COURSE OUTLINE AND READING LIST

This course focuses on the sources and uses of political power in Latin American societies, and on useful strategies for understanding those processes better. While it will utilize contemporary tools in the study of comparative politics, without complex mathematical calculations or modeling, it also keeps a steady eye on problematic and little-understood aspects of Latin American political life. These issues that are understood poorly also constitute the frontier of social-science conceptualization, research and methodology. Concise historical and sociological background are provided, followed by a thematic (rather than case-based) examination of key political processes. Readings also emphasize, however, an interdisciplinary knowledge of two highly distinct Latin American societies: Peru and Cuba. In addition to a mid-term and final, book reviews (of texts beyond the regular course reading) encourage students to compare social-scientific approaches to Latin American political issues, with works of reportage and literature that may pose issues that should be addressed more effectively by social-science disciplines.

Course requirements: (1) Reading. Required readings are assigned for most topics. Please keep up with the reading carefully; readings will naturally be discussed during weekly section meetings and in our twice-weekly classes, and mastery of them will be carefully tested. Please treat handouts distributed in class as assigned readings. Books may be bought in the NYU Bookstore, or may be read in the Bobst Reserve Room, on Level A in Bobst Library. (2) Attendance in class and at weekly discussion sections: regular participation in class will be an important course requirement, and attendance will be taken at discussion sections. (3) Mid-term exam: there will be a one-hour exam in class, on March 2; it will include both a short-answer section and an essay section; both will be designed to test mastery of the reading. This mid-term will count for 25% of a student's final grade. Only a written medical note will be accepted if you are absent. (4) Comparative book review: A ten-page comparative book review will be due on April 8, and will count for 25% of each student's final grade. Pairs of books available for review, from a list to be distributed in class, will each match a work emphasizing social-science tools with a work emphasizing narration or humanistic aspects of relevant issues. (5) Final exam: a two-hour final, including both essays and short-answer questions, will be held on a date to be determined between May 5 and May 12. (Please do not schedule any travel that would conflict with this exam date.) The final will cover the full course, and will count for 50% of each student's final grade.
I  Introduction – January 20, 22


II  Latin American history, social structure, economy – January 27, 29, February 3, 5


Aviva Chomsky, Barry Carr, and Pamela Smorkaloff, eds., *The Cuba Reader* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), sections to be assigned

III  Major themes in Latin American politics

A. Authoritarianism, and the growth and practice of democracy – February 10, 12, 17


Document collection for discussion sections: *The Attempted Autogolpe of President Jorge Serrano in Guatemala, 1993*

B. Accountability and legitimacy, including human rights and constitutionalism – February 19, 24, 26

Reading: Foweraker *et al.*, *Governing Latin America*, pp. 59-91, 123-144

Document collection for discussion sections: *Litigation Surrounding the Arrest of Gen. Augusto Pinchet of Chile on Charges of Violating Human Rights*

Midterm exam: March 2

C. Political parties, government institutions, elections – March 4, 9, 11

Reading: Foweraker *et al.*, *Governing Latin America*, pp. 95-122

Document collection for discussion sections: *The Dominican Presidential Election of 1994 and its Aftermath*

D. New political actors: social movements and minorities – March 23, 25, 30

Reading: Foweraker *et al.*, *Governing Latin America*, pp. 147-189
IV Practicing politics in Peru and Cuba

A. Peru: Social division, democratic governance – April 1, 6, 8

   Reading: Orin Starn et al., eds., *The Peru Reader*, sections to be assigned

   Guillermoprieto, *Looking for History*, pp. 154-177

   Comparative book review due, April 8

B. Cuba: Revolution, authoritarianism, transition – April 13, 15, 20

   Reading: Aviva Chomsky, et al., eds., *The Cuba Reader*, sections to be assigned

   Guillermoprieto, *Looking for History*, pp. 73-152

V Conclusion – April 22, 27, 29