LATIN AMERICA AT THE START OF THE XXI CENTURY:
COMING OF AGE OR CONTINUING CHAOS?

Fall 2015

I. Course description

This seminar focuses on several aspects of Latin America’s problems in the past and their possible solutions today. It takes up such topics as the absence of orderly, peaceful, and steady democratic rule during the first 160 or 170 years of independence from colonial rule and the consolidation of representative democracy today; the absence of economic growth during the last 20 years and the possibility of a new economic takeoff today; the widespread persistence of violence in Latin America and the growing respect for human rights today; and the weakness of civil society in Latin America in the past and the growing strength and vigor of civil society today. For each topic, there are readings dealing with its political, economic, and cultural dimensions in both past and present.

II. Course requirements

Midterm Examination: 30%
The midterm exam will cover the topics discussed in class between Weeks 1-4.

Final Examination: 30%
The final exam will cover all topics discussed during the course, but relying more heavily on Weeks 7-13.

Class participation: 10%
Students are encouraged to participate throughout the lecture.

Final Paper: 30%
In consultation with the graduate assistant, students are expected to write a 10-15 page paper. While not intended to produce original research, it should address a topic of interest to the student that is linked to the general topic of the course.
• Topics should be defined by Week 5 at the latest.
• The paper will be due on December 14th.

III. Meeting information

Professor
Jorge G. Castañeda
jorge.cstaneda@nyu.edu

Graduate Assistant
Lucas Perelló C.
imep483@nyu.edu

Class Meetings
Mondays 9:30-12:00
King Juan Carlos II Center, room 404W
53 Washington Square South
IV. Required Readings

The following books are available for purchase at the University bookstore:


Additional articles and other required materials will be available on Blackboard.

V. Weekly Schedule

A. INDEPENDENT LIFE AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY.

**Week 1: September 14th**


Reid, Michael. 2007. *Forgotten Continent*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press (Ch. 3).

*Complementary Readings*


*NOTE: STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO HAVE READ EVERYTHING PRIOR TO THE FIRST CLASS.*

**Week 2: September 21st**


**Complementary Readings**


**B. THE PERSISTENCE OF VIOLENCE, THE GROWING RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, AND THE EMERGENCE OF CIVIL SOCIETY.**

**Week 3: September 28th**


**Complementary Readings**


**Week 4: October 5th**


Week 5: October 12th

NO CLASSES SCHEDULED

NOTE: FINAL PAPER TOPIC SHOULD BE DEFINED BY THIS DATE.

Week 6: October 19th

MID-TERM EXAM

C. THE ABSENCE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH DURING THE LAST TWENTY YEARS, THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEW ECONOMIC TAKE-OFF.

Week 7: October 26th

Reid, Michael. 2007. Forgotten Continent. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press (Ch. 2).


Complementary Readings


Week 8: November 2nd

“The Americas: Pain but no panic; Latin America's economies”


Complementary Readings

D. THE UNITED STATES AND LATIN AMERICA: FROM CONFLICT AND MISTRUST TO COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION.

Week 9: November 9th


Week 10: November 16th


Complementary Readings


E. OTHER ISSUES: IMMIGRATION POLICY AND DRUG TRAFFICKING.

Week 11: November 23rd


Complementary Readings


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Week 12: November 30th


Complementary Readings


F. LATIN AMERICA AT THE BEGINNING OF THE XXI CENTURY.

Week 13: December 7th

Reid, Michael. 2007. Forgotten Continent. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press (Ch. 1, 12).


NOTE: FINAL PAPER DUE DECEMBER 14TH 5:00PM

FINAL EXAMINATION: DECEMBER 21ST

9:30-12:00

Room 404W, KJC II

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