

GLA 3473: Latin America in the World

Fall 2023

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Department of Political Science & Geography

Office: MS 4.02.46

Classroom: MH-3.03.18

Schedule: **Monday & Wednesday 4:00PM - 5:15PM**

Office hours: **Thursday 2-3:30PM and by appointment**

1 Course Description

Latin America is one of the most violent and unequal regions in the world. Yet it is also home to important democratic experiments and innovations, including transitions to democracy, transitional justice, and innovative social policies. What are some of the political and economic problems faced by Latin America? What are the limitations and challenges of its governments in addressing these problems?

This course explores some of the most pressing problems faced by Latin American countries over the past century. We will pay special attention to their global determinants and the role of other countries and regions in shaping Latin America. We will explore the historical determinants of development and state capacity, the breakdown of democracy and transitions to democratic regimes. We will also learn about corruption and vote-buying, human rights and violence, mechanisms of transitional justice, the war on drugs, the role of citizen mobilization in pushing for LGBTQ and racial policies, and the role of major global powers, such as China and the US.

2 Course Objectives

1. **Learning about the main** political problems and challenges in Latin American societies of the last century.
2. **Becoming familiar with** major arguments and theoretical debates about development, political institutions, regime change, corruption, human rights, and transitional justice, among others, applied to the Latin American context.
3. **Critically assessing arguments.** The course will help you develop your capacity to critically assess arguments, methods, and conclusions. This implies thinking about some key questions: What are the authors' argument? What type of evidence does the text provide in support for the claims? How compelling is it? Is there a better and

more convincing method to answer the research question? What are the implications of the argument to understanding other time periods, regions of the world, and other phenomena?

4. **Writing and thinking more critically** I hope that the course will give the tools to discuss, debate, and write about complex phenomena in a more clear and effective way. Whether you're interested in a career as an academic or practitioner, writing remains as one of the most fundamental forms of communication.

3 Course Requirements

- Participation: 20%
- Midterm: 25%
- Final exam: 25%
- Short final paper: 30%

Participation (20%)

This course will be taught in seminar format. Participation lies at the core of any seminar and is fundamental to its success. Unlike lectures, seminars can be best thought of as a *collective project*: their quality does not depend on the instructor or any one single participant, but on the process of deliberation, debate, and criticism by everyone in the room. This requires that you do the assigned readings for the week and come to class prepared to ask questions and actively engage in the *conversation*.

Midterm exam (25%)

The midterm exam will take place on [October 2](#). The exam will cover material presented in the readings and seminar discussion. There will be no make-up exams unless you have a documented medical excuse. Make travel plans accordingly.

Final exam (25%)

The final exam will take place on [December 4](#). The exam will be cumulative and cover all material from both the readings and seminar discussion. There will be no make-up exams unless you have a documented medical excuse. Make travel plans accordingly.

Short research paper (30%)

You will write a short research paper (10-12 pages, double-spaced, 12 inch font, 1 inch margins) on any Latin American country of your choosing. You may also choose two or more countries and compare them.

The aim of the paper is not to explain the country's entire history, but rather to focus on a particular issue and ask a clear research question. For instance, you may ask whether and

why exposure to crime in country X has led their citizens to prefer certain types of policies, why countries like Mexico experienced a sudden increase in criminal violence, why citizens in country Y are beginning to shift their preferences towards right-wing populists, or why country Z, unlike others, has witnessed active mobilization in favor of LGBTQ rights. The research paper should ideally draw on the concepts and theories covered by the course, but additional independent research will, of course, be necessary.

On [September 27](#), you will bring your typed thesis statement, so we can all conduct peer-review of your idea. Make sure to describe to us your research question you would like to explore and the working hypothesis and potential arguments. The other students are expected to offer constructive criticism, ask clarifying questions, and offer suggestions.

The final paper will be due [December 1st](#).

4 Policies

Office hours and communication

You are welcome to schedule a meeting with me during office hours every **Tuesday** from **2 to 3:30pm**. An alternative way is to arrange a meeting via email. The time I have listed is *for you*. It is a time I have dedicated to being available to you to provide assistance and for you to ask questions about the assignments and papers, your performance in the semester, or talk about the department, graduate school, and career options.

