

Twenty First Century Latin American Politics

**Political Science 360
Friday 10-12p
Sidney Smith Hall, Room 1074**

**University of Toronto
2016**

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(and by appointment)
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Course Overview

Following the election of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela in 1998, Latin America was characterized as experiencing a “Pink Tide” of left of centre governments. In this ‘left turn,’ a majority of states have set out on a post-Neoliberal path, emphasizing economic redistribution and paths of development independent of the so-called ‘Washington Consensus.’ However, despite a high degree of regional solidarity, there remain significant differences across the states of the ‘Pink Tide,’ and by 2016, the ‘Tide’ seems to have turned to the right. This advanced undergraduate and graduate level course introduces students to the cultural politics, themes, and internal differences among Latin American Left governments and Social Movements. Our approach in the course will address themes through pan-regional hopes and challenges in the pursuit of social justice, and case studies – offering students in-depth investigations into individual country cases. Key questions addressed include: the status of the nation-state after globalization and neoliberal structural adjustment; resource extraction and sustainable development; regional integration; social movements, with particular emphasis on women’s, indigenous, and environmental movements; and the role of China in the new Latin America.

Assessment

Class Attendance and Participation	10%
Paper Proposal	20%
Keywords (2, 15% each)	30%
Final Paper	40%

Class Participation – A course is only as strong as its participants. Participation includes asking questions of the professor and colleagues, bringing news stories to our attention, and making appointments to meet with the professor either individually or in small groups to discuss the topics of the course.

Keywords – Three times during the semester you will be asked to write a two to three paragraph entry on a key concept or event from a list provided by the professor (via blackboard). Your entry should define, contextualize, and explain the significance of your keyword in clear and concise language. You will be expected to cite your sources.

Please note, it is nearly impossible to write a strong keyword without a significant amount of prewriting and revision. Space is limited, so make sure you revise and polish your work in order to convey your idea as effectively as possible. Keywords are due in paper at the beginning of the class on the day they are due. Emailed submissions will only be accepted under extremely extenuated circumstances.

Final Paper Proposal – In preparation for your final research paper, you are required to submit a graded paper proposal, 1-2 pages in length. Your proposal should identify a research question as well as provide a brief discussion of the significance of the topic. Your paper should explore a problem or history introduced in the course.

Strong proposals will also identify potential scholarly resources for your paper. I am more than happy to discuss topics and writing strategies in greater detail in office hours.

Final Paper – The final 15-20 page research paper is due on 6 December via email to the instructor. Time and location TBA.

Grading Rubric

A: Excellent work, with clear, challenging, original ideas supported by sufficient, appropriate, logically interpreted evidence. The essay should engage the reader in the inquiry, convincingly answer opposing views, be well organized, and free of significant flaws. An ‘A’ paper should be not just good but outstanding in ideas and presentation.

B: Good to very good work, with a clear thesis supported by sufficient, appropriate evidence, organized and interpreted logically. The ‘B’ paper may have some outstanding qualities but be marked by significant flaws which keep it from being an ‘A’; or it may be all-around good work, free of major problems but lacking the deeper insight necessary for excellence.

C: Satisfactory work, but not yet good. The ‘C’ paper meets the basic requirements of a thesis supported by interpretation of specific evidence, but it needs work in thinking and/or presentation. There may be a lack of clarity, the evidence may not always be sufficient and appropriate, or the interpretation may have logical flaws. The essay may have organizational or mechanical problems that keep it from being good. The ‘C’ paper may be good in some respects but poor in others, or it may simply be adequate but not noteworthy overall.

D: Barely passing work that shows effort but is so marred by serious problems that it cannot be considered a satisfactory paper. Papers without a readily identifiable thesis are liable to be graded ‘D’.

No Pass: Failing work—for example, a hasty, sloppy paper that shows little or no thought, effort, or familiarity with the text.

Please Note: Poor mechanics detract from your grades, but good mechanics by themselves do not make a good paper. Sloppy grammar, punctuation, and spelling tax the goodwill of your reader, which all effective writing is careful to respect. These problems won't be overlooked, since they affect the communication of thought—but thoughtful work is the most important.

Late Policy: Barring personal injury or family tragedy, late submission of written work is *strongly discouraged*. Marks on any late assignments will be reduced by 10 (on a 100 point grading scale) points per day past the due date.

