garsd, “The Chicago Boys” (parts I and II), *NPR Planet Money*, April 10 & 12, 2019 (podcast, 51:00).
 - Full audio and transcripts: <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/711911535>,
<https://www.npr.org/transcripts/712816135>.
- Oscar Olivera, “Even the Rain,” in *The Bolivia Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, edited by Sinclair Thomson et al. (Duke University Press, 2018): 603-607.

Tuesday, October 5. Debate 1

- No required readings.

III. Governing Latin America: States and the Regimes that Run Them

Thursday, October 7. Building States and Putting Them to Work

- Frank Safford, “The Construction of National States in Latin America, 1820–1890,” in *State and Nation Making in Latin America and Spain: Republics of the Possible*, edited by Miguel Á. Centeno and Agustín Ferraro (Cambridge University Press, 2013): 25-55.
- Ruth Berins Collier and David Collier, “Incorporation: Recasting State-Labor Relations” (excerpts), in *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, The Labor Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America* (Notre Dame Press, 1991): 161-168.
- Michael L. Conniff, “Introduction” (excerpts), in *Populism in Latin America*, 2nd edition (The University of Alabama Press, 2012): 4-10.
- Eva Duarte de Perón, “Your Excellency, Mr. President; dear descamisados...” in *Latin America since Independence: History with Primary Sources*, by Alexander Dawson (Routledge, 2010): 182-185.

Due date alert

Debate 1 jurors submit opinion column
by Friday, October 8, at 11:59 PM

Tuesday, October 12. The Breakdown of Democracy and Authoritarian Rule

- David Collier, “Bureaucratic Authoritarianism,” in *The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World* (2 ed.), edited by Joel Krieger (Oxford University Press, 2004) [5 pages].
- Karen L. Remmer, “Neopatrimonialism: The Politics of Military Rule in Chile, 1973-1987,” *Comparative Politics* 21, no. 2 (1989): 149-170.
- Hebe de Bonafini and Matilde Sánchez, “The Madwomen at the Plaza de Mayo,” in *The Argentina Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (Duke University Press, 2002): 429-439.

Thursday, October 14. Transitions to Democracy

- Guillermo O’Donnell, “Transitions to Democracy: Some Navigation Instruments,” in *Democracy in the Americas: Stopping the Pendulum*, edited by Robert A. Pastor (Holmes Meier, 1992): 62-75.
- Ruth Berins Collier and James Mahoney, “Adding Collective Actors to Collective Outcomes: Labor and Recent Democratization in South America and Southern Europe,” *Comparative Politics* 29, no. 3 (1997): 285-303.
- *No*, film directed by Pablo Larraín, 2012 (screening time TBA).

Due date alert

Proposal for research project due by
Friday, October 15, at 11:59 PM

Tuesday, October 19. Debate on Transitions to Democracy

- No required readings.

Thursday, October 21. A Different Path: Insurgency and Revolution

- Daniel Hellinger, “Democracy in Times of Revolution” (excerpts) in *Comparative Politics of Latin America: Democracy at Last?* 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2015): 282-296.

- Silvio Rodríguez, “Song of the Chosen One [*Canción del elegido*]” (handout) and “Silvio Rodríguez Sings of the Special Period,” in *The Cuba Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, edited by Aviva Chomsky, Barry Carr, and Pamela Maria Smorkaloff (Duke University Press, 2003): 599-603.
- Ana Arjona, “Institutions, Civilian Resistance, and Wartime Social Order: A Process-driven Natural Experiment in the Colombian Civil War”, *Latin American Politics and Society* 58, no. 3 (2016): 99-122.

Due date alert

Debate 2 jurors submit opinion column
by Friday, October 22, at 11:59 PM

IV. Challenges and Opportunities of Democracy in Latin America

Tuesday, October 26. Challenges of Democratic Governance

- Scott Mainwaring, Fernando Bizzarro, and Ana Petrova, “Party System Institutionalization, Decay, and Collapse,” in *Party Systems in Latin America: Institutionalization, Decay, and Collapse*, edited by Scott Mainwaring (Cambridge University Press, 2018): 17-33.
- Javier Auyero, “The Logic of Clientelism in Argentina: An Ethnographic Account,” *Latin American Research Review* 35, no. 3 (2000): 55-81.
- “Brazil in Black and White (with Update),” *NPR Rough Translation* (podcast), August 21, 2019.
 - Full audio with transcript: <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/752866675>.

