SYLLABUS

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Office Hours: Tuesday 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m. @ Carleton (407 Willis); Wednesday 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. @ St. Olaf (The Cage Café) and by appointment on Skype (Skype username: amontero9601)

Course Description

Latin America has long been analyzed using the historically specific paradigm of its post-debt crisis political economy. During the 1990s the region embraced market-oriented neoliberal economic and social reforms in response to the acute fiscal and macroeconomic crises of the decline of the previous import-substituting model of development during the 1980s. These reforms were conceived and implemented mostly by center-right and conservative parties in government. Then, just as a surge in commodity export prices during the 2000s sparked almost a decade of sustained economic growth, leftist governments came to power throughout the region. Some scholars saw the “left turn” in Latin America as the emergence of a new paradigm to replace the discredited neoliberal one. But commodity booms always end in busts and so did this latest one in Latin America. By 2012, several leftist incumbents found themselves in trouble, their economic and social policies facing intense opposition. In some cases, these governments became mired in corruption scandals that threatened to replace presidents, destroy policy legacies, and shake up political alliances. While some of these governments lost power to center-right and conservative political forces, others struggled into ever deepening crises; a few kept power and managed to stabilize and even improve their fortunes.

The variety of trajectories of political, economic, and social change across Latin America after 1990 provides a rich set of cases for comparative research. We will ask how political parties and movements on both the left and the right managed to deal with good and hard times. How have economic and social policies responded to the challenges of the last three decades? Have models of participatory and democratic government become sufficiently resilient during these turbulent decades? How have civil societal organizations opened political spaces for new actors to emerge and exercise voice in Latin American politics? Have the vagaries of globalized markets fundamentally limited the possibilities for political and social change or have these shifts between right and left, neoliberalism and state-led forms of growth and distribution, provided a coherent set of lessons for the region going forward?

The purpose of this course is to explore all of these dimensions of the last three decades of Latin American political, economic, and social development. As a research seminar, instruction will involve intense discussion and periodic debates. Beyond preparing for each session, most of the work in the seminar will focus on a term-long research project that will culminate in a 25-page paper and oral presentation in the classroom.
What is Expected of Students

Students will be expected to read, think, criticize, and form arguments. That will require keeping up on reading assignments and attending class regularly. Students must be fully prepared at all times to discuss the readings and concepts from previous class meetings. The best students will be critical but balanced in their assessments, and will develop coherent arguments that they can defend in their writing and their in-class discussion. Preparation in this seminar requires daily effort to do the readings and take notes on them in the days preceding each meeting.

Reading Materials

The two required books for this course have been ordered and are presently on sale at the Carleton College bookstore. All are paperbacks. The texts are:


In addition to these texts, this course requires your study of a number of other readings from diverse sources. These readings are all available through the course Dropbox directory. Additionally, I will occasionally distribute electronic clippings from different sources that I acquire through social media.

Grading

As a true research seminar the assessment of students’ performance will focus on the process and work product of sustained research. The seminar paper has several graded components: the quality of the first draft, the oral presentation, and the final draft. Seminar participation in the form of sustained discussion of readings and cases as well as structured debate performances will account for the rest of the evaluation. The grade breakdown follows:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Debates</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Draft</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Research Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Draft</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
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The Debates

This seminar will use a series of adversarial debates (4x4) to address the literature on neoliberal, the right and the left in Latin America. Students will be instructed in how to organize these debates and how to participate with an emphasis on rejoinder and argument development. Each student will participate in at least two debates.

The Seminar Paper

The culmination of student work in this seminar will be the composition of a seminar paper of 20-25 pages of text (typed, double-spaced, 12cpi, one-inch margins, paginated) and a research bibliography of a minimum of three pages, single-spaced. All drafts of the work prior to the final as well as the final must be handed in by 5 p.m. on the student’s directory on Dropbox on the due date (see below). All files, except for data files, must be in PDF format.

The composition of the seminar paper will be broken down into the following steps:

(1) By Monday, September 26, students will have decided upon a research topic in consultation with me. Each student will prepare a preliminary abstract of the project.

(2) By Friday, October 7, students will hand in a copy of a preliminary research bibliography of no fewer than 3 pages, single-spaced. A handout will define the proper citation and bibliographic reference format for the paper. Weak bibliographies and/or bibliographies that do not follow the required format will generate negative points assessable on the rough draft score.

(3) By Friday, October 28, students will hand in a first draft of the argumentative section of their paper (the first seven-eight pages) with an updated abstract and bibliography.

(4) On November 7, 10, and 14, each student will orally present their research for no less than 15 minutes a piece in the research seminar. All colleagues will offer their input. If possible, we will schedule a couple of early presentations to free up the schedule at the end of the course.

(5) On Monday, November 21, the final draft of the seminar paper will be due at 5:00 p.m. on Dropbox.