Help with Writing

All undergraduate students taking summer courses in the Faculty of Arts and Science are eligible to use any of the five college writing centres that remain open in the summer: Innis College, New College, University College, Victoria College and Woodsworth College Writing Centres. Students may book up to TWO appointments per week. For information about writing centre appointments in the summer session, visit <http://writing.utoronto.ca/news>. To learn more about how writing centres work, visit <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/learning>.

More than 60 Advice files on all aspects of academic writing are available from www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice. Printable PDF versions are listed at www.writing.utoronto.ca/about-this-site/pdf-links.

Please also familiarize yourself with the helpful guide "How Not to Plagiarize" and other advice on documentation format and methods of integrating sources. These pages are all listed at www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources.

Accessibility Services

Please let me (and AccServ) know early if you require any accommodations this semester. I am happy to be flexible.

Books for Purchase

The course has only one required text, available for purchase at the U of T bookstore (214 College St, 416-640-7900). Other readings will either be made available on Blackboard or can be found via links to their original online sources as noted in the syllabus.

Jeffery Webber and Barry Carr, eds. (2013) *The New Latin American Left: Cracks in the Empire* (Toronto: Rowan and Littlefield).

A note on background information and familiarity with the subject matter

Ideally students will arrive prepared with a degree of background in Latin American politics and history. However, readings and lectures are intended to be accessible to newcomers and specialists alike. Advanced knowledge of Latin American history is a much-encouraged plus, but not a prerequisite for enrollment. As always, the best way to get around any problems that might arise due to gaps in the knowledge we come to the course with is to ask questions, to ask them often, and to ask them without fear.

Students less familiar might consider referencing general histories of Latin America such as:

John C. Chasteen (2011) *Born in Blood and Fire* (New York: W.W. Norton)

Tulio Halperin Donghi (1993) *The Contemporary History of Latin America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press)

Eduardo Galeano (1997) *Open Veins of Latin America* (New York: Monthly Review Press)

Robert Gwynne and Cristobal Kay (1999) *Latin America Transformed* (New York: Routledge)

The professor is also more than happy to point students toward sources according to their own particular interests.

***Análisis de Coyuntura* and the Importance of Outside Sources**

This is a course on contemporary Latin America at a time when ‘facts on the ground’ are rapidly being rewritten. While the primary focus of the course will be the themes and readings for each meeting, we will always allow time at the beginning of class to discuss, debate, and inform each other about current events in the Latin America. The aim of this sort of *análisis de coyuntura* (conjunctural analysis) is to draw our collective attention to the causes and consequences of the moments we are studying beyond the confines of the syllabus.

Latin American affairs are notoriously misrepresented – or ignored – in the North Atlantic Press. I wholeheartedly encourage you to add non-North American sources of information to your daily news and analysis repertoires. If you are fortunate enough to read languages other than English, all the better! Staying informed is one of our key responsibilities as global citizens.

Links including everything from online newspapers to government ministries is The Latin America Network Information Center. <http://lanic.utexas.edu>

The Washington Office on Latin America is a policy lobbying organization focusing on issues of human rights, security and justice. <http://www.wola.org>

NACLA Report offers analysis of Latin American conditions from a critical perspective. <http://www.nacla.org>

Good analysis on regional trends in crime and public insecurity. <http://www.insightcrime.org>

Resource for political movements and activism in Latin America, from the perspective of movement participants. <http://upsidedownworld.org>

Inter-American Dialogue (analysis of political and economic trends) <http://thedialogue.org>

The United States Institute of Peace (conflict resolution, includes database of peace accord documents) <http://www.usip.org>

Also offering excellent analysis of regional trends is the Canadian Foundation for the Americas, FOCAL. <http://www.focal.ca>

Among Latin American based research centers, for wide-ranging and timely scholarship see FLACSO (with sites in several LA countries) <http://www.flacso.org>

Please feel free (and encouraged!) to share any other sources of news and analysis you encounter.