Thursday, October 28. Even More Challenges of Democratic Governance

- Agustina Giraudy, “Varieties of Subnational Undemocratic Regimes: Evidence from Argentina and Mexico,” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 48, no. 1 (2013): 51-80.
- Yanilda María González, “The Swinging Pendulum of Police Reform in the Americas,” *Current History* 118, 811 (2019): 291-297.
- Mariana Enríquez, “The Inn,” in *Things We Lost in the Fire* (Hogarth Press, 2017): 37-50.

Due date alert

Short argumentative essay due by
Friday, October 29, at 11:59 PM

Tuesday, November 2. The Left Turn

- Françoise Montambeault, Manuel Balán, and Philip Oxhorn, “Widening and Deepening Citizenship from the Left? A Relational and Issue-Based Comparative Approach,” in *Legacies of the Left Turn in Latin America. The Promise of Inclusive Citizenship*, edited by Manuel Balán and Françoise Montambeault (University of Notre Dame Press, 2020): 17-43.
- Selections from *The Bolivia Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, edited by Sinclair Thomson et al. (Duke University Press, 2018).
 - Evo Morales Ayma, “Brother and Comrade,” 627-632.
 - “Deepening Divisions,” 633-635.

- Anthony Bebbington and Denise Humphreys Bebbington, “An Andean Avatar: Post-Neoliberal and Neoliberal Strategies for Securing the Unobtainable,” in *New Political Economy* 16, no. 1 (2011): 131-145.

Thursday, November 4. Inclusion and Participation I

- Ruth Berins Collier, “Prologue: Reflections on Two Episodes of Popular Inclusion: Structuring and Restructuring Arenas of Participation,” in *The Inclusionary Turn in Latin American Democracies*, edited by Diana Kapiszewski, Steven Levitsky, and Deborah J. Yashar (Cambridge University Press, 2021): xxv- xlvi.
- Deborah Yashar, “Indigenous Politics in the Andes: Changing Patterns of Recognition, Reform, and Representation,” in *The Crisis of Democratic Representation in the Andes*, edited by Scott Mainwaring, Ana María Bejarano, and Eduardo Pizarro Leongómez (Stanford University Press, 2006): 257-291.
- Carlos de la Torre, “Nina Pacari, an Interview,” in *The Ecuador Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, edited by Carlos de la Torre and Steve Striffler (Duke University Press, 2008): 279-283.

Tuesday, November 9. Inclusion and Participation II

- Sara Niedzwiecki and Santiago Anria, “Participatory Social Policies: Diverging Patterns in Brazil and Bolivia,” *Latin American Politics and Society* 61, no. 2 (2019): 115-137.
- Tianna Paschel, “The Right to Difference: Explaining Colombia’s Shift from Color Blindness to the Law of Black Communities,” *American Journal of Sociology* 116, no. 3 (2010): 729-769.
- David Noriega, “Colombia Is Rising Up,” *VICE News*, May 28, 2021, <https://youtu.be/WB2isJA1JdU> (16:43).

Due date alert

Research paper outline due by
Tuesday, November 9, at 11:59 PM

Thursday, November 11. Research Paper Outline Workshop

- For today, you will read two of your peers’ paper outlines (workshop groups TBA).

Tuesday, November 16. Contentious Politics

- Eduardo Silva, “Exchange Rising? Karl Polanyi and Contentious Politics in Contemporary Latin America,” *Latin American Politics and Society* 54, no. 3 (2012): 1-32.
- Cora Fernández Anderson, “Latin American Women’s Movements: A Historical Overview,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Latin America*, edited by Xóchitl Bada and Liliana Rivera-Sánchez (Oxford University Press, 2020): 339-356.
- Sandra Cuffe, “Chile’s ‘A rapist in your path’ chant hits 200 cities: Map,” *Al Jazeera English*, December 20, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/12/20/chiles-a-rapist-in-your-path-chant-hits-200-cities-map>.

IV. Taking Stock and Looking Forward

Thursday, November 18. Authoritarianism and Violence Redux—or Never Gone?

- V. Ximena Velasco Guachalla et al., “Latin America Erupts: When Does Competitive Authoritarianism Take Root?” *Journal of Democracy* 32, no. 3 (2021): 63-77.
- Deborah Yashar, “Institutions and Citizenship: Reflections on the Illicit,” in *Shifting Frontiers of Citizenship: The Latin American Experience*, edited by Mario Sznajder, Luis Roniger, and Carlos A. Forment (Brill, 2013): 431-458.
- “Brazil Gangs Impose Strict Curfews to Slow Coronavirus Spread,” *The Guardian*, March 25, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/25/brazil-rio-gangs-coronavirus>.

Due date alert

Research paper due by
Tuesday, November 24, at 11:59 PM