Latin America in the International System

Class code
POL UA 9780

Instructor Details
Mariano Turzi - mt118@nyu.edu

Class Details
Latin America in the International System
Mondays & Wednesdays from 7 pm to 8.30 pm
Borges

Prerequisites
None

Class Description
The course is a historical and a topical approach to the international relations of Latin America.

1) The first section is divided analytically in two:

1.1. The first and briefest is an introduction and an overview to the main theories of international relations: realism, liberalism and constructivism. Theory will provide a common language for the class and patterns to order and interpret reality.

1.2. The second part is historical. We will cover the history of the international system and the history of Latin America, bridging both processes looking for divergences and convergences. We will review the patterns of insertion of Latin America in the broader global system and the influences of the system in the region. We begin at the so called “discovery” and journey through colonial times and the national organization period. Then we go into the XX century and the impact of the World Wars and the Great Depression. After that, the Cold War as the organizing paradigm in world affairs and how it was anything but Cold in Latin America. We then move to the end of the Cold War, the “New World order” and the rise of the neoliberal order. The last period we cover is from 2001 onwards. We will explore the transformations in American foreign policy, the rise of new powers in the world and the backlash against the Washington consensus in the region, the new left and the rise of the merging countries. We conclude by at the same time looking back and ahead. At this stage we will be able to unearth recurrent patterns and identify breaks with the past, always looking for its causes and implications.

2) The second part of the program is topical. We will analyze here the main issues in the international agenda and how are they perceived from Latin America. How are they incorporated into the regional agenda? How and to what extent are they taken into account in
the national foreign policies? We will cover a wide array of topics such as poverty, inequality, climate change, terrorism, trafficking, drugs, energy and natural resources. What are the areas of coincidence between the global and the Latin American agenda? What does Latin America bring into the international agenda? We will be examining the mutual interaction and the interdependent effects in the context of globalization.

**Desired Outcomes**

The aim is for the student to have a full understanding of Latin America's insertion in the global structure of international relations. Covering in parallel the evolution of the international system and the changing position of the region in that same system, the course attempts to reinterpret the frameworks of analysis as perceived from the Western Hemisphere.

The student will be provided with a Latin American view of the main economic developments and political processes that have given shape –at each stage in history- to the structure and dynamics of the international system. The ultimate goal is to make students aware that “where you stand depends on where you sit” by exposing them to alternate views on concepts they are already familiar with.

**Assessment Components**

There are no prerequisites for this course. Because students will be introduced to the basic concepts of international relations theory in order to understand the inter-American system, the seminar is introductory to both the study of world politics and its regional manifestations. However, all students interested in joining the course do need to be willing and prepared to carry out a significant amount of weekly reading and to participate actively in class debates. Their performance will be evaluated on the basis of the following components:

a) 30% of the final grade will correspond to a mid-term exam that will take the week before the break that will cover all readings and lecture notes up to and including class 10.

b) 10% will correspond to class participation, which encompasses three elements: the quality of students’ interventions in class debates. The first 15 minutes of each class will be devoted to discuss a topic current relevance for Latin American international affairs. Students are encouraged to bring topics of their interests to class and relate them to the topic of the day or the class readings.

c) 30% will be a 10 minute oral presentation. In the topical part of the course, each student will have choose one of the issue areas outlined to make an oral presentation on it. Other topics not covered by the syllabus might be acceptable, provided they are of the interest of the student and are cleared beforehand with the professor. The in-class presentation will last no more than 10 minutes. It must present and explain the topic in terms of causes and consequences, while setting it in the broader national, regional and/or global levels of analysis. Theoretical and historical themes are acceptable. The aim is not a definitive exposition of the topic, but rather to highlight and issue and make classmates aware of its importance. Besides the professor’s grading, classmates will submit their grades. Students must submit bullet points in advance to the class in order to spark debate as well as the ppt should they choose to use one as presentation aid.

d) 30% will be a policy memo final exam. Students will take up the role of consultants to a Latin American government, international organization or Latin America related regional body (Inter American Development Bank, Organization of American States, UNASUR). It could also be a corporation or a US government agency. They will have to summarize an issue, present its relevance for their clients, identify the client's interest, lay out possible courses of actions and recommend the actions/policies with basis on their analysis. Further instructions and models will be distributed.
Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.