Schedule of Readings and Discussion Topics

15 Sept – Intro to Course

22 Sept – The Contemporary Scene

Jeffery Webber and Barry Carr (2013) “The Latin American Left in Theory and Practice” in *The New Latin American Left: Cracks in the Empire*, Jeffery Webber and Barry Carr, eds. (New York: Rowan and Littlefield). pp. 1-12

Arturo Escobar (2010) “Latin America at a Crossroads: Alternative Modernizations, Post-Liberalism, or Post-Development?” *Cultural Studies* 24(1): 1-65.

Strongly Suggested:

Emir Sader (2011) “The New Mole” in *The New Mole: Paths of the Latin American Left* (New York: Verso). pp. ix-28.

Suggested and Supplemental:

Fernando Coronil (2011) “The Future in Question: History and Utopia in Latin America (1989-2010)” in *Business as Usual: The Roots of the Global Financial Crisis*. Craig Calhoun and Georgi Derluguian, eds. (New York: NYU Press). pp. 231-265.

Enrique Dussel (2008) *Twenty Theses on Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press).

Jorge Castañeda (2006) “Latin America’s Left Turn” *Foreign Affairs* 85(3): 28-43.

David Harvey (2007) *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: University Press).

Tulio Halperin Donghi (1993) *The Contemporary History of Latin America* (Durham: Duke University Press).

29 Sept – Neoliberalism, Neostructuralism, and Resistance

Fernando Ignacio Leiva (2008) *Latin American Neostructuralism: The Contradictions of Post-Neoliberal Development*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press). Selections

Debora Loppreite (2015) “Gender Politics in Argentina after Neoliberalism: Opportunities and Obstacles for Women’s Rights” *Latin American Perspectives* 42(1): 64-73.

Suggested and Supplemental:

Sara Motta (2013) “‘We are the ones we’ve been waiting for’: The Feminization of Resistance in Venezuela” *Latin American Perspectives* 19(40): 35-54.

Daniel Ozarow (2014) “When All They Thought was Solid Melted into Air: Resisting Pauperization in Argentina during the 2002 Crisis” *Latin American Research Review* (49)1: 178-202.

Maria Josefina Saldaña Portillo (2003) *The Revolutionary Imagination in the Americas and the Age of Development* (Durham: Duke University Press).

6 Oct – From Polyarchy to Popular Democracy...and Back?

William Robinson (2006) “Promoting Polyarchy in Latin America: The Oxymoron of ‘Market Democracy’” in *Latin America after Neoliberalism* (New York: The New Press): 96-119.

Barry Cannon (2016) “Understanding the Right in Latin America” and “Coups, Smart Coups, and Elections: Right Power Strategies under Left-led governments” in *The Latin American Right: Elite Power, Hegemony, and the Struggle for the State*. (New York: Routledge).

13 Oct – First Keyword Assignment Due at Beginning of Class

13 Oct – Environmental Crises, Challenges, and Movements

Andrea Spikin and Jorge Rojas Hernández (2016) “Climate Change in Latin America: Inequality, Conflict, and Social Movements of Adaptation” *Latin American Perspectives* 43(4): 4-11.

Arturo Escobar (2006) “Difference and Conflict in the Struggle over Natural Resources: A Political Ecology Framework” *Development* 49(3): 6-13

Jorge Rojas Hernández (2016) “Society, Environment, Vulnerability, and Climate Change in Latin America: Challenges of the Twenty-First Century” *Latin American Perspectives* 43(4): 29-42.

20 Oct – China and Latin America: New Frontiers or New Dependencies?

Jörn Dosch and David Goodman (2012) “China and Latin America: Complementarity, Competition, and Globalization” *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 41(1): 3-19.

James Cypher and Tamar Diana Wilson (2015) “China and Latin America: Processes and Paradoxes” *Latin American Perspectives* 42(6): 5-26.

Alicia Puyana and Agostina Costantino (2015) “Chinese Land Grabbing in Argentina and Colombia.” *Latin American Perspectives* 42(6): 105-119.

27 Oct – Final Paper Proposal Due at Beginning of Class

27 Oct – Venezuela’s Bolivarian Revolution

Julia Buxton (2016) “Venezuela After Chávez” *New Left Review* 99: 5-25.

Barry Cannon (2014) “As Clear as MUD: Characteristics, Perspectives, and Strategies of the Opposition in Bolivarian Venezuela: *Latin American Politics and Society* 56(4): 49-70.

