

**Latin American Politics - POS 316/416**  
**Spring 2010**  
**Professor Erickson**

Professor: Christian Erickson (cerickso@roosevelt.edu - <http://faculty.roosevelt.edu/erickson/>)

Meeting Times: Mondays 6:00-8:30 pm.

Location: AUD 430.

Office Hours:

Downtown Campus - AUD 757: Tuesdays, 2:00 to 3:30; Thursdays, 2:30 until 3:30; and, by appointment.

Schaumburg Campus: By appointment.

Phone Number: (312) 341 3707(office/voice mail).

**Course objectives:** This course introduces students to both the political history and contemporary political issues confronting Latin America. The course is divided into five major components. 1) An exploration of the unique geography, historical origins and political dynamics of the region. The next four sections will focus on contemporary Latin American politics by exploring: 2) The transition from authoritarian to democratic regimes throughout the region which has occurred in the closing decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and is on-going; 3) the impact of globalization on the political and economic systems of the region, 4) the development of Latin America under the influence of the sole remaining superpower the United States, and finally; 5) current insurgencies and transnational crime (especially drug trafficking) that pose serious problems for many of the regimes in the region up to and including the prospect of state failure and the reversal of democratization. This course is interdisciplinary and will draw on materials from comparative politics, history, anthropology, sociology, Latin American Studies, and comparative criminology. Country case studies are used in the class, and will be incorporated into the class components for the purposes of comparing the similarities and differences in how countries have responded to contemporary problems.

**Prerequisites:** POS 203 or HIST 112, or consent of instructor.

**Course texts and other materials:** All books are available at the Roosevelt University bookstore and will be placed on reserve.

**Required Texts:**

1) Van Haden, Harry E. and Gary Prevost. 2006. *Politics of Latin America: The Power Game*. New York: Oxford University Press.

2) Smith, Peter H. 2005. *Democracy in Latin America: Political Change in Comparative Perspective*. New York: Oxford University Press.

3) Loveman, Brian (ed.). 2006. *Addicted to Failure: US Security Policy in Latin America and the Andean Region*. New York: Rowan & Littlefield.

**On-line required and recommended texts:** I will be using the course website to distribute or provide links to recent articles that reflect themes covered in the course. *Graduate students:* All graduate readings listed in syllabus are available via RU Library's EBSCO data base. If accessing materials on the web is difficult for you I will also have photocopies of the materials either for distribution in class or that will be placed on reserve.

**Course Assignments:** This course places equal emphasis on readings and lecture. All students are expected to have completed the reading assignments prior to coming to class. Students will be asked to do a brief presentation and lead a discussion during class on a subject raised by the readings for at least 10 minutes during one class session.

Total class grade will be derived from your participation in several ways:

Class participation: 25% of the total class grade

(Attendance and in-class participation 10% - leading class discussion 15%).  
Geography Exam: 5%  
Midterm examination: 20%  
Research/Term paper: 25%  
Cumulative final exam: 25%

There will be no make-up examinations without medical excuse or prior arrangement with the professor.

**Course website:** Our course also has a website: <http://faculty.roosevelt.edu/Erickson/courses/pos316-416/>. The syllabus is posted on this site, and it will be used for announcements, archiving lecture slides, providing research links, distributing or providing links to supplemental articles, and other purposes as we collectively decide over the course of the semester.

**Term/Research paper:** Each of you will write a term paper of 2500 to 2750 words (excluding bibliography and notes, ten to twelve typed, double-spaced pages 12 point font) on a topic of your choice that pertains to the themes of the course. The term paper should not be a report on a subject, but rather should 1) address a theoretical *question* that is introduced by one of the readings for class, which is 2) backed up by empirical evidence. You must then 3) state your own opinion, and 4) substantiate your opinion with facts. A more detailed summary of the term paper assignment will be distributed on the second week of class (February 3rd).

The paper assignment is broken up into 4 assignments: 1) paragraph long paper description with 3 sources; 2) one page long paper description with 6 sources; 3) one and a half page description, annotated bibliography with 9 sources; outline; 4) final research paper.

The subject of the research paper should examine issues related to the contemporary themes of the course: democratization; globalization; crime and insurgency; and state failure. Students can either choose to examine these issues in depth by either concentrating on one country or by comparing several countries. Students can also choose to discuss other contemporary phenomena, and/or the historical roots of these phenomena, but must clear subject first with the professor.