Attendance

Attendance and participation are mandatory. They are also necessary conditions for success in this class. If you are ill or cannot attend class, please email me in advance to let me know you cannot make it. Unexcused absences will be reflected in the participation component of the grade.

Late Policy

Late papers will be accepted in cases of personal emergency. I strongly encourage you to discuss any problems with me before the papers are due. Late submissions will receive a 5/100 deduction per two hours of lateness.

Grading

This course will be grade according to the following scale:

A	≥ 93	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62

F = 59 or below

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. In that sense, I expect your submitted work to be of your own and not a plagiarism of other people's ideas and works. Plagiarism, in any of its forms, will be reported in accordance with the procedure required by the Student Code of Conduct. It is important for you to familiarize with the proper methods of citation to avoid any possible misunderstanding. In all your work, you are free to choose your preferred citation style (e.g. APA, MLA, Chicago). The Student Code of Conduct is Section B of the Appendices in the Student Information Bulletin. Scholastic Dishonesty is listed in the **Student Code of Conduct** (Sec. B of the Appendices) under Sec. 203. For more information on the Student Code of Conduct, contact the **Student Conduct and Community Standards** team.

5 Class schedule

Week 1: Introduction to the course

- August 21: This will be a fairly short meeting. We will discuss the syllabus, including the course objectives and requirements. I will also answer any question you may have.
- August 23:
 - Hoffman, K. and Miguel Angel Centeno. 2003. "The Lopsided Continent: Inequality in Latin America." *Annual Review of Sociology*. 29 (1), 363–390.
 - Fukuyama, Francis. 2008. "Poverty, Inequality, and Democracy: The Latin American Experience." *Journal of Democracy* 19(4), 69-79.

Week 2: Development and colonialism

- Robinson, James. 2008. "The Latin American Equilibrium," in F. Fukuyama (ed.) *Falling Behind: Explaining the Development Gap between Latin America and the United States*, Oxford University Press, 161-193.
- Mahoney, James. 2003. "Long-Run Development and the Legacy of Colonialism in Spanish America." *American Journal of Sociology*, 109(1): 50–106.
- **Movie:** Even the rain - Available on Netflix

Recommended:

- Coatsworth, John. 2008. "Inequality, Institutions, and Economic Growth in Latin America." *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 40(3): 545-569.

Week 3: State capacity

- O'Donnell, Guillermo. 1993. "On the State, Democratization and some Conceptual Problems: A Latin American View with Glances at some Postcommunist Countries." *World Development*, 21(8): 1355-1369.
- Cárdenas, Mauricio. 2010. "State Capacity in Latin America." *Economía*, 10(2): 1–45.
- Schenoni, Luis. 2021. "Bringing war back in: Victory and state formation in Latin America." *American Journal of Political Science*, 65(2): 405-421.

Week 4: Breakdown of democracy

- Schamis, Hector. 1991. "Reconceptualizing Latin American Authoritarianism in the 1970s: From Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism to Neoconservatism." *Comparative Politics*, 23(2): 201–220.

- Cohen, Youssef. 1987. "Democracy from Above: The Political Origins of Military Dictatorship in Brazil." *World Politics*, 40(1), 30-54.
- **Documentary:** The edge of democracy - Available on Netflix

Recommended:

- Mainwaring, Scott and Aníbal Pérez-Liñán. 2013. "Lessons from Latin America: Democratic Breakdown and Survival." *Journal of Democracy*, 24(2): 123–137.

Week 5: Democratic transitions and consolidation

- Karl, Terry. 1990. "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America." *Comparative Politics*, 3(1), 1-21.
- Waylen, G. 1993. "Women's Movements and Democratisation in Latin America." *Third World Quarterly*, 14(3): 573–587.
- **Movie:** NO - available on Alexander Street (through UTSA)
<https://login.libweb.lib.utsa.edu/login?url=https://video.alexanderstreet.com/p/79YnnNYpO>

Recommended:

- Mainwaring, Scott and Aníbal Pérez-Liñán, A. 2015. "Cross-Currents in Latin America." *Journal of Democracy*, 26(1): 114-127.