Donald Kingsbury (Forthcoming) “From Populism to Protagonism (and back?) in Bolivarian Venezuela: Rethinking Ernesto Laclau’s *On Populist Reason*” *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*.

Suggested and Supplemental

George Ciccariello-Maher (2013) *We Created Chávez: A People’s History of the Venezuelan Revolution*. Durham: Duke University Press.

3 Nov – Brazil: Internal Contradictions of a Regional Superpower

Conn Halinan (2016) “A Very Brazilian Coup” *Counterpunch* Available at: <http://www.counterpunch.org/2016/06/03/a-very-brazilian-coup/>

Glenn Greenwald (2016) “Credibility of Brazil’s Interim President Collapses as he Receives 8-year Ban on Running for Office” *The Intercept* Available at: <https://theintercept.com/2016/06/03/credibility-of-brazils-interim-president-collapses-receives-8-year-ban-on-running/>

Ricardo Antunes (2013) “Trade Unions, Social Conflict, and the Political Left in Present-day Brazil: Between Breach and Compromise” in *The New Latin American Left*.

Dan LaBotz (2015) “Brazil: Lula, Rousseff, and the Workers Party Establishment in Power” *New Politics* 15(2): 53-60.

Suggested:

Mônica Dias Martins (2000) “The MST Challenge to Neoliberalism” *Latin American Perspectives* 27(5): 33-45.

Michael Reid (2014) *Brazil: The Troubled Rise of a Global Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press)

10 Nov – Ecuador: *Extractivismo para superar el extractivismo?*

Sarah Radcliffe (2012) “Development for a Postneoliberal Era? *Sumak Kawsay*, Living Well, and the Limits to Decolonization in Ecuador” *Geoforum* 43: 240-249.

Sara Caria and Rafael Domínguez (2016) “Ecuador’s *Buen Vivir*: A New Ideology for Development” *Latin American Perspectives* 43(1): 18-33.

Eduardo Gudynas (2013) “Buen Vivir: The Social Philosophy Inspiring Movements in South America”

<http://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/blog/buen-vivir-philosophy-south-america-eduardo-gudynas>

Carlos Zorrilla (2014) “The Struggle over Sumak Kawsay in Ecuador”

<http://upsidedownworld.org/main/ecuador-archives-49/4810-the-struggle-over-sumak-kawsay-in-ecuador>

Suggested and Supplemental:

Henry Veltmeyer and James Petras (2014) *The New Extractivism: A Post-Neoliberal Development Model or Imperialism for the Twenty First Century?* (New York: Zed Books).

Jeffery Webber (2012) *Red October: Left-Indigenous Struggles in Modern Bolivia* (New York: Brill).

Deborah Yashar (2005) *Contesting Citizenship in Latin America: The Rise of Indigenous Movements and the Postliberal Challenge* (Cambridge: University Press).

17 Nov – Final Keyword Assignment Due at Beginning of Class

17 Nov – Countercurrents: Mexico and Central America

Hector Perla, Marco Mojica, and Jared Bibler (2013) “From Guerrillas to Government: The Continued Relevance of the Central American Left” in *The New Latin American Left*.

Richard Roman and Edur Velasco Arregui (2013) “Neoliberal Authoritarianism, the ‘Democratic Transition,’ and the Mexican Left” in *The New Latin American Left*.

Todd Gordon and Jeffery Webber (2013) “The Overthrow of a Moderate and the Birth of a Radicalizing Resistance: The Coup against Manuel Zelaya and the History of Imperialism and Popular Struggle in Honduras” in *The New Latin American Left*.

24 Nov – Opening Cuba

Thomas Skidmore, Peter Smith, & James Green (2014) “Key Colony, Socialist State” in *Modern Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Camila Piñeiro Harnecker (2014) “Nonstate Enterprises in Cuba: Building Socialism?” *Latin American Perspectives* 41(4): 113-128.

Luis Suárez Salazar (2014) “Updating Cuban Socialism: A Utopian Critique” *Latin American Perspectives* 41(4): 13-217

Suggested and Supplemental:

Antoni Kapcia (2008) *Cuba in Revolution: A History since the Fifties*. London: Reaktion Books.

1 Dec – Class Wrap-Up and Summary

6 Dec – Final Paper Due