Latin American Politics
PSCI 5650-002
Fall 2017

Prof. Glen Biglaiser
Office Hours: T, R 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (OBA)
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This graduate-level course is designed to give students an overview of the “grand” substantive topics, analytical perspectives, and methodological tools in the Comparative Politics sub-field of Latin American Studies. The course is divided into four sections. The first section examines the general history, analytical perspectives and debates, and the role of the state in Latin America. The second section considers political institutions in Latin America with a focus on political parties, electoral rules, and the origins of institutions. The third section focuses on Latin America’s shift toward market-oriented reforms. The final section briefly discusses social development in Latin America.

Course Requirements and Policies

The structure of the course is designed to be an open discussion of theoretical and substantive themes in the area of Latin American politics. As such, discussion will play an important part of your grade. To facilitate discussion, students will be broken into groups and asked to prepare for class discussion ahead of time. Each group will be asked to discuss the readings before coming to class, draft a short group report and then lead class discussion. Additionally, each student is required to submit two questions related to the readings to a class e-mail list prior to class. Finally, you are required to write three short analytical essays that integrate the course readings and themes. Upon permission of the professor, advanced graduate students may substitute a research proposal in lieu of these three analytical essays. You will be graded on your analytical understanding of course topics as represented in both written assignments and in-class participation.

Grading:

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<tr>
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<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analytical Essay I</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>October 5 (6:30 pm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analytical Essay II</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>November 2 (6:30 pm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analytical Essay III</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>December 12 (1:00 pm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Proposal Option</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>December 12 (1:00 pm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly questions</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Wednesdays by 10 pm</td>
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<td>Group reports</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Weekly (in class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-class discussion</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Weekly (in class)</td>
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Analytical Essays: Questions for these essays will be handed out a week before the due date. While the group reports are designed to give you in-depth understanding of each week’s readings, these essays require you to integrate several weeks of reading, thereby providing a broader perspective on the course content. Essays should be no longer than 10 typed (double spaced, normal margins) pages and are due in class on the Thursday listed above no later than 6:30 p.m. Students who are assigned to write their group’s report for that week are allowed to turn their paper in 24 hours after the posted deadline. (Note: This will not apply for those choosing the research proposal option.)
**Research Proposal Option:** Advanced graduate students who are working on a dissertation proposal or related task (e.g., conference paper, M.A. thesis) may turn in a proposal or equivalent work (e.g., draft of conference paper) during the last week of class. You must secure the professor’s permission to do this by September 14 by presenting a short (one page) précis of the project. As part of this option, you will also be asked to turn in progress reports and meet with the professor during the semester. Here is a website that may give ideas for your project. Georgetown Constitutions and Election Results for Latin America. [http://pdba.georgetown.edu/Elecdata/elecdata.html](http://pdba.georgetown.edu/Elecdata/elecdata.html).

**Weekly Questions:** One of the most underrated skills in academia is the ability to ask good questions. (Contrary to popular belief, there are such things as stupid questions.) This is your chance to practice. The questions should be analytical (theoretical) or methodological in nature and can focus directly on the reading or attempt to develop a tangential line of inquiry. In the latter case, these questions may be ideas for future dissertations and/or conference papers. Perhaps you were inspired by an “off hand” comment in a footnote, or would like to examine how a particular work’s thesis might be updated to understand contemporary politics. You may also develop questions that “speak” to multiple readings or other regions of the world. Be creative. Questions will be graded on a +, √, - basis. You are required to turn in at least 12 sets of weekly questions. You need not turn in questions for the first week of class (Aug. 31) since you won’t have yet read this syllabus or the readings. You also are permitted two “bye” weeks of your own choosing. As these questions will be submitted to a class e-mail list available for viewing by all registered students, you are more than welcome to comment on questions submitted by other students.

