Course: **Latin American Politics at the Crossroads LM0151 S03**
Instructor: Arturo Alvarado
Class: Monday, 3:00 – 5:20 PM
Watson institute, Room 116
Cross listed with PS0182
Office: Watson Institute, 111 Thayer Street, Room 219
Office Hours: 10 a.m. to 12 noon, Tuesdays or by appointment
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The course will examine, in a comparative perspective, patterns of contemporary political institutions of government in Latin America.

The course will analyze current political trends in Latin America and evaluate the status of its institutions of Democracy and the Rule of Law. The course will examine different modes of transition to democracy (or persistent authoritarianism) in the region.

We will examine the origins and performance of political institutions in terms of freedom, equality and fair elections, human and political rights, quality democracy and the Rule of Law.

The relevance of social science theories in trying to account for these topics will be discussed. We will make a critical assessment of democratic indexes and refer them to the state of democratic theory.

There is an increasing discussion related to the effect that globalization and that cultural, economic and social conditions affects the development of democracy. There is also a growing literature focusing on minority rights, gender, women, indigenous rights, inequality and access to justice.

Questions also arise about international relations, drugs, wars and humanitarian intervention; about the Transformation of State-Society Relations, new Patterns of Representation and Protest, the Rise of Indigenous Politics, Inequity, Gender and Political Participation, Corruption and Scandals, rent seeking politicians; the Debt Crisis and the Politics of Economic Liberalization.

Throughout the sessions of the course, we will address these topics only as they are related to the institutions and processes we have selected.

Finally, as Latin American countries and governments are becoming daily matters in international newspapers and the media, we will dedicate part of our classes to analyze these shifting patterns of government, from (neo) liberal to the left, and assess the long term impacts of these trends for the region.

**Evaluation**
1st. Writing assignment 20% Due October 2d.
2d. Writing assignment 20% Due October 30th.
Final research paper 40% due December 11th. Topic on Sept. 25th, Outline on October 16th. Draft by November 20th.
Participation and presentation in class 20%

**Seminar Format**

I will begin each session with an introduction to the readings and presenting my own materials, providing some context and general background about the topic in question.

For each session two students will be in charge of co-leading the discussion, including the posting of questions about the reading.

The rest of class time will be devoted to group discussion.

For some specific sessions we will develop a class exercise on class based on the literature, such as revising and comparing constitutional arrangements, or an electoral system. For every one of these assignments I will provide clear and specific guidelines before and during the class.

In addition, each class will focus on a critical analysis of political events of interest in the region (Mexican elections and the aftermath, among other topics), institutions, such as parties, the media, the electoral system, and the legal system.

I have suggested some readings in Spanish. There are to provide students with a broader view of the literature not available in English. There is, however, is no language requirement.

**Required Readings for the Course**

Please note the required and recommended readings for each seminar session in that week’s seminar program. All students must read the required assignments for every week. Recommended readings will be useful for preparing the class and the assignments.

**Required Books:**


**Course Packet of Required Readings.** The reader is available at Allegra Print and Imaging, 102 Waterman Street., (401) 421-5160.

**Recommended Overview Books.** (The following books provide a good overview for the topics covered in this class).


For a general overview of Latin America:


**LIST OF SEMINAR SESSIONS:**

**Session 1.**  
Introduction: An assessment of Democracy and Development in Latin America. (Monday, Sept. 11th)

- Theories of Latin American Politics and Development.  
- Latin America and the World: first estimation.

**Required Readings:**


**Recommended Reading:**


Solari, Aldo, Rolando Franco y Joel Jutkowitz. Teoría, acción social y desarrollo. México, Siglo XXi editores, 1976

Session 2. The Social Origins of Democracy and Autocracy. (Monday, Sept 18th.)

- From the Crisis of the Oligarchic State to Revolutionary Nationalism and developmentalist models.

- The Dependentist models and the crisis of development, autocracy and dictatorship.

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:


Session 3.
The Political Cycles in the Region: From Democratic to Autocratic, Authoritarian and Beyond.
(Monday, Sept. 25th)

- The Breakdown of Regimes in the 1960s and 1970s

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:


**Session 4.**
The Roots of Political Institutions: The Constitution and the State.
(Monday, October 2d.)

**Required Assignment.**
Find a constitution from one country and write a three page essay describing, its main political institutions and political rights of its citizens.

