

# INTL 4380 Latin American Politics

University of Georgia

Fall 2024

Tuesday – Thursday 3:55-5:10 MLC 253

Gabriel Soyer (he/him), Instructor  
Room 01B IA Building, 202 Herty Drive.

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Office Hours (in-person or Zoom):

**Tuesday 1:00-3:00 pm Sign up for scheduled office hours at least 12hs in advance at:**

<https://calendly.com/gabrielsoyer/15min>

Join Office Hours Zoom Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/7693439501>

Meeting ID: 769 3439 501

## 1. Goal

Latin America is a very diverse region encompassing a wide array of cultures, histories, and political events. As a result, it is impossible to cover the entire region in a single semester-long course. This class will focus on a few key themes and readings that will provide students with a foundation. This class's primary focus is on politics in the 20th and 21st centuries. However, we will spend the first several weeks discussing historical legacies from earlier colonial eras that continue to shape Latin American politics in the present.

By the end of the semester, you will have a broad understanding of modern Latin American issues such as political institutions, non-governmental actors, inequality, crime, political representation, identity, and the relationships between political and economic factors in different countries in the region.

## 2. Requirements and assignments

All students are expected to complete the assigned readings before the class meeting for which the particular readings are assigned. This will permit students to engage in discussions. Recommended readings are not mandatory, but the instructor often will rely on them in lectures or class discussions. All readings will be available on eLC.

**Attendance:** The mode of instruction for this course is in-person, and you are expected to attend all classes, except in the event of illness, emergency, religious observance, or unavoidable conflict related to your academic, personal, and professional responsibilities. Please remember that my primary commitment to you is care for your well-being. You may always take an excused absence for any serious and legitimate reason. If you are at all sick, please do not come to class. If you are going to be absent, please notify me as early as possible ahead of class time via email. In the case of sudden illness or emergency, please

notify me as soon as you are able after the missed class session. Attendance is integral to your participation in this course. Absences for which you do not communicate a serious and legitimate cause are considered unexcused. Unexcused absences detract from your participation grade and are not eligible for accommodations with regard to assignments or other coursework.

**Late/Missed Assignments:** Missed assignments will result in a zero without a university approved medical excuse, family emergency, or other excuse approved by the instructor. Students will be penalized for late assignments; 20% of the grade for each day late without a university-approved medical excuse, family emergency or excuse approved by the instructor. Make-up exams can be arranged with the instructor with a university-approved medical excuse or family emergency. If a student needs to take a make-up exam, they should contact the instructor not later than 48 hours after the due date.

**Participation:** Your participation is crucial and will count for 25% of your grade. Your involvement in the discussions during the class is particularly important. Participation entails asking questions during lectures, participating in class activities, sharing discussion questions with the class, responding to discussion leaders' questions, and sharing your own thoughts, perspectives, and insights. Everyone is expected to post two discussion questions on eLC by 11pm the day before our Thursday meeting. We should all feel comfortable questioning, disagreeing, or challenging ideas in a sensitive manner, using well-reasoned arguments backed by evidence. While not required, I strongly suggest that you take notes on the assigned readings as you do them and create your own summaries of the readings together with any questions. This will allow you to refer to these notes during class meetings and prepare for the final paper.

**Discussion leader:** Starting in week 2, a group of students will be assigned a week to be a discussion leader. Your responsibilities as a group of discussion leaders include a broad introduction, discussions questions, reflection and critique of the week's readings for Thursday meeting. You must try to connect your own critical perspectives with course readings from previous weeks. This is the opportunity for you to set the agenda for the class. It will count for 15% of your final grade.

**Midterm quiz:** will consist of a number of short answer questions and will count for 20% of the overall grade. The midterm will be administered on eLC.

**Short analytical paper:** The main assignment for this course will be the development of an 8-page analytical paper. You will be responsible for choosing a research question, engaging theoretically with the course material, and conducting a literature review. First, you will formulate a one-page summary of your research idea before proceeding to develop your essay. Your research should be motivated by a question or puzzle, frame that puzzle in relation to theory, and make an argument that is theoretically informed and grounded in empirical evidence. This assignment will count for 40% of your grade.

Formatting guidelines: Please upload only Word or pdf files to eLC. All other file formats including links to other platforms will not be accepted. Your paper should be double

spaced, formatted in 12-point Times New Roman font and justified with 1-inch margins. Your paper should include parenthetical (Author YEAR) citations in the text, with page numbers for direct quotations, and a full list of references in APA format.

