Class details

BPEP-UB 9044001 / POL-UA9530001 Politics of Latin America
Fall 2016
Mondays* 6:15pm–9:15pm
Room B203

Instructor Details

Prerequisites

n/a

Class Description

This class is aimed at students interested in the political economy of Latin America development. This is an interdisciplinary course in which the reading material is mostly drawn from economics, political science, and history. The required texts are intended to show how politics and economics have always been intertwined when it comes to the making of public policy. Among the topics covered are import-substitution industrialization (I.S.I.), the 1980s debt crisis, episodes of hyperinflation and stabilization programs, economic liberalization, financial crises, trade and regional integration, natural resources, corruption, and illicit economies. We also examine the role of populism in the making of domestic policy in the region. Emphasis will be placed on the region’s economic performance in the post-1980s debt crisis period.
Desired Outcomes

Some of the learning objectives of this class include:

- Gain knowledge of the post-World War II history of economic development in Latin America.
- Develop confidence in interpreting the application of macro and microeconomic concepts in policy making.
- Understand the economic and political risks that inform financial investors’ decision-making in emerging markets.
- Become well-informed about current political and economic challenges affecting the region.
- Build familiarity with both substantive research issues and methodological approaches.

Assessment Components

Attendance and reading of all assigned texts before class meetings are required. The final grade will be calculated as follows:

1) Midterm I (20%): One-hour in-class exam on October 17 (Session 6)
2) Midterm II (20%): One-hour in-class exam on November 28 (Session 12)
3) Homework Assignment # 1 (10%): One-page essay due in class on October 24 (Session 7)
4) Homework Assignment # 2 (10%): One-page essay due in class on October 31st (Session 8)
5) Final Exam (40%): Two-hour in-class exam on December 12 (Session 15)

The midterm exams consist of ID questions whereas the final exam includes ID and essay questions. Essay questions for the homework will address the assigned movie documentaries and will be handed out in the week before the essays are due in class.

Very Important: I reserve the right to conduct unannounced short quizzes in class if I notice that students are not reading the assigned texts as scheduled. In such case, the students’ final grades will also include grades earned in the quizzes. Further information about this requirement will be spelled out in class.

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.

Assessment Expectations

Grade A: The student makes excellent use of empirical and theoretical material and offers well-structured arguments in his/her work. The student writes comprehensive essays / exam questions and his/her work shows strong evidence of critical thought and extensive reading.

Grade B: The candidate shows a good understanding of the problem and has demonstrated the
ability to formulate and execute a coherent research strategy.

**Grade C:** The work is acceptable and shows a basic grasp of the research problem. However, the work fails to organize findings coherently and is in need of improvement.

**Grade D:** The work passes because some relevant points are made. However, there may be a problem of poor definition, lack of critical awareness, poor research.

**Grade F:** The work shows that the research problem is not understood; there is little or no critical awareness and the research is clearly negligible.

### Grade conversion

NYU Washington, DC uses the following scale of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numerical Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100-94</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93-90</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89-87</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-84</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>83-80</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>79-77</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-74</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73-70</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69-67</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-66</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below 65</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Attendance Policy

Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. **To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is mandatory, and unexcused absences will affect students' semester grades.** Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure. At all Global Academic Centers, unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade.

To seek an excused absence for medical reasons, students must use the online absence reporting form within 24 hours of their first missed class. Students may be required to produce a doctor’s
note with that day’s date, especially if the student has missed any classes already that semester or if exams/presentations/papers occurred on the missed-class day.

Non-medical absences must be discussed with the Academic Program Coordinator at least 7 days before the missed date(s) in question. If faculty members do not receive notification of an excused absence, the student has not procured an excused absence.

NYU Washington, DC expects students to arrive to class promptly (both at the beginning and after any breaks), to be attentive, and to remain for the duration of the class. If full class attendance and participation becomes a problem, it is the prerogative of each instructor to apply the rule for unexcused absences, which may include a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade.

Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. This means they should initiate email and/ or office hour discussions to discuss any missed lectures and assignments and arrange a timeline for submitting missed work.

Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave Washington, DC before the end of the finals week.

Please note that for classes involving a field trip or other external visit, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student’s responsibility to arrive at the announced meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion. Staff members may always be reached by cell phone for advice regarding public transportation.

**Late Submission of Work**

1) Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor.

2) Late work should be emailed to the faculty as soon as it is completed. (If the assignment must be submitted in person, the Academic Program Coordinator can collect on behalf of the faculty between the hours of 9–5, M–F.)

3) Late work will be reduced for a fraction of a letter grade (e.g.,: A to A-, A- to B+, etc.) for every day it is late, including weekends.

4) Written work during the semester that is submitted 5 days after the submission date (including weekends) without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.

5) Students who arrive to class late for an exam do not have automatic approval to take extra time to complete the exam.

6) Students who miss an exam (including the final) without previously arranged permission will
receive a zero on that exam.

7) Assignments due during finals week that are submitted more than 3 days without previously arranged extensions will not be accepted and will receive a zero. Any exceptions or extensions for work during finals week must be discussed with the Site Director.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in a class are encouraged to contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at (212) 998-4980 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For more information, see Study Away and Disability.

