



**COURSE SYLLABUS
Latin American Politics
PSCI 333.01E (28326)
SPRING 2024**

**January 10, 2024 through May 10, 2024
Monday/Wednesday/Friday 10-10:50am
SS 313**

Instructor: Dr. Robert G. Rodríguez
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Office Hours: MWF 11:00am-12:00pm (please send me an email in advance if you would like to meet at a specific time); or by appointment (in-person or zoom)

The BEST way to contact me is via email.

Course Description:

Welcome to Latin American Politics! The purpose of this course is to study the systems, institutions, historical processes, and cultural factors that influence political activity in Latin America. After a brief examination of early Latin American political history and the formation of independent states in the region, we will take an in-depth look at Latin American politics through the lenses of race, gender, and religion. Then, we will shift our focus to economics and political culture before rounding out the course with discussions on the *types* of governments that have emerged in the region: democratic, military, populist, and revolutionary. U.S.-Latin American relations will be a theme throughout the course.

Format:

Each class session will involve lectures and discussions about the assigned readings. Lecture outlines will be available on D2L- you should print these out and bring them to class to fill in information during lectures.

You will regularly be asked about the readings and to contribute your opinions about the course material. In addition to the assigned readings listed in the syllabus, we will regularly discuss current political events in Latin America.

This syllabus is subject to change at any time at the professor's discretion.

Learning Objective:

Students will understand the dominant issues in Latin American politics, including important concepts, theories and debates in the field.

Global Learning Objectives:

Learning Outcome 1: Students will be able to demonstrate **knowledge** of the interconnectedness of global dynamics (issues, processes, trends, and systems).

Learning Outcome 2: Students will be able to **apply** knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics.

Learning Outcome 3: Students will be able to view themselves as **engaged** citizens within an interconnected and diverse world.

***NO PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES ARE ALLOWED IN CLASS AT ANY TIME.
THIS INCLUDES (BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO):***

CELL PHONES,

LAPTOPS,

Smartwatches,

iPADS,

iPODS,

MP3 Players/Recorders,

Translation Devices

VIDEO CAMERAS

***OR ANY OTHER AUDIO AND/OR VIDEO RECORDERS OF ANY KIND
IF ANY OF THESE DEVICES ARE PRESENT IN CLASS THE INDIVIDUAL(S) RESPONSIBLE
MAY BE DIRECTED TO LEAVE THE CLASSROOM IMMEDIATELY, AND THE ENTIRE CLASS
MAY HAVE A POP QUIZ.***

Requirements/Assignments

Examinations: In this course, all students are required to take FOUR exams, each of which will consist of 20 multiple choice questions that stem directly from the readings. You will have one hour to complete each exam. Together, these exams will comprise **60%** of your grade (each exam is worth 15%). Although Exam 4 will be given during Finals Week, it will only cover the material presented after Exam 3-- there is NOT a comprehensive final exam in this course.

If you miss an exam, you will receive 0% for that exam.

If you have a **legitimate reason** for missing an exam (e.g. severe illness or injury requiring professional medical care, emergencies in your immediate family, participation in official university activities, legal obligations) **AND** you have **supporting documentation** for your absence, then you may request taking the MAKE-UP EXAM, which will take place at a mutually-agreed upon time and date **-ONLY IF APPROVED**. Exam 2 will be held during Finals Week, therefore no make-up exams will be scheduled, except in the most extraordinary, legitimate, and documented circumstances.

Requests for taking the make-up exam must be **submitted in writing within 24 hours** of the scheduled exam **AND include documentation** explaining and substantiating why the absence was legitimate. An approval to take the make-up exam will be based solely upon the professor's evaluation of your request and any supporting documentation.

Attendance: 10% of your grade is based on your class attendance. Students are required to attend class and attendance will be taken at the end of each class session using a sign-in sheet. Signing in a student who is not present or asking a student to sign you in when you are absent constitutes academic dishonesty (see p.3). It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they have signed in. Arriving late and/or leaving early will negatively impact your attendance grade. *Attendance is critical, discussions are irreplaceable, and course sessions cannot be "made up."* **I will not be managing any excuses for absences.** It is not necessary to provide me with any excuses for absences (unless you are absent during an examination-read previous section.) **You can miss up to two class sessions without penalty for any reason. More than two absences will result in a reduction in your grade, REGARDLESS of the reason (excused OR unexcused). On the flip-side, students with perfect attendance will receive a bonus of 2%.**

The attendance grade scale appears below.