**Email:** Your first recourse for questions about the course is this syllabus. For questions not answered in the syllabus, please contact me. When emailing me, please use your UGA account and include the course name (INTL 4380) in the subject line. For useful email guidelines, please consult: <http://www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor>.

**Eating:** Please refrain from eating during class. Exceptions to this policy require my approval.

**Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Use of generative artificial intelligence-based technologies, such as ChatGPT, is prohibited for any assignments related to this course. Use of these technologies is considered unauthorized assistance in this course and therefore violates the University's academic honesty policy.

### **3. Grading Scale**

A 94 to 100

A- 90 to 93.9

B+ 87 to 89.9

B 84 to 86.9

B- 80 to 83.9

C+ 77 to 79.9

C 74 to 76.9

C- 70 to 73.9

D 60 to 69.9

F 59 and below

### **4. Administrative Policy**

#### **4.1 Academic Honesty**

The University of Georgia's "Culture of Honesty" ([http://www.uga.edu/honesty/ahpd/culture\\_honesty.htm](http://www.uga.edu/honesty/ahpd/culture_honesty.htm)) has requirements that must be met by all academic work. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with these requirements before beginning any academic work. Our academic dishonesty policy is straightforward: Avoid plagiarism. You will receive a failing grade in the course if you turn

in a written assignment that is (in part) not your own. Disciplinary actions that could result in your dismissal from the university could be taken.

#### **4.2 Prohibition on Recording Lectures**

In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course.

#### **4.3 Students with Disabilities**

If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, by calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <http://drc.uga.edu>

#### **4.4 Resources for Mental Health and Wellness**

Contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or go to <https://sco.uga.edu> if you or someone you know needs help. By putting you in touch with the proper resources or services, they will assist you in navigating any challenging situations you might be dealing with. For students looking for crisis help or mental health services, UGA has a number of resources available at <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>. Please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of FREE programs, classes, mentoring, and health coaching given by certified clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center if you need assistance managing stress, anxiety, relationships, etc. The UGA App gives users access to more resources.

#### **4.5 Diversity and Inclusion**

The University of Georgia is dedicated to upholding a just and courteous atmosphere for employment, residence, and education. To that end, the University forbids harassment or discrimination against any person on campus due to race, color, sex (including sexual harassment and pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity or national origin, religion, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status by any member of the University Community in accordance with federal and state law, University System of Georgia policy, and University policy.

#### **Course schedule**

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

#### **August 2024:**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

- Tuesday, August 20

### **Syllabus review and course expectations**

“History of Latin America - Pre-Columbian, Colonial, Modern | Britannica.” 2024.

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Latin-America>.

“Calle 13 - Latinoamérica ”.

- Thursday, August 22

Denevan, William M. 1992. “The Pristine Myth: The Landscape of the Americas in 1492.”

*Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 82 (3): 369–85.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8306.1992.tb01965.x>.

## **COLONIAL INSTITUTIONS**

- Tuesday, August 27

Lecture

- Thursday, August 29

Alencastro, Luiz Felipe de. 2018. “*The Trade in the Living: The Formation of Brazil in the South Atlantic, Sixteenth to Seventeenth Centuries*”. SUNY Press. (Chapter 1).

Bulmer-Thomas, Victor, ed. 2014. “Latin American Economic Development: An Overview.” In *The Economic History of Latin America since Independence*, 3rd ed., 1–19. Cambridge Latin American Studies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Recommended:

Earle, Rebecca, ed. 2012. “Food and the Colonial Experience.” In *The Body of the Conquistador: Food, Race and the Colonial Experience in Spanish America, 1492–1700*. Critical Perspectives on Empire. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Intro)

## **September 2024**

### **INDEPENDENCE**

- Tuesday, September 3

Lecture

- Thursday, September 5

Bulmer-Thomas, Victor, ed. 2003. “The Struggle for National Identity from Independence to Midcentury.” In *The Economic History of Latin America since Independence*, 2nd ed., 19–45. Cambridge Latin American Studies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511817397.004>.