Be as specific as possible about your expectations regarding student work.

**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:** 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**

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**Exams and Submission of work**

Final Exam dates cannot be changed under any circumstance.

Mid term exam dates will be scheduled with each professor and it must be before the break. Unexcused absences from exams are not permitted and will result in failure of the exam. If you are granted an excused absence from examination (with authorization, as above), your lecturer will decide how you will make-up the assessment component, if at all (by make-up examination, extra coursework, or an increased weighting on an alternate assessment component, etc.).

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

**Final essays must be submitted to the professor in print and electronic copy.** If the student is not in Buenos Aires, he / she must send a printed copy via express postal mail (i.e. FeDEX, DHL, UPS, etc) to the NYU Center in Buenos Aires - Anchorena 1314 - (C1425ELF) Argentina. This copy must arrive before or on the date of established deadline.
Attendance Policy

- NYU Buenos Aires has a strict policy about course attendance.
- Students should contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work but should NOT approach them for excused absences.
- Absences due to illness must be discussed with the Assistant Director for Academics Affairs, María Pirovano Peña within one week of your return to class.
- A doctor note excusing your absence is mandatory.
- The date on the doctor’s note must be the date of the missed class or exam
- Absence requests for non-illness purposes must be discussed with the Assistant Director for Academics Affairs, María Pirovano Peña prior to the date(s) in question.
- If students have more than two unexcused absences they will be penalized by deducting 50% of the class participation grade. Please be aware that in most of the courses the class participation grade is 20% of the final grade. So the 50% of the class participation grade would mean 10% of the final grade.
- If students have more than four unexcused absences they will fail the course.
- Intensive Languages Courses: students who have more than three unexcused absences will be penalized by deducting 50% of the class participation grade. Please be aware that in most of the courses the class participation grade is 20% of the final grade. So the 50% of the class participation grade would mean 10% of the final grade. Those students who have more than five unexcused absences will fail the course.
- Each class has a duration of one hour and half or two hours. Missing one class represents one absence. For those courses that meet once a week (three hours block), missing one class represents two absences.
- Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence.
- NYU BA also expects students to arrive to class promptly (both at the beginning and after any breaks) and to remain for the duration of the class. Three late arrivals or earlier departures (10 minutes after the starting time or before the ending time) will be considered one absence.
- 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 an agreed meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion.
- Holidays’ make up classes are mandatory as regular scheduled classes.

Late Submission of Work

Late work should be submitted in person to the Assistant Director for Academics Affairs during office hours (Mon – Fri, 9.30 am to 5 pm), who will write on the essay or other work the date and time of submission, in the presence of the student. Another member of the administrative staff can accept the work, in person, in the absence of the Assistant Director for Academics Affairs and will write the date and time of submission on the work, as above.

Work submitted within 5 weekdays after the submission time without an agreed extension receives a penalty of 10 points on the 100 point scale.

Written work submitted after 5 weekdays after the submission date without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.

Please note end of semester essays must be submitted on time

Plagiarism Policy

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.

All your written work must be submitted as a hard copy AND in electronic form to the instructor.
It is expected that the student follows the rules on academic honesty and intellectual integrity established by NYU University.

**Week 1**


Readings:

**Week 2**

Latin American international relations before “discovery”. Columbus and the impact of European arrival. Colonial era and metropolitan international relations. Spanish and Portuguese colonies. The English model. Independence (1790-1828): Haiti, Relations between the new countries and between the Latin American republics and Europe.