Week 6: Populism

- De la Torre, Carlos. 2017. "Populism in Latin America." *The Oxford handbook of populism*, pp.195-213.
- Roberts, Kenneth. 2012. "Populism and democracy in Venezuela under Hugo Chávez." in Mudde, C. and Rovira Kaltwasser, C. (eds) *Populism in Europe and the Americas: Threat or Corrective for Democracy?*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 136–159.
- Boas Taylor C. 2005. "Television and neopopulism in Latin America: Media effects in Brazil and Peru." *Latin American Research Review* 40(2): 27-49.

Week 7: Corruption and vote-buying

- Weyland, Kurt. 1998. "The Politics of Corruption in Latin America." *Journal of Democracy*, 9(2): 108–121.
- Ocantos, Ezequiel Gonzalez, Chad Kiewiet de Jonge, and David W. Nickerson. 2014. "The Conditionality of Vote-Buying Norms: Experimental Evidence from Latin America." *American Journal of Political Science* 58(1): 197–211.

- **Movie:** Herod's Law - available on Netflix

Recommended:

- Pavão, Nara. 2018. "Corruption as the only option: The limits to electoral accountability." *Journal of Politics*, 80(3): 996-1010.

Week 8: Political and criminal violence

- Arias Enrique Desmond. 2016. *Criminal Enterprises and Governance in Latin America*. Cambridge University Press, 2016. Chapter 1 (pp. 19-38)
- Cruz, José Miguel and Angélica Durán-Martínez. 2016. "Hiding violence to deal with the state: Criminal pacts in El Salvador and Medellín." *Journal of Peace Research*, 55(2): 197-210.
- **Movie:** City of God - available on Swank (through UTSA)
<https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/univtxsanantonio352815/watch/C51B1BF22D?referrer=direct>

Recommended:

- Moncada, Eduardo. 2020. "The Politics of Criminal Victimization: Pursuing and Resisting Power." *Perspectives on Politics*, 18(3): 706-721.

Week 9: Human rights

- Pereira, Anthony. 2012. "Human Rights and Military Abuses." In *Routledge Handbook of Latin American Politics*, eds. Peter Kingstone and Deborah J. Yashar. London, United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis Group
- International Crisis Group. 2022. **A Remedy for El Salvador's Prison Fever**, report n. 96.
- Visconti, Giancarlo. 2020. "Policy preferences after crime victimization: panel and survey evidence from Latin America." *British Journal of Political Science* 50(4): 1481-1495.
- **Documentary:** 500 years: life in resistance - available on Newday (through UTSA)
<https://www-newday-com.libweb.lib.utsa.edu/films/watch/563>

Recommended:

- French, J. H. (2013). Rethinking Police Violence in Brazil: Unmasking the Public Secret of Race. *Latin American Politics and Society*, 55(4), 161–181.

Week 10: Transitional justice

- Gonzalez-Ocantos, E. 2020. *The Politics of Transitional Justice in Latin America: Power, Norms, and Capacity Building* (Elements in Politics and Society in Latin America). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Introduction, Chapter 1 and 4.
- Alejandro Chavez-Segura. "Can Truth Reconcile a Nation? Truth and Reconciliation Commissions in Argentina and Chile: Lessons for Mexico," in *Latin American Policy*.
- **Documentary:** The Mothers of Plaza de Mayo - available on Kanopy (through UTSA) <https://www.kanopy.com/en/utsa/watch/video/2288469>

Recommended:

- Trejo, Guillermo, Juan Albarracín, and Lucía Tiscornia. 2018. "Breaking State Impunity in Post-Authoritarian Regimes: Why Transitional Justice Processes Deter Criminal Violence in New Democracies." *Journal of Peace Research* 55(6): 787–809.

Week 11: Inclusive citizenship and social movements

- Corrales, Javier. 2020. "The Expansion of LGBT Rights in Latin America and the Backlash." in Michael J. Bosia, Sandra M. McEvoy, and Momin Rahman (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Global LGBT and Sexual Diversity Politics*, Oxford Handbooks.
- Piscopo, Jennifer and Kristin N. Wylie. 2021. "Gender, Race, and Political Representation in Latin America." In *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Latin American Politics*, Oxford University Press.
- **Movie:** Roma - available on Netflix.