Bulmer-Thomas, Victor, ed. 2014. “The Export Sector and the World Economy, circa 1850–1914.” In *The Economic History of Latin America since Independence*, 3rd ed., 50–86. Cambridge Latin American Studies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139208710.005>. (skim)

## STATE BUILDING

- Tuesday, September 10

Lecture

- Thursday, September 12

Mazduca, Sebastián. 2021. *Latecomer State Formation: Political Geography and Capacity Failure in Latin America*. Yale University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1mgmcz2>. (Chapter 1)

Centeno, Miguel Angel. 1997. “Blood and Debt: War and Taxation in Nineteenth-Century Latin America.” *American Journal of Sociology* 102 (6): 1565–1605. <https://doi.org/10.1086/231127>.

Recommended:

Safford, Frank. 1992. “The Problem of Political Order in Early Republican Spanish America.” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 24:83–97.

## 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries: Modern Latin American struggles

## DEPENDENCY THEORY

- Tuesday, September 17

Lecture

- Thursday, September 19

Cardoso, Fernando Henrique, and Enzo Faletto. 1979. *Dependency and Development in Latin America*. Berkeley: University of California Press. (Preface)

Valenzuela, J. Samuel, and Arturo Valenzuela. 1978. "Modernization and Dependency: Alternative Perspectives in the Study of Latin American Underdevelopment." *Comparative Politics* 10 (4): 535–57. <https://doi.org/10.2307/421571>.

#### Recommended

Baer, Werner. 1972. "Import Substitution and Industrialization in Latin America: Experiences and Interpretations." *Latin American Research Review* 7 (1): 95–122. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0023879100041224>.

Wasserman, Claudia. 2022. "Dependency Theory in the Academic Self-Reports of the Brasília Group." *Latin American Perspectives* 49 (1): 57–74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X211036767>.

## MILITARY DICTATORSHIPS

- Tuesday, September 24

### Lecture

Schamis, Hector E. 1991. "Reconceptualizing Latin American Authoritarianism in the 1970s: From Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism to Neoconservatism." *Comparative Politics* 23 (2): 201–20. <https://doi.org/10.2307/422361>.

Tremlett, Giles. 2020. "Operation Condor: The Cold War Conspiracy That Terrorised South America." *The Guardian*.

#### Recommended:

Bruneau, Thomas C. 2013. "Civilians and the Military in Latin America: The Absence of Incentives." *Latin American Politics and Society* 55 (4): 143–60. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-2456.2013.00216.x>.

- Thursday, September 26

## Midterm on ELC.

## October 2024:

## MEMORY AND TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

- Tuesday, October 1

Lecture

- Thursday, October 3

Balardini, Lorena. 2016. "Argentina: Regional Protagonist of Transitional Justice." In *Transitional Justice in Latin America*, 76–102. Routledge.

Willis, Graham Denyer. 2021. "Mundane Disappearance: The Politics of Letting Disappear in Brazil." *Economy and Society* 50 (2): 297–321.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03085147.2020.1796318>.

## RACE AND ETHNICITY

- Tuesday, October 8

Lecture

- Thursday, October 10

Wade, Peter. 2010. "Blacks and Indigenous People in Latin America". In *Race and Ethnicity in Latin America*. London: Pluto Press.

Vox. 2020. "What it means to be Black in Brazil."

Rogero, Tiago. 2024. "Brazil Apologises after Three Diplomats' Black Teenagers Searched at Gunpoint." *The Guardian*

**One-page summary short paper idea due.**

## PARTY SYSTEMS AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

- Tuesday, October 15

Lecture

- Thursday, October 17

Mainwaring, Scott, ed. 2018. *Party Systems in Latin America: Institutionalization, Decay, and Collapse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Ch. 1 and 2)  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316798553>.



Rich, Jessica A. J., Lindsay Mayka, and Alfred P. Montero. 2019. "Introduction: The Politics of Participation in Latin America: New Actors and Institutions." *Latin American Politics and Society* 61 (2): 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1017/lap.2018.74>.

Recommended:

Cohen, Mollie J., Facundo E. Salles Kobilanski, and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister. 2018. "Electoral Volatility in Latin America." *Journal of Politics* 80 (3): 1017–22. (skim) <https://doi.org/10.1086/697464>.

## **POLITICAL VIOLENCE**

- Tuesday, October 22

Lecture

- Thursday, October 24

Auyero, Javier. 2007. "Routine Politics and Violence in Argentina: The Gray Zone of State Power." *Cambridge Studies in Contentious Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511814815>.

