Course Description and Objectives
The past 100 years in Latin America have been marked by dramatic political, economic and social changes; the highest levels of income inequality in the world; and a series of foreign interventions, primarily from the United States. This course offers an introduction to the political history and contemporary politics of Latin America, along with some of the main concepts and theories used by social scientists to understand the region. Through a comparative historical approach, the course aims to help students understand the roots of the conflicts that have shaped each country’s history, and the ongoing impacts of these critical moments on people, political and economic institutions, and regional relationships.

In first three weeks of the semester we will cover the empirical and theoretical bases necessary to understand the region. After this, each week we will discuss one country. In the first half of each class, we will discuss the history of country up until and including a pivotal change in their history and focus on WHY that change occurred. In the second half of each class, we will talk about the CONSEQUENCES of that change: what have been the long-term impacts of the change we discussed? Throughout the semester we will discuss how we can see connections to the larger themes of the class: the role of inequality; the role of social movements; and the role of the US.
Guiding Questions:

- What led to the political change?
- What were the consequences of political change?

Sub-Questions:

- Who are the key political actors, and what constituencies do they represent?
- What were the most important issues?
- What was the role of the US?
- How does income inequality play a role?
- What was going in the world – in the economy, in international relations – that also played a role?

During the semester, we will do case studies of different Latin American countries, including Guatemala, Cuba, Chile, Nicaragua, Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela, Colombia, and Brazil.

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<th>Class Session &amp; Date</th>
<th>Class Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/19 Introduction: Inequality, Colonialism &amp; Independence</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1/26 Economies of LA: Dependency, ISI &amp; Debt Crises</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2/2 Guatemala</td>
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<td>3/2 Venezuela / Brief Mid-Term Review</td>
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<td>3/23 Mexico</td>
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<td>4/13 Ecuador/Bolivia</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>4/20 Final Presentations</td>
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<td>4/27 Final presentations / Optional Review Session</td>
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**Final Exam: Tuesday, May 11th, 3 - 6 pm**
Government and Politics of Latin America
The objective of the course is not only to understand what has happened in specific Latin American countries, but also to reflect on what the region’s experiences as a whole can teach us about the requirements of and barriers to meaningful democracy and sustainable and equitable development around the world, including “north of the border.” It will equip students with tools to address questions such as:

- What has been the relationship between different economic ideologies, democracy and human rights?
- What has motivated external intervention, and what have been the immediate and enduring impacts?
- What are the roots of economic inequality, and how has wealth inequality manifested itself as a socially, politically and economically relevant factor in the region?
- How does wealth inequality impact democracy?
- What has been the role of social movements and unions in political, social and economic change?
- How has racism affected political and economic development?
- How can state actors be made accountable to the citizenry, for past, present, or future actions and decisions?

Students should finish the course with an in-depth understanding of the factors that contribute to or impede political and economic development, and a strengthened ability to engage in discussions about what US-based and international actors can and should do (or refrain from doing) to promote meaningful and equitable democratic development at home or abroad.

Class structure
This class will be run as a seminar. Attendance is compulsory, and informed class participation is essential. The seminar relies heavily on student-led discussion. This means that it is critical that you attend all sessions; unexcused absences will result in a significant lowering of your final grade (see “requirements,” below).

For each class session, 2-3 students will be asked to serve as discussants. In order to prepare for this role, the discussants will 1) write a reading response memo (described below); and 2) prepare discussion questions for the class. The response memos and discussion questions must circulated (via Blackboard) to the rest of the class by 2:30pm on the Sunday before the week in which your paper will be discussed.

All students must review the memos and discussion questions in advance of class. On the session in question, the designated students will help to facilitate the class by offering short summaries and analyses of the readings (building on the written memos) and leading the class in discussion (building on the prepared questions).
Government and Politics of Latin America

**REQUIREMENTS**
Course grades will be determined as follows:

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<th>Grade %</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Writing Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Jan 19th or 26th</td>
<td>Paper 1</td>
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<td>5%</td>
<td>Feb 21st</td>
<td>Country Focus</td>
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<td>15%</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>Discussion Leader Memo (1)</td>
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<td>5%</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>News Analysis (1)</td>
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<td>25%</td>
<td>April 13th</td>
<td>Final Paper Draft 1</td>
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<td>April 20th OR April 27th</td>
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<td>Final Paper</td>
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**Exams**

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<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>March 9th</td>
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<td>15%</td>
<td>May 11th, 3 - 6 pm</td>
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**Participation**

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<td>Active Contribution to class</td>
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**Class attendance and participation**
Your attendance and participation account for 20% of your final grade. Grades will reflect not just the quantity, but also the quality, of your participation, as well as the degree to which you listen to and engage with your classmates. This includes having read and thought about your classmates’ response memos and discussion questions in advance of class, and I will evaluate your participation in each session. If you have a legitimate reason why you cannot attend a class (for example, due to a health or family emergency, or religious observances), you must notify me and receive prior approval for that absence. Appeals after class will not be considered.