Consultation with me during each of these steps is crucial. We will also discuss the format and direction of paper topics and issues as part of the normal discussion of the research seminar. One of the most important lessons of the seminar is that good research depends upon the input and support of colleagues. Each student will be expected to contribute their share to this effort.

Class Participation

Typically, I will begin each class session by offering a general overview of the issues to be discussed. I will also present you with a set of reading and discussion questions to structure our deliberations. After the overview portion, the seminar will proceed to student-led discussion. I
will conclude each class session with a brief review of the authors and readings for the next meeting. Whenever possible, each class will have a break of about 15-20 minutes.

Electronic Equipment Policy

For years I have allowed students to use laptops in class to take notes. However, based on much scientific evidence as well as personal experience, it is evident that such practices encourage inattention and multitasking that degrades the ability of students to learn. There is also plenty of scientific evidence that taking pen-and-paper notes is far superior to note-taking on laptops. The use of laptops and tablets in this class will be strongly discouraged unless a student can prove that they absolutely need such a device in the classroom. Preference will be given to students who have an officially sanctioned accommodation (see Special Needs below), but students without such accommodations may also be given permission to use laptops and iPads for approved purposes. Use of such devices in class does not designate any student as having special needs.

The Grading Scale

I will be using the following grading scale in this course:
98-100 A+
94-97 A
91-93 A-
88-90 B+
83-87 B
79-82 B-
76-78 C+
72-75 C
68-71 C-
67/below D/F

Academic Misconduct

Given the fact that academe relies upon the ethical conduct of scholars, students are held to the same standards in their own work. Any act of academic dishonesty or misconduct will be referred to the Office of the Dean. For further information, see the useful handout on “Avoiding Academic Misconduct.”

Special Needs

Carleton College is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all states. The Disability Services office (Burton Hall 03) 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, sensory, or physical), please contact Chris Dallager, Director of Disability Services, by calling 507-222-5250 or sending en email to cdallager@carleton.edu to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.
NOTE: Readings must be completed for the dates assigned below.

I. Neoliberalism and Post-Neoliberalism

*Crisis-led Reform and Boom-Bust Cycles: From the Lost Decade of the 1980s through the Difficult Decade of the 1990s (Monday, September 12)*


*Actors, Institutions, and Processes of Neoliberal and Post-Neoliberal Latin America (Thursday, September 15)*


Recommended:


*The Discrediting of Neoliberalism and the Emergence of Post-Neoliberal Latin America? The “Left Turn” (Monday, September 19)*


**Recommended For Debate:**


**Recommended for Background:**


**Two Lefts or Many More? Varieties of the Latin American Left (Thursday, September 22)**


**Recommended Earlier Work:**


**The Institutionalized, Partisan Left: The Continuity of Social Democracy? (Monday, September 26)**


**The Non-Party and “Populist”/ “Contestatory” Left (Thursday, September 29)**

Margarita López Maya, “Venezuela: Hugo Chávez and the Populist Left,” in Levitsky and Roberts.


Catherine M. Conaghan, “Ecuador: Rafael Correa and the Citizens’ Revolution,” in Levitsky and Roberts.


**Crisis, Continuity or Collapse of the “Populist” Left (Monday, October 3)**


*Recommended for Debate:*


**Conservative Continuity and Resurgence (Thursday, October 6)**


Peter Siavelis, “Chile: The Right’s Evolution from Democracy to Authoritarianism and Back Again,” in Luna and Rovira Kaltwasser.


*Recommended:*


**II. Processes and Policy Issues**

**Participatory Politics I: Incorporation or Mobilization? (Monday, October 10)**


Benjamin Goldfrank, “The Left and Participatory Democracy: Brazil, Uruguay, and Venezuela,” in Levitsky and Roberts.


**Participatory Politics II: New Actors and New Challenges to Democratic Incorporation (Thursday, October 13)**


**Recommended for Debate**


**Midterm/Fall Break (Carleton/St. Olaf) (Monday, October 17)**


**The “Resource Curse” and Commodity-driven Development (Thursday, October 20)**


**Recommended Earlier Work:**


**Natural Resources and Environmental Policy (Monday, October 24)**


**Recommended Earlier Work:**


**Contra Poverty and Inequality: Social Policy Regimes (Thursday, October 27)**


**Re-forming the State: Decentralization, Civil Service Reform, and New Forms of Bureaucratic Governance (Monday, October 31)**


**For Debate:**

Kurt Weyland, “The Left: Destroyer or Savior of the Market Model?” in Levitsky and Roberts.


**Political Party Systems: Re-Orientation, Re-Branding, or Decay? (Thursday, November 3)**


Sergio Morresi and Gabriel Vommaro, “Argentina: The Difficulties of the Partisan Right and the Case of Propuesta Republicana,” in Luna and Rovira Kaltwasser.

The Challenge of Indigenous Politics: Movements and Parties (Monday, November 7)


Recommended Earlier Work:


III. Student Projects and Presentations

Student Presentations (Monday, November 7; Thursday, November 10; Monday, November 14)