Introduction:

This course is an introduction to the government and politics of Latin America. It begins with an overview of this region’s history and geography before turning to central issues in its political economy. This course involves lectures, discussions, videos, and readings about Latin America as a whole as well as more in depth examinations of Bolivia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Chile, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Venezuela.

Learning Objectives:

Students who complete this class will practice:

1. identifying evidence relevant for evaluating rival explanations of political outcomes;
2. interpreting events and trends from alternative national or cultural perspectives;
3. analyzing differences and similarities among nation-states;
4. writing effective arguments, ones whose conclusions are clear and well-defended.

Course Requirements:

The class requires students, first, to write two essays, each of which is worth 30 percent of the course grade (for a total of 60 percent of the final grade; the grade for each essay will be an average of its first and final drafts). Second, each outline and annotated bibliography is worth 10 percent of the class grade (or a total of 20 percent of the class grade). The first appendix provides some deadlines and discusses these assignments in more detail. Third, the final 20 percent of the class grade will consist of one or two essay exams, which I will announce in class at least 2 class sessions in advance.

Books for Purchase:

Course Policies:

This course combines lectures with class discussion. It assumes students have done the reading and regularly compare their notes on the texts and from class.

Please respect the following rules in class:

- Turn off your cell phones, both in the class and when you visit me during office hours;
- Use laptops only for note-taking;
- Be punctual and do not leave a class before it is over;
- Listen attentively while others speak in class;
- Avoid wearing baseball caps, flip-flops and other beachwear to class;
- Give me at least a couple of days to respond to e-mail messages.

Students who miss more than 3 classes will be withdrawn from this course. For every day a written assignment is past due, it will drop a letter grade. Documented excuses will only be accepted from students requiring emergency medical attention.

University policy requires that you obtain certification from the Office of Disability Services (EUC, Suite 215; 334-5440) if you have a disability that merits accommodation.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic and Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION TO LATIN AMERICA</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>Aug. 19 &amp; 21.</td>
<td>A. Geography and History: An Overview</td>
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<td>3, 4 &amp; 5</td>
<td>Aug. 26, 28 &amp; Sept. 2.</td>
<td>B. Economic, Political, and Social Portraits</td>
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<td>Reading: Lehoucq, <em>The Politics of Modern Central America</em>, Introduction &amp; chap. 1</td>
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<td>II</td>
<td>II. DEMOCRATIZATION AND REVOLUTION</td>
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<td>6, &amp; 8</td>
<td>Sept. 4, 9 &amp; 11</td>
<td>A.i. Revolution and Democratization in Central America</td>
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<td>Reading: Lehoucq, <em>The Politics of Modern Central America</em>, Introduction and chaps. 2-3</td>
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<td>8, 9 &amp; 10</td>
<td>Sept. 11, 16 &amp; 18</td>
<td>A.ii. Economic Reform in Central America</td>
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<td>Reading: Lehoucq, <em>The Politics of Modern Central America</em>, chap. 4.</td>
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<td>11 &amp; 12</td>
<td>Sept. 23 &amp; 25</td>
<td>A.iii. The Quality of Democracy in Central America</td>
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<td>Reading: Lehoucq, <em>The Politics of Modern Central America</em>, chap. 5 &amp; conclusion.</td>
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III. DEMOCRATIZATION, BREAKDOWN, NEOLIBERAL REFORM

13 & 14   Sept. 30 & Oct. 2
Final draft due on 2nd
B.i. Political Developments
Reading: Solimano, *Chile and the Neoliberal Trap*, chaps. 1-2.

15 & 16   Oct. 7 & 9
B.ii. Neoliberal Developments
Reading: Solimano, *Chile and the Neoliberal Trap*, chaps. 3-6.

17   Oct. 16.
B.iii. The Quality of Democracy in Chile
Reading: Solimano, *Chile and the Neoliberal Trap*, chaps. 7-9.

IV. DEMOCRATIZATION AND REGIME CHANGE

18, 19 & 20   Oct. 21, 23 & 28
A. Stable Democracy and its Unraveling

B. Electoral Authoritarianism?
Reading: Corrales and Penfold, *Dragon in the Tropics*, chaps. 3-6.

V. DEMOCRATIZATION AND VIOLENCE

23, 24 & 25   Nov. 6.
A. Violence
Reading: Camp, *Mexico*, chaps 1.

24 & 25   Nov. 11 & 13.
B. The PRI
Reading: Camp, *Mexico*, chaps. 8, 2 & 5.

26, 27 & 28   Nov. 18 & 20.
B. Democratization and Change
Reading: Camp, *Mexico*, chaps. 3, 9, 10 & 12.

28   Nov. 25.
Conclusion
Due Date for Final Paper (TBA)

Appendix 1 – Essay Assignments

First Essay Question: What changes has democratization brought to a Central American country?

Second Essay Question: What are the development and political challenges that a Latin American country faces? Please focus on a Latin American country outside of Central America.

Each of these questions must have an answer that is at least 8 pages long and does not exceed 10 double-spaced, typewritten pages (12-pt font with at least 1.0 margins, including a bibliography). Each assignment requires submitting an outline and annotated bibliography (of 10 items for each essay) as well as an advanced draft of the essay before turning in the final version of
your essay. We will discuss each of these assignments in class. Due dates for the first essay are listed on the syllabus; we will produce the deadlines for the other assignment in class.

Use the citation format of the American Political Science Review, which is available at: http://uncg.libguides.com/content.php?pid=100907&sid=1079424. You will lose points if your citations are incorrect.

Appendix 2 – Notes on Writing English and for Using the Writing Center

Effective English writing is brief and austere. Several rules worth following include:

1. Always put subjects before verbs and their objects. Do not say: “The presidency was won by the PAN.” It is better to say that, “The PAN won the presidency.”

2. Use strong verbs and avoid adverbs and adjectives. Never use two to make a point. It is much better to say that: “Economic crisis transformed political preferences,” than to say “political preferences about parties were fueled by a dramatic and major economic crisis.” The first is much better (and shorter).

3. Never use the passive voice. Always identify your subject. Never say: “Logit analysis was used in this paper.” It is better to say, “The paper (or “I,” or “my analysis,” etc.) uses logit models.”

4. Avoid past tenses, if you can. The present tense and the active voice make for better papers.

A great and short primer about writing English is William Strunk, Jr., and E. B. White, The Elements of Style. The Economist magazine is also marvelous for its use of the English language. Gary Cox and Robert Bates are two political scientists who write exceedingly well.

Visit the Writing Center often as part of a more general strategy to improve your writing. Conversations with students and with the Center’s Director suggest that a useful visit starts with a concrete request. It is not a good idea to tell a Writing Center consultant that a professor made me come here. A good paper starts with a proactive stance, one where the writer is looking for help to address one or more issues relevant for her paper assignment. Questions worth raising with the Writing Center or anyone else whose advice you seek include:

1. Is my argument persuasive? Do I have convincing reasons in support of my conclusion?
2. What are my claims? Do I have evidence for my claims?
3. Have I organized my paper effectively?
4. Have I filled my paper with unnecessary facts?
5. Have I asked a tutor or a friend for her overall impressions on my work?

It is best not to ask a tutor or friend to spell- and grammar-check your writing. Only raise these issues if you are not sure how to apply the rules for writing good English. Instead, use your visits to the Writing Center to obtain answers to questions like the aforementioned. Finally, write a summary of your session with the Writing Center consultant. Identify the central points of your conversation and review these notes as you draft your paper.