If absences are unexcused (does not include absences during first 2 class sessions):
- 2 absences: no penalty
- After this, your final grade is lowered by 2 points for each additional absence.
- Three late arrivals count as an absence.

**Blackboard check-in required at beginning of each class.**
If you are going to miss a class, within 24 hours of your absence, the University requires you to use the University absence-reporting website https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/ to indicate the date and reason for your absence. Please keep in mind that using the reporting system does not mean that your absence is automatically considered “excused.” If you miss a class or exam for religious reasons, please consult http://www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/holidays1112.htm

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:
1) Discussion Leader Memo
You will prepare one reading response memo during the semester. Late Discussion Memos will be penalized significantly. These assignments are not useful if they are not produced in time for the class to read them.

   a. Memos should be 1-2 pages (single spaced) in length.
   b. Each memo will focus on either the CAUSES of the political upheaval; or the CONSEQUENCES of that change. You should focus on answering the country-specific discussion questions included in the syllabus to guide you in your analysis. The important thing is not to summarize or cover all readings – but to seriously analyze, using the assigned and optional readings, what caused the change we are focusing on that week.

In addition to the CAUSE/CONSEQUENCE discussion, you must address the following question:
   • Relate the causes/consequences of change in [this week’s country of focus] to the cause/consequence in another country we have studied: What was the same? Different? What do these similarities or differences teach us about at least one the course’s central themes: Change, Inequality or Intervention?

c. Each memo should end by clearly formulating at least two questions for discussion.

d. The reflections must discuss not only information from the required readings, but at least one recommended reading for the week as well.

You are required to circulate your memo and discussion questions in advance of class (via Blackboard) no later than 2:30pm on the Sunday before class. This deadline is to ensure that your classmates have enough time to read and reflect on your memo before class. Failure to submit the memo on time will result in a serious deduction to your grade (see policy on late work below). You are responsible for guiding discussion for the sessions in question; failure to prepare and circulate your memo in time is a serious discourtesy to your
2) News Analysis
You will write one 500-600 word (1-2 pages) news analysis during the semester. This requires that you find and provide a link to a current news story related to a Latin American country and provide a summary and commentary explaining its relevance. The news source can be in any language (so if you are fluent in and read news sources in languages other than English, you may use those). The news analysis, however, needs to be written in English and should have the following form:

1. Summary of event or issue covered in the article/report (who, what, where, when). 100 words
2. Background information necessary to understand the news article:
   a. If this is a country we have done already in class, briefly remind us of the relevant facts (for example: who is president, what country are they from). Do not go into depth with info we have already learned!
   b. If it is not a country we have focused on, give us any necessary background we need to understand the basic ideas of the article (what party the president is from, when they were elected, for example).
3. Any information on the how’s or why’s of the event or issue provided by the source. 100 words.
4. A discussion of how this relates to a more general issue we have covered, will cover, or should cover in class (we can’t cover everything!)…basically, tell us why this is relevant and important for students of Latin American politics. 200 words.
5. Questions that you have about this event or issue, or things about which you would like to know more or would like to ask your classmates about (for responses or perspectives). 100 words.

Possible news sources:
- NY Times Americas: https://www.nytimes.com/section/world/americas
- Al Jazeera Latin America: https://www.aljazeera.com/topics/regions/latin-america.html
- NACLA: https://nacla.org/: More in-depth; 100% devoted to Latin American news

You will email these news analyses to me at janice.gallagher@rutgers.edu no later than 2:30pm on the Sunday before class. You will present this story at the beginning of class briefly, highlighting the 4 parts listed above.

3) Country Focus / Final Paper / Presentation
There will be a final paper and presentation. In these presentations, students will focus on a country or city/state in Latin America, and write about the causes and consequences of a
Government and Politics of Latin America

political change within the selected case. The final paper will be 10-12 pages, and the final presentation will be between approximately 8 minutes. Each student will also serve as a discussant of one of their peer’s papers and provide one page (single space) of feedback. The Country Focus paper, due February 26th, will ask you to present the country you think you might study, and look for initial sources.

