

Latin American Politics
LALS 242 /POLLS 242

Professor: Amalia Pallares
Office Hours: T,12:30-2pm, R, 4:30-5:30
Office: 1108A BSB
Tel: 312 4139170
amalia@uic.edu

Fall 2006
320 SH
T, R 11:00-12:15

T.A: Mariana Goya
Office Hours, 2-4pm, 1164 BSB
Mgoyam2@uic.edu

This course aims to familiarize students with contemporary political institutions, processes, and problems in Latin America. The first two weeks provide a general introduction to issues and actors in the region. During the remaining weeks we will examine specific country case-studies. The course materials and lectures emphasize the challenges of democratization, post-authoritarian regimes, revolutionary struggles and social movements, social and economic equalities, and political change in the region. This semester the countries of emphasis will be Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Chile, Argentina and Cuba.

Required Texts: The following books are available for purchase in the bookstore. There will also be a few additional readings posted on Blackboard. You will be responsible for completing all the readings BEFORE the date in which they are assigned.

Politics of Latin America: the Power Game. Edited by Harry E. Vanden and Gary Prevost. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Paul Levy and Kathleen Bruhn. Mexico: the Struggle for Democratic Development. University of California Press, 2006.

Caldeira, Teresa. City of Walls: Crime, Segregation and Citizenship in São Paulo. University of California Press, 2001.

Leech, Gary. Killing Peace: Colombia's Conflict and the Failure of U.S. Intervention. Information Network of the Americas, 2002.

Course Requirements: There will be three exams, each worth 30% of your grade. The other 10% consists of regular attendance, regular reading and participation in weekly exercises and class projects. The extra credit options available to you include viewing a film or attending a lecture that addresses at least one of the themes and/or countries studied and writing a short review of the film or event. Special attention should be paid to how this film or project addresses questions raised in the classroom.

Teaching Assistant: Mariana Goya will be the teaching assistant for this course. She will be assisting me in grading exams, supervising group projects and reviewing for exams. She will also hold office hours.

Schedule

August 29: Introduction to the Course

August 31: Overview of the region: geography and history

Vanden & Prevost, Chapters 1, 2, 3

September 5: Cultural and Institutional Patterns

Vanden & Prevost Chs 4, 5, 8

September 7: The Question of Development

Video: the Garden of Forking Paths

September 12: Economic Structures and Inequalities

Vanden & Prevost Ch. 7; “The Vicious Cycle of Inequality in Latin America” and “The Contemporary Latin American Economies: Neoliberal Reconstruction”

September 14: Democracy and Democratization

“Democracy and Mass Belief Systems in Latin America”

September 19: Authoritarianism: its causes and consequences: the case of Chile

Vanden & Prevost Ch. 15

September 21: Authoritarianism: the case of Argentina

Vanden & Prevost, Ch. 14

September 26:

FILM: “The Official Story”

September 28

Discussion of Film and Review Exam #1

October 3: Exam #1

October 5: The Challenges of Democratization: the case of Mexico

Vanden & Prevost, Ch. 5 Levy & Bruhn, Chapters 1&2

October 10: Case Study: Mexico

Levy & Bruhn, Chapters 3 &4

October 12: Case Study: Mexico

Levy & Bruhn, Chapters 5 & 6

October 17: Case Study: Mexico

Levy & Bruhn Chapters 7 &8

October 19:

Video: The Sixth Section

October 24:

Revolutionary Politics: The Case of Cuba

Vanden & Prevost Ch 9

October 26: Revolutionary Politics: the Case of Cuba

“Revolution, Rectification and Contemporary Socialism” and “The Invisible Crisis: Stability and Change in 1990s Cuba”

October 31: Cuba in the XXI Century; US-Cuba Relations

“The Single Party of the Cuban Nation Faces the Future”; “Presidential Sucession: Legal and Political Contexts and Domestic Players”; “The Armed Forces Today and Tommorrow”; “The Cuba-U.S. Conflict in a New Century”.

November 2 Other Revolutions: the Central American Wars

Vanden & Prevost Ch 10

November 7: Review for Exam #2

November 9: Exam #2

November 14: Armed Insurgency: the Case of Colombia

Vanden & Prevost, Ch. 18, Leech Part 1

November 16: Case Study: Colombia

Leech, Part 2 and Conclusion

November 21: The Politics of Crime: The Case of Brazil

Prevost, Chapter 14

November 23: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY. NO CLASS

The Politics of Crime: The Case of Brazil

Caldeira, Chapters 1-3

November 28 Case Study: Brazil

Caldeira Chapters 4, &5

November 30 Case Study: Brazil & Course Wrap Up

Caldeira, Chapters 6, 7, & 8

December 5 *NO CLASS- READING DAY*

December 7 Final Exam Review

December 14- FINAL EXAM, 10:30-12:30