Readings:

**Week 3**


Readings:

**Week 4**

Readings:
- Smith, Peter H; Talons of the Eagle: Latin America, the United States, and the he World; Oxford University Press, 2008, Chapters 1 a 4.
- Friedman, Max Paul; “Retiring the Puppets, Bringing Latin America Back In: Recent Scholarship on United States-Latin American Relations,” *Diplomatic History* 27, 2006.

**Week 5**

March 11 & 13

Cold War? East vs. West and North vs. South. NIMBY. Decolonization, nationalism and revolution. The third world. Democracy and dictatorship and the road to modernization and development. The Cuban revolution and Latin American communism. The OAS and the polarization of relations in the Western Hemisphere. USA vs. USSR in Latin America: the missile crisis.

Readings:
- Domínguez, Jorge I; *U.S.-Latin American Relations During the Cold War and its Aftermath*, Harvard Institute of Latin American Studies, January 1999

**Week 6**

March 18 & 20

March 20

Presentation topics due


Readings:
- Persons, D; *Central American Civil War Refugees and Civic Foreign Policy*, PhD dissertation, Chapter 5.

**Week 7**

March 25 & 27

SEMESTER BREAK
PART 2 of the course: Latin America in the international agenda


Readings:
- Hakim; Peter; “Is Washington Losing Latin America?”, Foreign Affairs, January/February 2006.
- Castañeda, Jorge; “Latin America’s Left Turn”, Foreign Affairs, May/June 2006
- Russell, Roberto; “The ‘New Left’ and Democratic Governance in Latin America” (Foreign Policy section), Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars, August 2007.

Midterm exam

Impact of transnational movements. Human rights as a policy issue and civil society as an actor.
The intermestic level of analysis through two case studies: Madres de Plaza de Mayo (Argentina) and Movimento Sem Tierra (Brazil).

Readings:
- Harris, Richard L; “Resistance and alternatives to globalization in Latin America and the Caribbean”, Latin American Perspectives, Vol. 29, No. 6, 2002.


Readings:

Security and Defense. The role of the military in Latin America. Legacies of authoritarian states and autocratic regimes. From the old state rivalries and territorial armed conflicts to the paradigm of Latin America as a “zone of peace”. Inter-state and intra state conflicts: guerrillas.
Week 12
April 26 & 29

Readings:

April 26 Make-up Date for May 1

Week 13
May 6 & 8
Poverty and inequality. From consequences to causes. Concentration of resources and institutional structures for concentration of power. Comparing case studies: Chile and Cuba. Compared innovations in poverty alleviation: Brazil’s Bolsa Familia vs. Argentina’s Plan Trabajar. Foreign policy impacts of political economy coalitions that exclude or redistribute.

Readings:
- Thorp, Rosemary; Progress, poverty and exclusion Chapters 1, 2 and 9.
- De Ferranti, D; Inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean: Breaking with History?, The World Bank, 2003, Chapters 1 and 5.

Week 14
May 13 & 15
Natural resources: curse or blessing? From the banana republics to the Soybean Republic? Governance, governments and economic cycles of commodity economies. Latin America in the international markets. The 2008 crisis and its impact in Latin America: models of growth and models of development.

Readings:
The new international system and the new Latin America. The rise of the emerging powers: South America and Brazil as a BRICS. American decline and inter-American relations. The role of extra-continental powers: China, Russia and India in Latin America. New regional and global power games: Venezuela and Iran.

Wrap up of the course: lessons learned from the past to look into the future. Final memo to be handed in the last day of class.

Readings:

Classroom Etiquette
The use of Blackberrys, phones and IPods in class are forbidden

Your Instructor
Mariano Turzi
MA in Strategic Studies and PhD in Interantional Studies, School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Johns Hopkins University
Professor in the Department of Political Science and International Studies at Torcuato Di Tella University in Buenos Aires, Argentina, NYU Buenos Aires and at the Argentine Foreign Service Institute.
His research interests are emerging powers, China and international relations of Latin America.
He has published articles in journals and in 2011 he authored the book “Mundo BRICS” (“BRICS world”). He contributes regularly with OpEds in the most important argentine newspapers.