Mid-Term and Final Exam:
The mid-term exam will be held during class on March 9th, immediately before spring break, and will consist of two essay questions, short answers, and IDs (fill in the blanks).

The final exam is Tuesday, May 11th from 3-6pm. It will include essay questions, IDs and short answers (fill in the blanks). The exam will include material covered on the readings and in class. You are not required to draw on sources that do not appear on the syllabus (this is not a research paper). To earn an A, you will be required to reference, in a substantive way, multiple recommended items on the syllabus (i.e., to show that you have read and synthesized the other course readings).

Late work. Work submitted after the date and time due will lose one letter grade (10%) per day late. Work submitted late [e.g. after 2:30pm] on the date due will still be considered a full day late. Please let me know in advance if you are unable to complete an assignment on time. If there is a legitimate reason (for example, a health or family emergency), I will work with you to find a suitable arrangement. Petitions for extensions after the deadline will not be considered.

Writing and formatting. All assignments should be double-spaced, one-inch margins, 12-point Times New Roman, except for the discussion memos (which should be single-spaced). You must provide citations (footnotes or parenthetical) in the text, accompanied by a full bibliography. Please refer to the APA Style in the Rutgers Libraries citation guide. The clarity of your writing matters greatly. Please copy-edit all work. For writing assistance, contact Rutgers Newark’s Writing Center: http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter

Academic integrity / Plagiarism: All students are expected to know and comply with the university’s policies on academic integrity. Your work must be fully your own. It is necessary to acknowledge the work and ideas of others with proper citations. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the academic code. See: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/

Plagiarism, as defined in the academic code:
Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the use of another person’s words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and both direct quotation and paraphrasing must be cited properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline or as required by the instructor in a course. Some common examples of plagiarism are:
• Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution.
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• Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one’s own words another person’s written words or ideas as if they were one’s own.

If you copy more than three words in a row from any source – you MUST QUOTE it
1st Violation, if minor: ZERO credit assignment
2nd Violation, or 1st if major: Fail Course

Public Domain: All work produced in this class may be read by your peers and instructor.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Any student with a documented disability is welcome to contact me as early in the semester as possible so that we may arrange reasonable accommodations. As part of this process, please be in touch with Student and Employee Accessibility Services by calling 401-863-9588 or online at
https://uhr.rutgers.edu/policies-resources/policies-procedures/policy-and-compliance-guidelines/disability-accommodations

COURSE MATERIALS

There is one required book for this class:
(Do NOT buy the 2013 version!)

- I have ordered this from the bookstore.

- Electronic version available on redshelf.com ($40)
  https://redshelf.com/search/?terms=modern+latin+america&csrfmiddlewaretoken=9UDCbGxONF6G
  OBiedySCDPs77J9Aj3kP5hrurodkfhB5FRrYSIAI1aWVTIeu38bJ

THIS IS A DYNAMIC SYLLABUS AND WILL CHANGE!
When I change the syllabus, I will post an announcement in Blackboard, which will email the entire class. You are expected to receive and read these emails within 24 hours.

Blackboard
The readings in this class are mostly journal articles and book chapters. I will upload book chapters to Blackboard, but expect you to download journal articles.

Please take note that in using Blackboard you are agreeing to comply with copyright restrictions that apply to the materials posted. You may use these materials only for academic purposes as they relate to the course and may not disseminate them to others.

Spring 2021
I. INTRODUCTION

Week 1: Introduction to Course and Assignments:
1/19/21

1st half of class
- Review of syllabus
- Map Quiz
- Names!
- Writing Expectations

2nd half of class:
- If you choose to write this week: Please choose 1 (and only 1!) of the following Options (there are 2 options, each in a box. The readings you will need to answer those questions are above that box).
- This assignment is due Tuesday, 1/19/19, at 9:30am
- Please email assignments to me: janice.gallagher@rutgers.edu

ESSAY 1 READINGS
Required Readings:
  - Chapter 1


Optional:
- SKIM Social Panorama on Latin America (on blackboard).

