

**POLI 4065: LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT & POLITICS**

**12:00 – 1:20pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays**

**Location: Atkinson 15**

**Professor:** Dr. Yann Kerevel

**Email:** ykerev1@lsu.edu

**Office:** Stubbs 230

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 1:30-3:30pm or by appt.

**Course Overview:**

In this course, you will be introduced to the history and politics of Latin America. We will start with a brief introduction of the colonial period and the independence struggles of the Americas, then move into the major political developments of the 20<sup>th</sup> century up to the present day. No knowledge of Latin America is assumed prior to this course and therefore, we will be spending a significant amount of time studying the political histories of a number of individual Latin American countries as well as addressing several topics that transcend borders, such as U.S.-Latin American relations, revolutionary movements, civil war, democracy, and dictatorship.

**Required textbook:**

Skidmore, Thomas E., Peter H Smith, and James N Green. 2014. *Modern Latin America, 8th Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press.

**Evaluation:**

<b>Components</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Grading Scale</b>
Class Participation/Homework	50	485-500 A+
Exam 1	60	465 - 484 A
Exam 2	50	450 - 464 A-
Exam 3	40	435 - 449 B+
Public Opinion Project	75	415 - 434 B
Geography Quiz	25	400 - 414 B-
Simulation	75	385 - 399 C+
Literature Review	125	365 - 384 C
Total	500	350 - 364 C-
		335 - 349 D+
		315 - 334 D
		300 - 314 D-
		0 - 299 F

*Class Participation and Homework:* I expect all students to attend class on a regular basis and participate in class discussion. In addition, I may assign short homework assignments in class throughout the semester based on in-class activities.

*Exams:* There will be three exams throughout the semester that relate to the readings, lectures and videos. The exams are not cumulative and only cover material since the last exam. Prior to each exam I will provide you with a study guide. All exams must be taken on the specified date.

If you have a DOCUMENTED illness, emergency or excused absence on the date of an exam, you may take an alternate exam during the scheduled final exam period.

*Public Opinion Project:* You are required to write a report based on public opinion data from Latin America that examines attitudes about democracy and about the United States. In preparation for writing the report, we will spend two weeks in a computer lab to teach you how to analyze a large public opinion dataset that includes responses to a detailed questionnaire from roughly 20,000 individuals across 18 Latin American countries. The project will consist of generating several tables of public opinion data using the statistical software package Stata, and briefly describing the results from the tables.

*Geography quiz:* Since this class is about a particular geographic region, it is very important that everyone knows where each country in the Americas is located. There is a geography quiz at the beginning of the semester that will require you to identify the major countries and their capitals on a blank map.

*Trade Simulation:* At the end of the semester we will conduct a simulated negotiation of a regional trade agreement between multiple countries. You will be graded on your participation during the simulation and on the generation of a response essay after the simulation. More details of the simulation will be provided in class.

*Literature review:* You are required to write a 6-page literature review based on a minimum of 6 academic sources provided to you. The literature review will provide you the opportunity to examine in greater detail one of the topics covered in class. I will supply a list of sources for each possible topic, and you must write a critical essay that briefly summarizes, and compares and contrasts the various arguments in each of the selected readings. Each topic will be guided by a general research question, and the supplied readings will provide a variety of answers to that question. The literature review is due at the date and time of the final exam. Further guidance and example literature reviews will be provided in class.

**Students requiring special accommodation:** Louisiana State University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments is requested to speak with the Disability Services and the instructor, as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential. This publication/material is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact the Disability Services, 115 Johnston Hall, (225)578-5919.

**General Statement on Academic Integrity:** Louisiana State University adopted the Commitment to Community in 1995 to set forth guidelines for student behavior both inside and outside of the classroom. The Commitment to Community charges students to maintain high standards of academic and personal integrity. All students are expected to read and be familiar with the LSU Code of Student Conduct and Commitment to Community, found online at [www.lsu.edu/saa](http://www.lsu.edu/saa). It is your responsibility as a student at LSU to know and understand the academic standards for our community.

Students who are suspected of violating the Code of Conduct will be referred to the Office of

Student Advocacy and Accountability. For undergraduate students, a first academic violation could result in a zero grade on the assignment or failing the class and disciplinary probation until graduation. For a second academic violation, the result could be suspension from LSU. For graduate students, suspension is the appropriate outcome for the first offense.

**Plagiarism and Citation Method:** As a student at LSU, it is your responsibility to refrain from plagiarizing the academic property of another and to utilize appropriate citation methods for all coursework. Ignorance of the citation method is not an excuse for academic misconduct. Remember there is a difference between paraphrasing and quoting and how to properly cite each respectively. If you have questions regarding what is appropriate, please consult with the library's tutorials on avoiding plagiarism and proper citation formats (links are also provided on the course Moodle page).

### **Lectures and Readings:**

All assigned readings for each day **MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE ATTENDING CLASS**. Note: the abbreviation "SSG" refers to the textbook.

#### **Week 1: Introduction**

1/14: no readings

#### **Week 2: Legacies of colonialism**

1/19 (T): Read SSG Chapters 1-2

1/21 (Th): Read Engerman and Sokoloff 1997; Geography Quiz

#### **Week 3: Legacies of imperialism; Legacies of revolution and civil war**

1/26 (T): US-Latin American Relations, Read SSG Chapter 15

1/28 (Th): Mexico, read SSG Chapter 3

#### **Week 4: Legacies of revolution and civil war, cont'd**

2/2 (T): Mexico, Read Morris 2010

2/4 (Th): Cuba, Read SSG Chapter 5

#### **Week 5: Legacies of revolution and civil war, cont'd**

2/9: (no class, Mardi Gras)

2/11 (Th): Nicaragua, Read SSG Chapter 4

#### **Week 6: Legacies of revolution and civil war, cont'd**

2/16 (T): Nicaragua, Read Colburn and Cruz 2012

2/18 (no class, conference)

#### **Week 7: Legacies of revolution and civil war, cont'd**

2/23 (T): Guatemala, Read Isaacs 2010

2/25 (Th): Exam #1

#### **Week 8: Legacies of military rule**

3/1 (T): Brazil, Read SSG Chapter 11

3/3 (Th): Chile, Read SSG, Chapter 10

**Week 9: Legacies of military rule, cont'd**

3/8 (T): Chile, Read Heiss and Navia 2007

3/10 (Th): Argentina, Read SSG Chapter 9

**Week 10: The new left in Latin America**

3/15 (T): Venezuela, Read SSG Chapter 8

3/17 (Th): Exam #2

**Week 11: Spring Break**

3/22 – 3/24 (no class)

**Week 12: Public opinion in the Americas**

3/29 (T): Meet in Computer Lab, Read SSG Chapter 13

3/31 (Th): Meet in Computer Lab

**Week 13: Public opinion, cont'd**

4/5 (T): Meet in Computer Lab

4/7 (Th): Meet in Computer Lab (MPSA)

**Week 14: Political economy of development**

4/12 (T): Strategies of Development, Read SSG Chapter 12

4/14 (Th): Free Trade Agreements, Read Commins 2013

**Week 15: The political economy of trade**

4/19 (T): Free Trade Agreements, Read Cameron and Tomlin 2000

4/21 (Th): Simulation

**Week 16: The political economy of trade, cont'd**

4/26 (T): Simulation

4/28 (Th): Exam #3

**Final Exam Week: Literature Review due Wednesday May 4 @ 2:30pm.**