Description and Objectives

This course introduces students to major theoretical approaches to the study of Latin American political-economy, and to specific issues of political and economic reform from the 1980s to the present. The theoretical approaches focus on the economic and political impact of international constraints, economic interest groups, and representative institutions and electoral politicians. The discussion of contemporary reform explores the relation between democratization and market-oriented economic and social policies implemented during the last decades.

Organization and Requirements

The course deals with five sets of issues: 1) historical origins and path dependence; 2) democratization and democratic institutions; 3) political representation; 4) economic policy reform; and 5) social policy reform.

Grades for the course will be based on three 10-15 page papers on assigned topics, due as indicated in the syllabus below.

Readings

The following books are recommended for purchase. All other reading assignments are available a) on reserve, b) on the Sakai page, or c) through the electronic journals collection of the library.


Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War.* Cambridge University Press 2010


Reading Assignments
Friday, January 20: Introduction
An excellent general survey of contemporary Latin American politics and economics is provided by Michael Reid, Forgotten Continent: The Battle for Latin America’s Soul. Yale University Press 2007. It raises many of the issues we will be discussing in this seminar in a sophisticated, but readable way.

Other useful background reading is available in the following:
I would recommend that you look at one or two of the country chapters in either of these books to familiarize yourselves with developments within specific national settings.

Friday, January 27: Historical Determinants of Underdevelopment: Are they doomed from the start?


Recommended
James Mahoney, Legacies of Liberalism: Path Dependence and Political Regimes in Latin America


Part I: Democratic Politics
Friday, February 3: Transitions: Role of Elite Compromises/Mass Pressures
Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies. Pp. 3-73


Recommended.
Dietrich Reuschmeyer, Evelyne Huber Stephens, and John D. Stephens, Capitalist Development and Democracy

Friday, February 10: Political Institutions: Are Presidential Systems Prone to Instability?
Juan J. Linz and Arturo Valenzuela, The Failure of Presidential Democracy: The Case of Latin America (Comparative Perspectives (Johns Hopkins 1994), pp. 3-151. (Linz critique of presidentialism, plus Valenzuela on Chile.

Scott Mainwaring and Matthew Soberg Shugart, Presidentialism and Democracy in Latin America (Cambridge University Press 1997), Chapter 1 (pp. 12-55), Chapter 8 (pp. 300-321).

Recommended.


Friday, February 17: Democracy and Inequality: Does Inequality Affect Transitions to Democracy? Does Inequality Undermine Democracy in Latin America?

Acemoglu and Robinson, Economic Origins of Democracy and Dictatorship, pp. 1-87

Ansell and Samuels, “Inequality and Democratization: A Contractarian Approach” Comparative Political Studies 43:12 (December 2010).


Recommended

February 24: Micro Perspectives


**Friday, March 2: Competitive Authoritarianism**


**Part II. Political Representation**

**Friday, March 9: Patterns of Representation in the Neoliberal Era (FIRST PAPER DUE)**


Machado, Scartascini, and Tomassi, “Political Institutions and Street Protest in Latin America,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*

Hagopian, “Accountability and Representation in Latin America,” Kingstone_

Levitsky,”Informal Institutions and Politics in Latin America,” in Kingstone_

Recommended.

Collier and Handlin, chapters 4-8.

**Friday, March 16: Spring Break**

**Friday, March 23: Representation and the Rise of the Left:**


Levitsky and Roberts, chapters to be assigned.

**Friday, March 30: Clientelism**


Weitz-Shapiro, “Why Some Politicians Opt out of Clientelism”

**Recommended**


**Friday, April 6: Ethnic Politics (SECOND PAPER DUE).**


Ollie A. Johnson III, “Race, Politics, and Afro-Latin Americans,” in Kingstone

Jose Antonio Lucero, “Indigenous Politics: Between Democracy and Danger,” in Kingstone

**Part III: Market and Social Reforms**

**Friday, April 13: Executive Power, Party Competition and Market Reforms**

Javier Corrales, “Neoliberalism and its Alternatives,” in Kingstone


Hector Schamis, "Distributional Coalitions and the Politics of Economic Reform in Latin America" *World Politics*, January 1999


Grigore Pop-Eleches, “From Crisis to Reform: Partisan Responses to Economic Crisis in Latin America and Eastern Europe.”

**Recommended**


Ben Ross Schneider, “Organizing Interests and Coalitions in the Politics of Market Reform in Latin America,” World Politics April 2004

**Friday, April 20: Reorganizing Social Safety-Nets and Investing in Human Capital**


Huber and Stevens, Democracy and the Left: Social Policy and Redistribution in Latin America, Chapters 4 and 5.

De la O, “The Politics of Conditional Cash Transfers”

Zucco, “Redistribution without Backlash? The Case of Conditional Cash Transfers in Brazil.”

**Recommended**

Lopez-Calva and Nora Lustig, “Decline of Inequality”

Marcus Andre Melo, “The Politics of ‘Hard Wiring’: Social Policy and the Transformation of Brazilian Federalism,” manuscript on web page


**Friday, April 27: Globalization, Partisanship, and Social Policy Reform: External Influences: Diffusion and Pressure**

Weyland, Kurt Gerhard, “Theories of Policy Diffusion: Lessons from Latin American Pension Reform” World Politics, January 2005


Susan Stokes, “Globalization and the Left in Latin America”

**Recommended**