ESSAY 1 Essay Prompt:
- 1-2 page (double spaced) reflection: What do “Latin American” countries have in common? Why is Latin America studies as a region?
- What did you learn about inequality in Latin America from these readings? What do you think the causes of inequality are?
**ESSAY 2 READINGS**

- MLA Chapters 1 and 2
- [Note: This book is denoted MLA in the schedule of readings below.]

**Optional:**


**ESSAY 2 Essay Prompt**

- 1-2 page (double spaced) reflection: What are the key things we should know about Latin American countries’ experience with colonization and independence? How did colonialism contribute to inequality and political instability?

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**Week 2: The Economies of Latin America: Liberalism, Dependency, ISI & Neo-liberalism**  
**1/26/21**

- For those of you who didn’t write for week 1 – you will write for this week! Choose one of the two following essay prompts:

**ESSAY 3 READINGS:**

- MLA Chapter 12

  
  Link to google book: [https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=PN9Q19-hQxsC&amp;oi=fnd&amp;pg=PR7&amp;q=open+veins+of+latin+america&amp;ots=te_sAnN1Fw&amp;sig=9DpV2gQcpkd5rnKEjCqBskSb27I#v=onepage&amp;q=open%20veins%20of%20latin%20america&amp;f=false](https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=PN9Q19-hQxsC&amp;oi=fnd&amp;pg=PR7&amp;q=open+veins+of+latin+america&amp;ots=te_sAnN1Fw&amp;sig=9DpV2gQcpkd5rnKEjCqBskSb27I#v=onepage&amp;q=open%20veins%20of%20latin%20america&amp;f=false)

  - Go to page 1 – which begins with the title “Introduction: 120 million Children in the Eye of the Hurricane”

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Optional:

Essay 3 Prompts:
1-2 page (double spaced) reflection:
- What is economic liberalism, and how does it relate to comparative advantage?
- What is dependency theory, and what does it imply for Latin American economic development?
- How was ISI supposed to "fix" countries' economic problems?

Essay 4 READINGS
- MLA Chapter 12

Optional:

Essay 4 PROMPTS:
1-2 page (double spaced) reflection:
- Did ISI work? How or why not? How have the economic policies we read about this week affected wealth inequality? Social unrest?
- What is the socialist response and how does it relate to the successes and failures of ISI?
- What is neoliberalism, and how did it contribute to debt crises?
Week 3: Guatemala: The Arbenz Overthrow of 1954
2/2/21

Key Questions:
Causes: What led to the overthrow of Arbenz?
Effects: What were the consequences of the 1954 Overthrow?
1990 – Current: How has Guatemala grappled with its violent history?

Required Documentary:
• Watch at Home: Granitos: How to Nail A Dictator (PBS, 90 minutes, Guatemala/Riot Montt)
  https://tubitv.com/movies/312538/granito_how_to_nail_a_dictator

Required Reading:
• Quick Overview of Guatemala History: MLA pg. 80 – 89; 103 – 108

• Causes of 1954 Overthrow: Stephen Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer, Bitter Fruit, Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5 (6 is optional) Available on Blackboard.


Optional:
• Documentary: When the Mountains Tremble
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a4rG8nmgRw4: When the Mountains Tremble filmed in 1982 at the height of the Guatemalan Army's repression against the Mayan indigenous people, has become a classic political documentary. It describes the struggle of the largely Indian peasantry against a heritage of state and foreign oppression. Centered on the experiences of Rigoberta Menchú, who later became a Nobel Peace laureate, the overall effect of the film is exhilarating. With clarity and energy it conveys the birth of a national and political awareness.
Key Questions:
Causes: What economic, social and political factors caused the Cuban Revolution?
Effects: What economic, social and political changes did the revolution bring to Cuba?
Fall of Soviet Union: How did the Cuban revolution manage to survive after the fall of their most important ally?

Required Reading:
- MLA 115 – 145
- Before the Revolution: Cuba Reader pp. 315-320; 321-325;
  - Oscar Zanetti “The United Fruit Company in Cuba”
  - Fidel Castro “History Will Absolve Me”
  - Ernesto “Che” Guevara, “Reminiscences of the Cuban Revolutionary War”
- After the Revolution: Cuba Reader: 344-353; 378-385
  - Medea Benjamin, Joseph Collins, and Michael Scott “How the Poor Got More”
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**Week 5: Chile: The 1973 Allende Overthrow**

2/16/21

**Key Questions:**

Causes: What caused Allende’s overthrow?

Effects: What impact did Pinochet’s coup and reign have on Chile since 1973?