Plagiarism Policy

As the University's policy on "Academic Integrity for Students at NYU" states: "At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others." Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the University and school policies.

The presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images, or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

NYU Washington, DC takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. All your written work must be submitted as a hard copy AND in electronic form to the instructor. Your instructor may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form.

It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you MUST inform your professor.

For guidelines on academic honesty, clarification of the definition of plagiarism, examples of procedures and sanctions, and resources to support proper citation, please see:

http://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html

http://liberalstudies.nyu.edu/page/academicintegrity
Religious Observances

Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday.

Students must notify their professor and the Washington, DC Academics team in writing via email at least 7 days before being absent for this purpose.

Required Text(s)

With the exception of the book below, all other assigned texts are electronically available on the course Blackboard site. I also may add “fresh” news stories to the reading list throughout the semester.


Suggested Reading

Considering the emphasis that this course places on empirical data, students are encouraged to consult regularly the following reports and databases:

- World Development Report (WB)
- Latin American Regional Report
- Latin American Weekly Report
- Poverty Net (WB)
- World Economic Outlook (IMF)
- Finance and Development (IMF)
- Trade and Social Databases (IADB)
- Foreign Trade Information System (OAS)
- The Economist Intelligence Unit (i.e., Country Commerce, Finance, Profile, and Report)
- Various Statistical Data and Reports on L.A. (ECLAC)
- LANIC – dataset (University of Texas)
- Center for Latin America (Federal Reserve Banks of Dallas and Atlanta).
For daily/weekly news, I recommend the Financial Times and The Economist. Your university online account allows you to access the electronic versions of some of those publications.

Internet Research Guidelines

N/A

Additional Required Equipment

Students need to bring their laptops to class in order to participate in the data analysis exercises. You will also need to have Excel installed in your device. No particular version of the software is required for the purpose of this class.

Session 1 – Monday, August 29, 2016

Introduction and Course Overview:


* Because of the Labor Day holiday, there is no class next week (Sept. 5)

➢ Reading load: 38 pages.

Session 2 – Monday, September 12, 2016

Basic Concepts in International Economics:

• Franko, chs. 2 and 3: 31 – 75.

➢ **Reading load:** 97 pages.

**Session 3 – Monday, September 19, 2016**

**The Exhaustion of I.S.I.:**

• Franko, ch. 4: 77 – 106.

➢ **Reading load:** 92 pages.

**Session 4 – Monday, September 26, 2016**

**The Political Economy of Structural Adjustment Reforms:**

• Franko, ch. 5: 107 – 144.

**Required assignment:**

Reading Load: 106 pages.

* Our class does not meet next week Monday (Oct. 3) due to the Fall Break (Oct. 3)

Session 5 – Monday, October 10, 2016

Structural Adjustment Reforms (revisited):

- Franko, ch. 6: 145 – 184.

Reading Load: 96 pages.

Session 6 – Monday, October 17, 2016

ONE-HOUR EXAM – FIRST MIDTERM (Please arrive at class at least 10 minutes early)

- Guest Speaker (TBD)

Session 7 – Monday, October 24, 2016

Macroeconomic Populism/ Homework Assignment # 1 is due in the beginning of class:

Required assignment:

- Watch documentary "The Revolution will not be televised" (2003) by directors Kim Bartley and Donnacha O'Briain.

⇒ Reading Load: 72 pages.

Session 8 – Monday, October 31, 2016

Inequality and Politics of the Left/Homework Assignment # 2 is due in the beginning of class:


Required assignment:

- Watch documentary "Our Brand is Crisis" (2006) by director Rachel Boynton.

⇒ Reading Load: 80 pages.

Session 9 – Monday, November 07, 2016

Welfare Programs:

Session 10 – Monday, November 14, 2016

Foreign Trade and the Role of Commodities:

- Franko, ch. 8: 235 – 283.

Reading Load: 105 pages.

Session 11 – Monday, November 21, 2016

Capital Account Liberalization, Political Finance, and Corruption:

- Franko (ch. 7): 185 – 234.

Reading Load: 105 pages.
Session 12 – Monday, November 28, 2016

ONE-HOUR EXAM – SECOND MIDTERM (Please arrive at class at least 10 minutes early)

- We will watch PBS documentary "Commanding Heights" - EPISODE 3, chs. 3 - 15., followed by discussion.

* Our next class is this FRIDAY.

Session 13 – Friday, December 02, 2016 (MAKE-UP DAY)

Mexico Case Study - The Tequila Crisis :


Reading Load: 57 pages.

Session 14 – Monday, December 05, 2016

Argentina & Brazil Case Studies - The Role of Foreign Investors:

3.  

➢ Reading Load: 60 pages.

Session 15 (Finals Week) – Monday, December 12, 2016

FINAL EXAM: Two-hour in-class exam

Classroom Etiquette

Although I am very liberal in regards to the use of personal computers and other electronic devices in the classroom, students should refrain from engaging in non-course related activities (e.g., checking email messages, social media, and news updates) during class. Please notice that when you are distracted performing non-class related activities you distract me as well. So please be kind to your professor and classmates and let’s all collaborate in establishing the best learning environment possible during our course meetings.

Required Co-curricular Activities

Required assignment:


Suggested Co-curricular Activities

List of relevant movies. (TBA)

Your Instructor