Trejo, Guillermo, and Sandra Ley. 2018. "Why Did Drug Cartels Go to War in Mexico? Subnational Party Alternation, the Breakdown of Criminal Protection, and the Onset of Large-Scale Violence." *Comparative Political Studies* 51 (7): 900–937. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414017720703>.

Maldonado, Carlos S. 2024. "Ana Piquer, Human Rights Activist: 'The Militarization Promoted by the Government of Mexico Has Not Improved Security.'" *EL PAÍS English*.

*BBC News*. 2024. "Coming Face to Face with Inmates in El Salvador's Mega-Jail," February 15, 2024, sec. Latin America & Caribbean. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-68244963>.

Recommended:

Acemoglu, Daron, James A. Robinson, and Rafael J. Santos. 2013. "The Monopoly of Violence: Evidence from Colombia." *Journal of the European Economic Association* 11 :5–44. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1542-4774.2012.01099.x>.

## **SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

- Tuesday, October 29

## Lecture

- Thursday, October 31

Svampa, Maristella. 2019. "Neo-Extractivism in Latin America: Socio-Environmental Conflicts, the Territorial Turn, and New Political Narratives." *Elements in Politics and Society in Latin America*, October. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108752589>.

Krenak, Ailton, and Felipe Milanez. 2023. "The Dimensions of Life: Environment, Subject, and the Wild Thought." In *Routledge Handbook of Latin America and the Environment*. Routledge.

Phillips, Tom, Nikhita Chulani, Katherine Stephens, Bryony Moore, and Source: The Guardian. 2023. "Killed Protecting the Amazon: Remembering Bruno Pereira and Dom Phillips – Video." *The Guardian*, sec. Environment. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/video/2023/jun/01/murdered-protecting-the-amazon-remembering-bruno-pereira-and-dom-phillips-video>.

Carrasco, Jorge C. 2024. "How Climate Displacement Is Affecting Southern Brazil." EL PAÍS English. May 14, 2024. <https://english.elpais.com/climate/2024-05-14/how-climate-displacement-is-affecting-southern-brazil.html>.

## November 2024:

### FOOD SYSTEMS

- Tuesday, November 5

## Lecture

- Thursday, November 7

Altieri, Miguel A., and Victor Manuel Toledo. 2011. "The Agroecological Revolution in Latin America: Rescuing Nature, Ensuring Food Sovereignty and Empowering Peasants." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 38 (3): 587–612. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2011.582947>.

Nowell, Cecilia. 2024. "Latin America Labels Ultra-Processed Foods. Will the US Follow?" *The Guardian*, May 21, 2024, sec. Environment. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/article/2024/may/21/latin-america-food-labels-processed-foods>.

## IMMIGRATION

- Tuesday, November 12

### Lecture

- Thursday, November 14

Acosta, Pablo, Cesar Calderón, Pablo Fajnzylber, and Humberto Lopez. 2008. “What Is the Impact of International Remittances on Poverty and Inequality in Latin America?” *World Development* 36 (1): 89–114. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2007.02.016>.

“Refugees and Migrants in Latin America and the Caribbean Benefit Local Economies, New Studies Show.” UNHCR. 2024. <https://www.unhcr.org/news/press-releases/refugees-and-migrants-latin-america-and-caribbean-benefit-local-economies-new>.

## INEQUALITY

- Tuesday, November 19

### Lecture

- Thursday, November 21

Coatsworth, John H. 2008. “Inequality, Institutions and Economic Growth in Latin America.” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 40 (3): 545–69. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022216X08004689>.

Cepaluni, Gabriel, Taylor Kinsley Chewing, Amanda Driscoll, and Marco Antonio Faganello. 2022. “Conditional Cash Transfers and Child Labor.” *World Development* 152 (April):105768. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2021.105768>.

*BBC News*. 2023. “Venezuela’s Slow Economic Recovery Leaves Poorest Behind,” February 4, 2023, Latin America & Caribbean. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-64466400>.

## WEEK 15 - NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK

- Tuesday, November 26

- Thursday, November 28

**December 2024:**

- Tuesday, December 3

Final project helpdesk

- Thursday, December 5

Final project helpdesk

**Tuesday, December 10: FINAL PAER DUE 5pm via eLC.**