Week 12: Pink Tide and resurgence of the right?

- Levitsky, Steven and Roberts, Kenneth. 2011. "Latin America's 'Left Turn': A Framework for Analysis." In Steven Levitsky and Kenneth M. Roberts (eds.). *The Resurgence of the Latin American Left*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press: 1-28.
- Anria, Santiago and Kenneth Roberts. 2019. "**A Right Turn in Latin America?**" AULA Blog. January 9, 2019.
- Hunter, W. and Power, T. J. (2019). "Bolsonaro and Brazil's Illiberal Backlash." *Journal of Democracy*, 30(1), 68-82.
- **Documentary:** South of the border - Available on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yg4ZdDiq0YM>

Week 13: War on drugs

- Flores-Macías, G., 2018. "The consequences of militarizing anti-drug efforts for state capacity in Latin America: Evidence from Mexico." *Comparative Politics*, 51(1), pp.1-20.

- Tokatlian, J.G. and Briscoe, I., 2010. **Drugs: towards a post-prohibitionist paradigm.** International Politics and Society.
- Cepeda, Carolina and Arlene Tickner. 2017. "Desecuritizing the 'War on Drugs'", In: Suarez, M., Villa, R., Weiffen, B. (eds) *Power Dynamics and Regional Security in Latin America*. Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- **Movie:** Birds of passage - available free on Roku
<https://therokuchannel.roku.com/watch/ebd80cbc4a9c592d9c3035cf41c5a41f?source=google>

Week 14: United States

- Weyland, Kurt. 2018. "Limits of US Influence: The Promotion of Regime Change in Latin America." *Journal of Politics in Latin America*, 10(3), 135–164.
- Finkel, Steven E., Aníbal Pérez-Liñán, and Mitchell A. Seligson. 2007. "The Effects of U.S. Foreign Assistance on Democracy Building, 1990-2003." *World Politics* 59(3): 404–38.
- **Documentary:** Dirty Secrets: Jennifer, Everardo & the CIA in Guatemala.
<https://vimeo.com/199361730>

Recommended:

- Thyne, Clayton. 2010. "Supporter of stability or agent of agitation? The effect of US foreign policy on coups in Latin America, 1960—99." *Journal of Peace Research*, 47(4), 449–461.

Week 15: China

- Campello, Daniella and Francisco Urdinez. 2021. "Voter and Legislator Responses to Localized Trade Shocks from China in Brazil." *Comparative Political Studies*, 54(7), 1131–1162.
- Jorge I. Dominguez, "**China's Relations with Latin America: Shared Gains, Asymmetric Hopes.**"
- Feinberg, Richard. 2011. "China, Latin America, and the United States: Congruent Interests or Tectonic Turbulence?" *Latin American Research Review* 46(2): 215–24.

Recommended:

- Gallagher, Kevin. "**Capitalizing on the China Cycle: Time is Running Out for Latin America.**"
- Ellis, Evan. "**The United States, Latin America and China: A 'Triangular Relationship'?**"

6 Common Syllabus Content

Counseling Services

Counseling Services provides confidential, professional services by staff psychologists, social workers, counselors, and psychiatrists to help meet the personal and developmental needs of currently enrolled students. Services include individual brief therapy for personal and educational concerns, couples/relationship counseling, and group therapy on topics such as college adaptation, relationship concerns, sexual orientation, depression, and anxiety. Counseling Services also screens for possible learning disabilities and has limited psychiatric services. Visit the [Counseling and Mental Health Services](#) website or call (210) 458-4140 (Main Campus) or (210) 458-2930 (Downtown Campus).

Student Code of Conduct and Scholastic Dishonesty

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Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The University of Texas at San Antonio in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provides “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities. Only those students who have officially registered with Student Disability Services and requested accommodations for this course will be eligible for disability accommodations. Instructors at UTSA must be provided an official confidential notification of accommodation through Student Disability Services. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found on the [Student Disability Services](#) webpage or by calling their office at (210) 458-4157. Accommodations are not retroactive.