Fragments of Latin American Constitutions in…
http://www.georgetown.edu/LatAmerPolitical/home.html


**Recommended Readings:**

**Session 5.**
Institutions (I): Executive-Legislative Relations
(Monday October 16th.)

-The Development of the Legislative and the Latin American Presidency

**Required Readings:**


Peter M. Siavelis, “Executive-Legislative Relations in Post-Pinochet Chile: A Preliminary Assessment.” In Scott Mainwaring and Mathew Soberg Shugart, eds. Presidentialism and Democracy in Latin America. Cambridge University Press, 1997. (Course packet)

Scott Mainwaring, “Presidentialism, Multiparty, and Democracy: the Difficult Combination,” Comparative Political Studies 26, no. 2 (1993). (Course packet)

**Recommended Readings:**
Session 6.
Patterns of Presidential Leadership in Latin America.
(Monday Oct. 23d.)

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:


Lamounier, Bolívar, “Brazil: An Assessment of the Cardoso Administration,” 269-292, in Domínguez and Shifter, Constructing Democratic Governance in Latin America

Levitsky, Steven. “Argentina: From Crisis to Consolidation (and Back),” 244-68, in Domínguez and Shifter, Constructing Democratic Governance in Latin America. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 203.

Session 7.
(Monday Oct. 30th).

Required Assignment.
There are two parts to this assignment:
Part I: Select an electoral system, look at the basic rules and institutions, obtain the formula, and make a simulation or analyze any of the last electoral results according to the formula.

The following book that is on reserve in the library will be a helpful tool:


Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:


Part II: Revise an electoral law of any country and explain the electoral results.
The project that you turn in should be four to five pages long.

Session 8.
Political Parties.
(Monday, November 6th)

Required Readings.


**Recommended Readings.**


Levitsky, Steven and Maxwell Cameron, “Democracy without Parties? Political Parties and Regime Change in Fujimori’s Peru.” *Latin American Politics and Society* 45, No. 3 (Fall 2003), 1-34.


Munck, Gerardo L. and Jeffrey A. Bosworth, “Patterns of Representation and Competition: Parties and Democracy in Post-Pinochet Chile,” *Party Politics* 4, No. 4 (October 1998).


**Session 9.**

**The Judiciary and the Rule of Law.** *(Monday, November 13th.)*

**Required Readings:**


Recommended Readings:


Carbonell, Miguel, Wistano Orozco, Rodolfo Vázquez (eds). Estado de derecho: concepto, fundamentos e democratización en América Latina. Por Joesph Raz, et. al….


Session 10.
Civil-Military Relations and Legacies of Authoritarian Rule.
(Monday, Nov. 20th).
**Required Reading:**


*Nunca Mas (Never Again): A Report by Argentina’s National Commission on Disappeared People*. London: Faber and Faber, 1986, Forward; Prologue; 9-55; 209-234; and 284-5. *(Course Packet)*

**Recommended Readings:**


**Session 11.**
**Public Security, Violence and the State.**
(Monday Nov. 27th).

**Required Readings:**
Davis and Alvarado, in Chavez, Daniel and Benjamin Goldfrank (eds), The Left in the City: Participatory Local Governments in Latin America. London: Latin America Bureau, 2004. (Course Packet)


**Recommended Readings:**


Session 12.
Towards Participatory Politics in Latin America.
(Monday, December 4th).

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:


Grindle, Merilee and Pilar Domingo (eds). Proclaiming Revolution: Bolivia in Comparative Perspective. London: Institute of Latin American Studies; Cambridge,


Session 13.
Democracy and Human rights.
(Monday, December 11th).

Required readings:


Recommended readings:


**Session 14.**

**Democracy in Latin America, a reassessment: Discussion Panel (Monday December 11th.)**

**Exersize:** During this last session We will make a critical revision of the topic and the literature considering any of the cases proposed in the following book:

**Required Readings:**

O'Donnell, Guillermo, Jorge Vargas Cullell, and Osvaldo M. Iazzetta, eds. *The Quality of Democracy: Theory and Applications*. Indiana, University of Notre Dame Press. 2004. 274 p. (Book will be used to extract some examples in class).


I will provide a guideline to develop the exercise before the class and then I will ask students to sign up for the discussion.

**Suggested Films:**

Four Days in September
The Battle of Chile
La ley de Herodes
City of God
The following bibliography is related to specific countries or issues not directly addressed in the course, but useful for further analysis and final papers:


Degregori, Carlos Iván, “Peru: The Vanishing of a Regime and the Challenge of Democratic Rebuilding,” in Domínguez and Shifter, Constructing Democratic Governance in Latin America


Ellner, Steve and Daniel Hellinger, “ Conclusion: The Democratic and Authoritarian Directions of the Chavista Movement,” in Ellner and Hellinger, eds. Venezuelan Politics in the Chávez Era.


Arturo Alvarado.
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