**Group Summary Reports:** Each group will be required to write a weekly report summarizing the readings to be discussed in class that week. These reports will be useful in preparing for your qualifying exams. Only one report per group is required (but post it online). Group members will be rotated giving everybody a chance to work with everyone else. The author of each weekly report will be pre-assigned to guarantee a fair workload. In weeks where there are multiple works, the workload may be divided amongst groups (although you are asked to read all assigned readings). Reports should be approximately 800 words (roughly 3 double-spaced pages) and should summarize the following elements: 1) the principal question under investigation; 2) the theoretical perspective being used; 3) the logic of the argument; 4) the research design/methodology used; and 5) a suggested (brief) alternative methodology/research design. You may also want to include brief critiques of the work, though the primary intent of these reports is to provide you with future study guides. A secondary goal is to get you into working groups to discuss the readings so as to give us a “running start” for class discussion.

**In-Class Discussion:** Weekly class discussion will be open. Each group will be responsible for getting the discussion going. Although the professor will come with some structured design, the discussion is free to follow whatever path develops. Consider the class time to be a good, old-fashioned barroom debate (only more sober).

**Required Texts:**


Optional Historical Texts:


Required Class Reader:

Readings marked with an * are on flash drive. Some readings are freely available on JSTOR (www.jstor.org) or another online source and may not be in your readings packet.

Department Statement of ADA compliance

The Political Science Department cooperates with the Office of Disability Accommodation to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written accommodation request on or before the sixth class day (beginning of the second week of classes).

University of North Texas -- Department of Political Science

Policy on Academic Integrity

The Political Science Department adheres to and enforces UNT’s policy on academic integrity (cheating, plagiarism, forgery, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty and sabotage). Students in this class should review the policy, which is located at: [http://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003](http://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003). Violations of academic integrity in this course will be addressed in compliance with the penalties and procedures laid out in this policy. Students may appeal any decision under this policy by following the procedures laid down in the UNT Policy Manual Section 06.003 “Student Academic Integrity.” See also Policies on academic dishonesty: [http://www.vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm](http://www.vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm)

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [www.deanofstudents.unt.edu](http://www.deanofstudents.unt.edu)

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, & Assault

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

UNT’s Dean of Students’ website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors: [http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources_0](http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources_0). Renee LeClaire McNamara is UNT’s Student Advocate and she can be reached through e-mail at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students’ office at 940-565-2648.
I. METHODOLOGY, ANALYTICAL DEBATES, AND THE STATE

Week 1  Introduction: Course Outline and Research Methodology.  (Aug. 31)


Week 2  General History, Analytical Perspectives, and Debates.  (Sept. 7)


Week 3  General Historical Overview: A Structural Perspective.  (Sept. 14)


Week 4  Structural Approaches, Part II: From ISI to B-A.  (Sept. 21)


Handout Analytical Essay 1
Week 5  How Much Capacity Does the State Have? (Sept. 28)


II. POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS IN LATIN AMERICA

Week 6  Democratization and Latin American Parties (Oct. 5)


Analytical Essay 1 Due: Oct. 5, 6:30 pm.

Week 7  Fundamentals of the Institutionalist Approach (Oct. 12)


Week 8  Effects of Electoral Rules on Parties and Party Systems (Oct. 19)


**Handout Analytical Essay II**

**Week 9  Voters and Corruption  (Oct. 26)**


**III. MARKET-ORIENTED REFORM IN LATIN AMERICA**

**Week 10  Democratization and Economic Liberalization.  (Nov. 2)**


**Analytical Essay II Due: November 2, 6:30 pm.**

**Week 11  Economic Reform and Statist Approaches.  (Nov. 9)**


Week 12 Market Reform and the Left in the 21st Century (Nov. 16)


Week 13 Public Opinion and Market Reform (TBD)


IV. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

Week 14 Social Spending in Latin America (Nov. 30)


**Handout Analytical Essay III**

**Week 15 Social Issues in Latin America (Dec. 7)**


*Htun, Mala, and S. Laurel Weldon. *States and the Logics of Gender Justice*. (Ch. 3: 103-143; “Religious Power, the State, and Family Law”). Forthcoming at Cambridge University Press.

**Analytical Essay III (or Research Proposal) Due: Tuesday, Dec. 12, 1:00 pm.**