Tutoring Services

Tomás Rivera Center (TRC) may assist in building study skills and tutoring in course content. The TRC has several locations at the Main Campus and is also located at the Downtown Campus. For more information, visit the [Tutoring Services](#) website or call (210) 458-4694 on the Main Campus and (210) 458-2838 on the Downtown Campus.

Academic Success Coaching

The Tomás Rivera Center (TRC) Academic Success Coaching Program offers one-on-one study skills assistance through Academic Coaching. Students meet by appointment with a professional to develop more effective study strategies and techniques that can be used across courses. Group workshops are also offered each semester to help students defeat

common academic challenges. Find out more information on [Academic Success Coaching](#) website or call (210) 458-4694.

The Writing Center

The Judith G. Gardner Center for Writing Excellence helps the entire UTSA Community with various writing projects, questions, and challenges. Our experienced tutors provide assistance to current undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty/staff members with each step of the writing process. Services are located at the Main Campus in the JPL building (2.01.12D) and at the Downtown Campus in the Frio Street Building (FS 4.432). They also offer online tutoring seven days a week by appointment so that you can chat live with a tutor. Visit [The Writing Center's](#) website to learn more and to schedule an appointment.

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

UTSA is committed to providing an environment free from all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual misconduct, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If a student has experienced or experiences any of these incidents, know that UTSA has resources to help.

UTSA faculty have the responsibility to create a learning environment that is safe and free from hostility. State and federal law as well as [UTSA's Handbook of Operating Procedures \(HOP 9.24\)](#) require that instructors must report incidents of sexual harassment and sexual misconduct they learn about to the Title IX Coordinator or a Deputy Title IX Coordinator. This means that if a student tells their instructor about a situation (including classroom discussions, written work and/or one-on-one meetings) involving sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, the instructor must report it to the [Equal Opportunity Services & Title IX Office](#). Although the faculty member must report the situation, the student will still have options about how their case will be handled, including whether or not the student wishes to pursue a formal complaint. The university's goal is to make sure students are aware of the range of options available to them and have access to the resources they need.

If a student wishes to speak to someone confidentially, they can contact any of the following on-campus resources, who are not required to report the incident to the EOS/Title IX Office: (1) [Counseling Services](#) at 210-458-4140; (2) [Student Health Services](#) at 210-458-4142; or (3) The [PEACE Center](#) at 210-458-4077.

Campus Safety & Emergency Preparedness

UTSA is committed to providing a safe campus environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors. As members of the community, we encourage you to take the following actions to be better prepared in case of an emergency:

- Alerts: Ensure you are signed up for UTSA Alerts through your [ASAP.utsa.edu](https://asap.utsa.edu) account.
- Emergency Procedures: Read through the information related to emergency preparedness on the [UTSA Alerts](#) page.
- Safety App: Download the [LiveSafe App](#) on your phone through the Apple store or Google Play; visit the LiveSafe App website for details.
- Important Numbers: UTSA Police - Emergency: (210) 458-4911; Non-Emergency: (210) 458-4242

Each one of us play a critical role in making sure ALL ROADRUNNERS are safe, know what to do, and how to stay informed during a campus crisis. Don't be scared, be prepared! #UTSAprepared

Inclusivity Statement

The University of Texas at San Antonio, a Hispanic Serving Institution situated in a global city that has been a crossroads of peoples and cultures for centuries, values diversity and inclusion in all aspects of university life. As an institution expressly founded to advance the education of Mexican Americans and other underserved communities, our university is committed to ending generations of discrimination and inequity. UTSA, a premier public research university, fosters academic excellence through a community of dialogue, discovery, and innovation that embraces the uniqueness of each voice.

The Roadrunner Creed

The University of Texas at San Antonio is a community of scholars, where integrity, excellence, inclusiveness, respect, collaboration, and innovation are fostered.

As a Roadrunner, I will:

- Uphold the highest standards of academic and personal integrity by practicing and expecting fair and ethical conduct;
- Respect and accept individual differences, recognizing the inherent dignity of each person;
- Contribute to campus life and the larger community through my active engagement; and
- Support the fearless exploration of dreams and ideas in the advancement of ingenuity, creativity, and discovery.

Guided by these principles now and forever, I am a Roadrunner!