**Late Policy/Plagiarism:** Without a valid medical or other excuse or prior permission of instructor late papers will be penalized 3 points (on a 100 point scale) for each 24 hour period the paper is late, and 5 points for each 24 hour period after 48 hours. Students are required to review Roosevelt University policies on plagiarism and will be held to standards of scholarship outlined in these policies. If plagiarism is detected the student will receive a 0 for the paper, will be reported as specified in the Roosevelt University plagiarism policy, and runs a very good chance of receiving an F in the class. All students are required to submit both a hard copy and an electronic copy of their papers for scanning by plagiarism detection software.

**Course Schedule:**

**Class 1: January 27<sup>th</sup> – Introduction**

Readings:

No assigned readings first day of class.

**Class 2: February 3rd - Historical Context Pre Colombian to the Age of Globalization II.**

Readings:

Van Haden and Prevost – Contents, Preface, Introduction and Chapters 1-2 (iv-41).  
Smith, Cover through Introduction (i-15).

**Geography Exam: Correctly Identify Latin American countries on regional map.**

*Paper and presentation assignments overview distributed and discussed.*

**Class 3: February 10th. Legacies of Conquest, Cycles of Democracy.**

Readings:

Van Haden and Prevost – Chapter 3.  
Smith, Part 1, Chapter 1..

**Due: Presentation assignment tentative week and topic selection.**

**Class 4: February 17th. Transitions and Indigenous Rights.**

Readings:

Van Haden and Prevost – Chapter 4.  
Smith, Part 1, Chapter 2 .

*Confirmed in class or via e-mail: Presentation assignment week and topic.*

**Note: Class does not meet Prof. Erickson at ISA 2010 Convention.**

**Class 5: February 24<sup>th</sup> – Gender, Religion, and Democratization.**

Readings:

Vanden and Prevost – Chapter 5-6.  
Smith, Chapter 9.

**Due: Tentative paper topic description and bibliography.**

**Class 6: March 3rd – Economic Elites, Democratization, Governance, and the Rule of Law.**

Readings:

Vanden and Prevost- Chapters 7 and 8.  
Smith, Chapter 7 and 8.

*Returned: Paper topic description and bibliography.*

**Class 7: March 10th. Midterm Exam.**

Exam, no assigned readings.

**March 17th Spring Break**

**Class 8: March 24<sup>th</sup> - Institutions of Governance and US Influence: 21<sup>st</sup> Century.**

Readings:

Vanden and Prevost – Chapter 9.  
Smith, Part II, Chapter 5 and 6.  
Loveman, Chapter 1.

*Returned: Midterm Exam.*

**Class 9: March 31st – Counternarcotics, Counterinsurgency, and Democratization - Colombia.**

Readings:

Vanden and Prevost – Chapter 10, 18.  
Smith, Chapter 10.  
Loveman, Chapter 2.

**Due: Expanded paper description and bibliography.**

**Class 10: April 7th – Militaries, Democratization, and Hegemonic Power – Venezuela.**

Readings:

Vanden and Prevost – Chapter 17.  
Smith, Chapter, 3.  
Loveman, Chapter 3.

*Returned: Expanded paper description and bibliography.*

**Class 11: April 14<sup>th</sup>. Insurgency, Counterinsurgency and Transitions – Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia.**

Readings:

Loveman, Chapter 4 and 6.

Human Rights Watch. 2006. "Country Summary – Peru, January 2006." <http://hrw.org/wr2k6/pdf/peru.pdf>

Movie: *La Boca Del Lobo*.

**Class 12: April 21st – Elections, Transitions, and Security: Mexico.**

Readings:

Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 12 .

Smith, Chapter 11 and 12.

**Due: Paper description, annotated bibliography, outline.**

**Class 13: April 28th– Left-Populist Regimes and Interventions by the Colossus to the North – Venezuela and Bolivia.**

Readings:

Vanden and Prevost, Chapter 14.

Smith, Chapter 4.

Loveman, Chapter 5, 7.

*Returned: Paper description, annotated bibliography, outline assignment.*

**Class 14: May 5th - Future of Latin America, Conflict, Multipolarity and Hegemony.**

Readings:

Smith, Epilogue.

Loveman, Chapter 8 and 9.

***Due: Research Paper.***

***Final Exam: May 12th – 6:00 to 8:30.***

Final research paper returned in class at end of final, or sent via e-mail.