- **0 absences = you will get a bonus of 2% added to your grade**
 - **1-2 absences= no penalty**
 - **3 absences= -1% from your grade**
 - **4 absences= -3% from your grade**
 - **5 absences= -5% from your grade**
 - **6 absences= -7% from your grade**
 - **7 or more absences= -10% from your grade**
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- **Attendance Note 1: If a pop quiz or any other assignment is given when you are absent, you CANNOT make it up, regardless of the reason for your absence (excused or unexcused).**
 - **Attendance Note 2: I will NOT reply to any emails asking what we did in class during your absence- We will follow the syllabus. If you miss class, get notes from a classmate and ask him/her if there were any announcements.**
 - **Attendance Note 3: Students who attend ALL class sessions and do not have ANY unexcused OR excused absences will receive a bonus of 2% added to their attendance grade.**
 - **Attendance Note 4: ARRIVE ON TIME! The classroom door will not be opened for late arrivals 5 minutes after class starts. Notify the professor in advance if you need to arrive late or leave early.**

Participation: Your participation in this class is worth up to 3% of your grade.

Your contributions to the class discussions are highly desirable and will make class sessions more interesting. Positive participation includes responding to my questions, asking your own questions, and contributing to class discussions. All of these activities will positively impact your participation grade.

Negative participation includes: sleeping in class, side-talk with your neighbors, coming to class late, and any other class disruptions- any of these activities will negatively impact your participation grade, even if you contribute to class discussions. If you use personal electronic devices in class that may result in your removal from the classroom and a pop quiz for the entire class, and it will negatively impact your participation grade. Also, if you misbehave in class or disrupt class in any way you may be directed to leave the classroom and your participation grade will be negatively impacted.

Your participation grade will be calculated as follows:

Never Contributes to Class Discussions/Disrupts class:	0%
Rarely/Sometimes Contributes to Class Discussions:	1%
Often Contributes to Class Discussions:	2%
Almost Always/Always Contributes to Class Discussions:	3%

Pop Quizzes: These may be assigned at any time for any reason. The usage of electronic devices in class, as well as sensing that students are not reading the course material are two reasons that are likely to prompt a pop quiz being assigned. Pop quizzes will collectively count for a total of **2%** of your grade. Pop quizzes will be very difficult to pass, as they will be based upon the readings that will be covered in a particular class session. If you are *absent* when a pop quiz is given, you **cannot** make it up, irrespective of the circumstances, and will earn 0% for any quiz you miss. Pop quizzes will be graded on the basis of the content and clarity of your answers. If no pop quizzes are assigned in the course, everyone will receive the full 2%.

Poster Presentation: Each student will be assigned to create a poster presentation of an assigned case study from the book. A symposium will be held on campus on **Monday, APRIL 30**, where the university community will be invited to browse your posters and interact with you about your case study, just as you would if you were presenting your poster at an academic conference. Your poster presentation will be graded on the basis of visual appearance, content, and your ability to respond to questions from observers at the symposium. It is worth **25%** of your grade.

Grades:

Your grade in this course will be determined by the criteria listed below. The following scale will be used to determine your grade:

- Exam #1 (**October 21**): 15%
- Exam #2 (**October 21**): 15%
- Exam #3 (**October 21**): 15%
- Exam #4 (**Finals Week**): 15%
- Poster Presentation (**April 30**): 25%
- Attendance: 10%
- Participation: 3%
- Pop Quizzes: 2%

A 90-100%; B 80-89.9%; C 70-79.9%; D 60-69.9%; F Below 60%

Notes on Academic Dishonesty of ANY kind: Any student who is caught committing any kind of academic dishonesty will receive an “F” in this course and will be reported to the University administration. “Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one’s own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), signing the attendance sheet for a student who is absent (or asking another student to sign you in when you are absent), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material” (Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures A13.12). If you have any doubt as to what may

constitute academic dishonesty, please consult with me prior to submitting any assignments.

Notes on plagiarism: All writing assignments will be submitted to *turnitin.com*, a digital plagiarism detection system. Any student who is caught plagiarizing will receive an “F” in this course and will be reported to the University administration for academic dishonesty. If you have any doubt as to what may constitute plagiarism, please consult me prior to submitting any written work.

In order to maximize your performance in this course, you must:

- **TURN OFF ALL PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES BEFORE CLASS BEGINS.**
- **IF ANYONE IS FOUND TO BE TEXTING OR ANSWERS A PHONE CALL DURING CLASS, THE ENTIRE CLASS MAY TAKE A POP QUIZ.**
- Attend each class session AND arrive ON TIME (the classroom door will not be opened for late arrivals 15 minutes after class starts; Notify the professor in advance if you need to arrive late or leave early;
- Read the assigned material before class;
- Be prepared to discuss the topics presented in class;
- Refrain from reading materials or working on other homework during class;
- Do NOT get up in the middle of class to go to the bathroom unless absolutely necessary;
- Be courteous to -and respectful of- your fellow students and professor.