**Required Reading:**

- MLA, Ch.10: 283–310


**Optional:**

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- *Film*: Dateline: Chile, 1973 - ABC News https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V_UAHZsrX_A
- Pamela Constable and Arturo Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies, Chile under Pinochet*, Chapters 11-12.

Week 6: Nicaragua: Causes & Consequences of Sandinistas’ Rise to Power
2/23/21

**Key Questions:**
- **Causes:** What led to the rise of the Sandinistas?
- **Effects:** What were the consequences of the 1979 revolution?

**Required Reading:**
- MLA 93 – 98
  - Pg. 66 - 71: 1924 - 1939
  - Pg. 225 - 236: Up until 1979
  - Pg. 236 - 242: After 1979
  - Pg. 328 - 330: 1985-1986
  - Pg. 333 - 339: Iran Contra
- Video: Reagan Speech on Contra Aid, 3/16/86 (15 minutes) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jx3g0ecBf34
- Alejandro Bendana, “The Rise and Fall of the FSLN,” NACLA, May/June 2004
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Optional:


Week 7: Venezuela: The Rise and Fall of Chavismo
3/9/21

Key Questions:
Causes: What led to Chavez’s rise to power
Effects: How has Chavez’s death led to the current political crisis in Venezuela?

Required Reading:

- MLA Ch. 8; pg. 217-240


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Optional:


Week 8: Mid-Term!

3/16/19  SPRING BREAK! Enjoy! Relax! No Class!

Week 9: Mexico: From Perfect Dictatorship to Flawed Democracy 3/23/21

Key Questions:
Causes: What were the causes and consequences of the Mexican Revolution?
Government and Politics of Latin America

The end of the “perfect dictatorship: What were the causes of the PRI losing power in 2000?
What has been the effect of Mexico’s democratization?

Required Reading:
MLA Ch 3: 47 – 78
  o 1st half of class: Revolution Causes and Consequences: 47 – 68;
  o 2nd half: The Shift to Democracy: 69 – 78


Gallagher, Bootstrap Justice, Chapter Three.


Optional:
Mexican Revolution:

Nora Hamilton, Mexico, Political, Social and Economic Evolution, pp. 29-61 (especially pages 29-38 and 49-61).

Transition to Democracy

Week 10: Colombia: La Violencia, the Rise of the FARC & the Road to Peace
3/30/21

Key Questions:
What caused Colombia’s civil war?
What were the effects of Colombia’s Civil War on people and politics (1960s – 2016)?
What are the effects of the 2016 Peace Agreement?

Required Reading:
• MLA 184 – 211


Optional Reading:


• Colombia’s Peace Agreement With the FARC Survives First Year


Optional:
Colombia Peace Process Timeline:
Week 1: Brazil: From Military Rule to Bolsonaro

Key Questions:
What were the causes of the Brazilian military dictatorship?
What led to the rise of Lula and the PT in Brazil?
Why did Bolsonaro rise to power?

4/9/21
Readings:

MLA 311 – 356

Remembering Brazil's Military Coup 50 Years


Corruption and Controversy in Brazil: https://nacla.org/news/2017/03/30/corruption-and-controversy-brazil

Optional:

A Political Purge in Brazil: https://nacla.org/news/2017/07/14/political-purge-brazil

Brazilian Human Rights Evidence Preserved in the Nunca Mais project
https://www.crl.edu/impact/brazilian-human-rights-evidence-preserved-nunca-mais-project
**Week 12: Bolivia & Ecuador: The Rise of Indigenous Social Movements to the Presidency 4/13/21**

**Key Questions:**
What led to the rise of Evo Morales (Bolivia) and Rafael Correa to power (Ecuador)?
What role has control over natural resources and neoliberalism played both the rise to power of these leaders, and the challenges they have faced?
What has been the role of the US in Bolivia and Ecuador?

