Overview

This seminar offers students an introductory overview of Latin America and the Caribbean through the intersection between structural forces, such as globalization, and micro phenomena, such as individual security. It explores the interplay between environmental, economic, social, political, and cultural factors in the region.

The course opens with an introduction to the historical roots of underdevelopment in Latin America and the various theoretical and conceptual frameworks that contribute to understanding the region’s social, economic and political realities. In the second part of the course, we will look at globalization and its consequences, with a focus on four key dimensions of human security and insecurity: economic, environmental, cultural and political. The third, and final, section examines how various actors, from students to sexual minorities to new political movements, are responding to these, real or perceived, threats and how such resistance is reshaping the social and political landscape in the region.

Course Format and Requirements

This course is structured in seminar format. As such, it is based on the active and sustained participation of students who are expected to have read all of the assigned material prior to class. This is necessary to have meaningful and fruitful debate and discussion. Participation is therefore a critical component of the course and its success depends upon it.

The requirements for the course are as follows:

- Participation: 20%
- Presentation: 30%
Research Paper: 50%

**Required Course Readings**

**Books:**


Or:


We will be reading significant portions of the following books. They are on reserve in the library and two are accessible as **Electronic Books** as well.


Or:


All the other required readings are available on Course Reserve.

**Participation**

Participation is a critical element of this course. It will be assessed based on your thoughtful and active contribution to class discussions. You are expected to do an average of 3 readings per week. **Each of you must do all REQUIRED readings every week (except for the ones marked with an asterisk).** Collectively, every effort will be made to create an atmosphere in which everyone feels confident participating in discussions. Students will be awarded a participation mark based on the criteria outlined in Table 1.
You must also prepare critical comments for each assigned reading. This is done with the objective to facilitate your active engagement in class discussion. For each reading, you must:

1) Identify the piece’s main argument (in one or two sentences);

2) Advance two critical comments on the strength of the author’s argument;

3) Elaborate on how the piece contributes to debates in the study of Latin America.

You must print this material out and bring it to class. This is mandatory or else the level of class participation degenerates extremely rapidly. Be prepared to speak each week. Please note: the participation component of your grade can go from 0 to 20.

Table 1. Seminar Participation Grading Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17-20</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Excellent—leads debate; offers original analysis and comment; uses assigned reading to back up arguments. Valuable comments in virtually every seminar.</td>
<td>Clearly has done and understands virtually all reading; intelligently uses this understanding in discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-16</td>
<td>Almost always</td>
<td>Good—thoughtful comments for the most part; willing, able, and frequent contributor.</td>
<td>Has done most reading; provides competent analysis of reading when prompted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-12</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Fair—has basic grasp of key concepts; arguments sporadic and at times incomplete or poorly supported.</td>
<td>Displays familiarity with most reading but tends not to analyze it or explore connections between different sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Occasional</td>
<td>Not good—remarks in class marred by misunderstanding of key concepts; only occasionally offers comments or opinions.</td>
<td>Actual knowledge of material is outweighed by improvised comments and remarks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Poor—rarely speaks, and parrots readings when put on the spot to offer an opinion.</td>
<td>Little to no apparent familiarity with assigned material.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Presentation

You are each required to do a presentation of an article (or paired articles) from Parts II and III (Weeks 5 – 12) of the required readings. Your presentation should be 30 minutes in length. Marks will be deducted if you are significantly over or under time. You must also include in the handout at least three substantive questions that arose from your reading of the material. Make sure you print a copy for each student in the class. Do not highlight sections of the article and read them. The purpose of this is to give a critical overview of the author’s main arguments and what evidence or analysis the author brings to make her case. I do not want a summary along the lines of “Neff says this, then he says that...” I want critical assessments of the reading. This should involve
whether the author made a convincing case, any gaps you see in the author’s logic, etc. Those presenting first receive a 10% bonus.

Essay

Students are required to submit a research paper on one of the topics we cover in this course, other than the one selected for the presentation. The essay is due on December 8, at noon (Courselink Dropbox). An annotated bibliography, which reviews the debates in the literature (beyond the work listed in this syllabus), is due on November 1, and an essay outline, which presents your research proposal, is due on November 15. There will be absolutely no extensions granted on the due dates for any of these items. You will be required to present to the class your research proposal during the last two weeks of the course. Students must meet with the instructor for twenty minutes during Weeks 11 and 12.

Your continued registration in the course will be taken as evidence that you have agreed to the requirements, terms and conditions of the course.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNED READINGS

Part I: Latin America’s Political and Economic Development

Sept. 13: Introduction to the Course

Sept. 20: Historical Overview

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:


**Sept. 27: Theoretical Explanations of Underdevelopment**

**Required Readings:**


**Recommended Readings:**


**Oct 4: Latin America’s Political Development**

*Required Readings:*


*Recommended Readings:*


**Part II: Globalization and its Consequences, Dimensions of Insecurity**

**Oct 11: Fall Break – No Class Scheduled**

**Oct 18: Economic Insecurity**

*Required Readings:*


*Recommended Readings:*


**Oct. 25: Environmental Insecurity**

*Required Readings:*


Díez, Jordi and O.P. Dwivedi (eds.) 2008. *Global Environmental Challenges: Perspectives from the South*. Toronto: The Toronto University Press, “Introduction: and one of the chapters on Mexico, Chile or Brazil.

**Recommended Readings:**


**Nov 1: Cultural Insecurity**

**Required Readings:**


**Recommended Readings:**


***Annotated Bibliography Due***

Nov 8: Political Insecurity

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:


Part III: Responses and Resistance
Nov 15: Student and Labour Protests

 Required Readings:


 Recommended Readings:


 ***Research Proposal Due***

 Nov 22: Social Mobilization

 Required Readings:

 Diez, Jordi. 2015. The Politics of Gay Marriage in Latin America: Argentina, Chile and Mexico. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, Introduction and One of 4, 5 or 6. [Chapter 3 is highly recommended!].

**Recommended Readings:**


**Nov 29: The Rise and Fall of Latin America’s Left Turn**

**Required Readings:**

Balán, Manuel and Françoise Montambeault (eds.) 2019. *Legacies of the Left Turn in Latin America: The Promise of Inclusive Citizenship*. South Bend, IN: Notre Dame University Press, Introduction, Chapter 1 (pp. 40-70), Chapter 14 (pp 370-406) and ONE of Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 or 12.


**Recommended Readings:**

Dec 1: Citizen Participation

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:


**Final Research Paper Due Dec 8**