Email Policy: Before you ask me a question in an email, check to see if the syllabus answers your question FIRST. I generally reply to emails within 24 hours, Monday-Friday. Emails sent to me over weekends will be replied to on Mondays. I do not reply to emails that ask questions about items covered in the syllabus, such as what chapters are covered on an exam or what the assigned readings are for a given week.

Code of Student Conduct: All students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. *Faculty have the authority to request students who exhibit inappropriate behavior to leave the class and may refer serious offenses to the University Police Department and/or the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.* Failure to comply with the Code of Student Conduct and commonsensical directions listed above may result in a verbal request to cease inappropriate behavior, your immediate removal from the class, being dropped from the class, and/or a review by an appropriate university

disciplinary agency. For more information on this subject, please see the Student Guidebook: http://www.tamuc.edu/student_guidebook/Student_Guidebook.pdf

Campus Carry: Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>) and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

Note to Students with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Velma K. Waters Library- Room 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu
Website: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
<https://www.tamuc.edu/campuslife/campusservices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/default.aspx>

Non-discrimination notice: A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

TAMUC Counseling Center Statement:

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel.

TAMUC COVID-19 Statement: A&M-Commerce recommends the use of face-coverings in all instructional and research classrooms/laboratories.

IMPORTANT REMINDER FOR POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJORS & DOUBLE MAJORS

All political science majors must complete and submit a graduating senior portfolio made up of course work. You should keep copies of your work from this class for potential submission. For more information, including the forms, guidelines and an instructional video on how to compile the portfolio, please see the "INFORMATION FOR SENIORS" link on the Department of Political Science webpage.

Required Readings:

Textbook

There is **one required text** for this course:

- **Politics of Latin America: The Power Game** (SEVENTH Edition, 2020, Oxford University Press)
by Harry E. Vanden and Gary Prevost
ISBN: 978-0197527603

Course Schedule

UNIT 1 Introduction; Geography; Colonization

January 10-February 9

- ***Instructions for Class Sessions on JAN 10 and 12 will be emailed to you. We will not have in-person classes on those dates.***
- ***Buy your book***
- ***Your Student Statement of Personal Responsibility is DUE on D2L ONLY Friday, January 19.***
- Vanden and Prevost, Preface
- Vanden and Prevost, Notes on Studying Politics in Latin America
- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 1 "Introduction"
- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 2 "Early History"
- ***Take UNIT 1 Exam IN PERSON on FRIDAY, February 9***

UNIT 2 Independence and Modernization; Race and Gender

February 12-March 8

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 3 "Democracy and Dictators"
- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 4 "The Other Americans"
- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 5 "Society, Family, and Gender"
- ***Take UNIT 2 Exam IN PERSON on FRIDAY, March 8***

SPRING BREAK March 11-15

UNIT 3 Religion; Political Culture; Revolutions

March 18-April 17

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 6 “Religion in Latin America”
- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 7 “The Political Economy of Latin America”
- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 10 “Struggling for Change”
- **Take UNIT 3 Exam IN PERSON on FRIDAY, April 17**

UNIT 4 U.S.-Latin American Relations; Symposium

April 19-April 29

- Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 11 “U.S.-Latin American Relations”
- **Symposium on Latin American Politics (Poster Presentation DUE MONDAY, APRIL 29)**

NO CLASS MAY1-3 – University Study Days

Finals Week

- **Take UNIT 4 Exam IN PERSON on Monday, May 6 10:30am**

STUDENT STATEMENT OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

YOU MUST SUBMIT A STATEMENT ON D2L ACKNOWLEDGING YOU HAVE READ THE SYLLABUS AND AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING *STUDENT STATEMENT OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY* BY **FRIDAY, JANUARY 19, by 11:59 p.m. This is a requirement to remain enrolled in this course.**

*****DO NOT EMAIL YOUR STATEMENT TO ME- IT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. I WILL PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONS TO THE CLASS ON HOW TO SUBMIT A FILE ON D2L*****

Statement: I have read the syllabus in its entirety, and understand the guidelines and agree to the policies detailed therein as a condition of being enrolled in this course. I understand my obligation to adhere to these guidelines and policies in this course, and that failure to do so may result in serious consequences, including (but not limited to) being dropped from the course, and/or receiving a grade of “F” in the course.