**Required Reading:**

**INTRO:**
MLA Ch. 6 (selections) 142 – 145;

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Bolivia:
- MLA 149 – 151; 166 – 176
- Chapter 16: “Bolivia: Changes, Continuities, and Contradictions.”, pgs 283 – 298, Miguel Centellas


Ecuador:
- MLA 151 – 153; 176 – 183
- Chapter 17 “Ecuador: Change and Continuity after Ten Years of New Left Revolution” pgs 299 – 315, Jennifer Collins (from Latin American Politics and Development; on blackboard)


**Optional:**
Our Brand is Crisis: Documentary about US Consulatns and how they helped get a Bolivian president elected:
[https://vimeo.com/211581181](https://vimeo.com/211581181)

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Evo Morales the film: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iN9zMPjG2D4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iN9zMPjG2D4)


**Week 13: Final presentations**
4/20/21

**Week 14: Final presentations / Optional Review Session AFTER CLASS**
4/27/21

Final Paper Due: May 4th
Final Exam: Tuesday, May 11th, 3 - 6 pm
COUNTRY SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

Overview: The Economies of LA: Dependency & ISI
What is economic liberalism, and how does it relate to comparative advantage?
What is dependency theory?
How was ISI supposed to "fix" countries' economic problems?
Did ISI work? How or why not?
How have the economic policies we read about this week affected wealth inequality? Social unrest?

Guatemala
Causes: What led to the overthrow of Arbenz?
Sub-questions
- How did Arbenz and Arévalo challenge Guatemala’s historic social order?
- How did the United Fruit Company play a role in Guatemala’s politics, and how was it related to the US government?
- Why and how was Arbenz overthrown?
- Could he have survived politically if the US hadn't intervened?

Effects: What were the consequences of the 1954 Overthrow?
Sub-questions
- What is meant by the adage that “it’s easier to get into a bear trap than to get out of it?” when applied to Guatemala?
- What was the Alliance for Progress, and how did it affect inequality in Guatemala?
- What caused the slaughter of indigenous Guatemalans in the 1970s and 1980s?

1990 – Current: How has Guatemala grappled with its violent history?
Sub-questions
- What do we learn from the movie Granitos about what has happened in Guatemala since the genocide?
- How is today’s migration from Guatemala (and the Northern Triangle) connected to its past?
Government and Politics of Latin America
• Who is currently in power in Guatemala and how is corruption relevant to his administration?

Cuba
Causes: What economic, social and political factors caused the Cuban Revolution?
Sub-questions
• Why did Cuba remain a Spanish colony for much of the 19th century? What portion of the Cuban population did this arrangement benefit?
• How did Cuba become an American protectorate, and what did this mean for the Cuban people? How did Cuba’s status as a protectorate benefit U.S. sugar companies?
• What caused the Cuban Revolution?
• What was the role of UFC and the US, and how did it differ from Guatemala?
• How did Fidel Castro and Che Guevara's leadership matter for the success of the revolution?
• How was the Cuban revolution affected by events in Guatemala?

Effects: What economic, social and political changes did the revolution bring to Cuba?
Sub-questions
• How/why has the Cuban Revolution survived despite US opposition?
• How did the Bay of Pigs served to legitimize Castro?
• What were the key achievements of the Cuban Revolution?
• In what areas did the revolution fail to meet its objectives?
• How did the Castro government address racism?
• How was racism linked to economic mobility in Cuba? Have these issues been resolved?
• How did human rights fare under Fidel Castro?
• As a leader, how did Raul Castro differ from Fidel?

Fall of Soviet Union: How did the Cuban revolution manage to survive after the fall of their most important ally?
Sub-questions
• How was Cuban effected by the fall of the Soviet Union?
• What was meant by Cuba struggling from a ‘double embargo’?
• With the threat of the Soviet Union removed, how did the U.S. justify its continued opposition towards Cuba during the late 1990s-early 2000s?
• U.S.-Cuba relations underwent a major shift in 2016. What caused this? How have relations been affected by the Trump administration?
• What challenges does Miguel Diaz-Canel face?
• How do the constitutional reforms address these challenges and appeal to the ‘new generation’?
• How might the constitutional reforms effect Cuba’s economy?
• What lies in Cuba's future?
Chile

Causes: What caused Allende’s overthrow?
Sub-questions
- How much blame do Allende and his party deserve for his eventual overthrow?
- Without US involvement, would he have survived?
- How important was Cuba to Allende's rise to power, and how much responsibility does Cuba have for Allende's downfall (if any)?

Effects: What impact did Pinochet’s coup and reign have on Chile since 1973?
Sub-questions
- How did Pinochet justify the military coup?
- What was his economic platform, and what was his logic for adopting it?
- Why and how did Pinochet eventually give up power?
- Why wasn't democracy stronger - in other words, what made it possible for a dictator to take and maintain power in a well-established democracy?

Nicaragua:

Causes: What led to the rise of the Sandinistas?
Sub-questions
- How did Zelaya’s rule and conflicts around the building of a canal lead to US involvement in Nicaragua?
- Describe the Somozas' rule: how did they stay in power so long?
- What led to the end of the Somoza regime, and the victory of the Sandinistas?
- Were the Sandinistas communists?

Effects: What were the consequences of the 1979 revolution?
Sub-questions
- What were the results of early Sandinista social and economic policies?
- Why did the US fund the contras?
- Relatedly, what was the Iran-Contra scandal?
- Would the Sandinistas have remained in power without the US-led resistance?
- What has been the impact of the US support of the contras?
- How have the Sandinistas, especially Daniel Ortega, changed since the 1970s?

Venezuela

Causes: What led to Chavez’s rise to power
Sub-questions:
- How is early Venezuela - up until 1998 - the same and different from other countries we have studied?
Government and Politics of Latin America

- What is the Punto Fijo pact, and how did it shape political competition and inequality in Venezuela?
- What explains Hugo Chavez’s rise to power and his popularity?
- To what extent did Chavez achieve 'socialism for the twenty-first century'?

Effects: How has Chavez’s death led to the current political crisis in Venezuela?

Sub-questions:
- What has the relationship of the US and Venezuela been since 1998?
- What are the causes of the economic crisis in Venezuela, and what role does oil play?
- How is Nicolás Maduro different than Chavez?
- What has caused the opposition protests in Venezuela?
- Who is Juan Guaidó, and what happens next in Venezuela?

MIDTERM / SPRING BREAK

Week 9: Mexico

Causes: What were the causes and consequences of the Mexican Revolution?
How do ideas of dependency explain the Mexican revolution?
What is the PRI, and how did it stay in power for so many years?
What was the coalition that was key to the PRI attaining power?
How is Mexico different from other countries we studied?

Causes: The end of the “perfect dictatorship: What were the causes of the PRI losing power in 2000?
What is NAFTA, and what important political reaction did it provoke in Mexico?
What brought about the end of PRI rule?
What role did election fraud, the earthquake and the peso crisis have?

Effects: What has been the effect of Mexico’s democratization?
Has Mexico achieved full democracy? Why/why not?
What is “Plan Mérida,” and has it worked?
How has the drug war impacted Mexico?
What caused migration from Mexico to increase, and then decrease?
Who is AMLO and what does his election mean for Mexico?

Week 10: Colombia

Causes: What caused Colombia’s civil war?
How does Colombia's political/economic history differ from its neighbors?
What led to the rise of the FARC and other guerrilla groups?
How are the assassination of Gaitán, “La Violencia,” and the National Front related to the civil war?

Spring 2021
Effects: What were the effects of Colombia’s Civil War on people and politics (1960s – 2016)?
How did Pablo Escobar and the rise of Colombian drug cartels impact the civil war?
What is the significance of the 1991 constitution?
What is Plan Colombia, and does it represent a new type of US intervention or more of the same?
Unión Patriótica?

Effects: What are the effects of the 2016 Peace Agreement?
What are the important points of the 2016 Colombian peace agreement?
How successful has the peace agreement been – in other words, do you think Colombia now truly has peace? What are the ongoing challenges?
Who is Duque, what policies does he advocate, and why was he elected?

Brazil

What were the causes of the Brazilian military dictatorship?
What gave rise to the rule of the military junta?
What was the junta’s human rights record?
How does the Brazilian dictatorship compare to others in the region?

What led to the rise of Lula and the PT in Brazil?
How did the legacies of both colonialism and the military dictatorship ultimately lead to Lula’s rise to power?
What were the major accomplishments and challenges of Lula’s administration?
What is the MST?
What is Bolsa Familia?
Why was Dilma impeached, and why is a corruption scandal currently rocking Brazil?

What led Bolsonaro rise to power?
How did Lula and Dilma’s fall from power lead to the rise of Bolsonaro?
Are corruption charges real, and/or a tool of the powerful to incarcerate the left?
How have Black Brazilians confronted discrimination, and how should we understand racism in Brazil today?

Bolivia & Ecuador

What led to the rise of Evo Morales (Bolivia) and Rafael Correa to power (Ecuador)?
What role has control over natural resources and neoliberalism played both the rise to power of these leaders, and the challenges they have faced?
How would you compare Morales and Correa? How are they similar and different?
What has been the role of the US in Bolivia and Ecuador? Why have they both avoided the type of intervention we have seen in other places?