

# **POLI 319 – Politics of Latin America**

Winter 2024

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**Class time:** Wednesday/Friday 8:35-9:55am (9:00-9:55pm from week of January 22<sup>nd</sup>)

**Class location:** LEA 219

**Dates:** January 5 – April 12 (no lectures on March 6, 8, and 29)

**Instructor:** Simon Bertrand ([simon.bertrand@mcgill.ca](mailto:simon.bertrand@mcgill.ca))

**Office hours:** TBD

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## **1. Course Description**

Despite transitions from authoritarian to democratic rule during the Third Wave, satisfaction with democracy has been at a low point in the last years in Latin America. The consolidation and deepening of democracy have been uneven across the region. Persisting inequalities, social exclusion, insecurity, and unequal rule of law have limited the political empowerment of citizens, particularly the most marginalized. What has shaped the evolution of democracy in Latin America? What explains the distinct paths taken by different societies in the region?

By exploring these questions, the course aims to equip students with an extensive understanding of the politics of Latin America. Part I traces the historical legacies that shape the region with a focus on the post-independence period. Part II takes a closer look at the evolution of democracy in Latin America, with a focus on how political institutions (both formal and informal) shape processes of political representation and participation. Part III explores the causes of the persistence of high levels of crime and violence in the region and its impact on democratic life.

## **2. Learning Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Gain an understanding of key theoretical, normative, and policy debates in the study of Latin American politics, with a focus on democracy and public security.
2. Gain an understanding of Latin America in both idiosyncratic and comparative perspective.
3. Critically assess and compare various perspectives and explanations to understanding politics in Latin America.

## **3. Prerequisites**

There is no formal requirement for this class although having taken an introductory class in comparative politics (POLI 212 or POLI 227) is an asset.

## **4. Instructional Format**

The course will be a blend of presentations from the instructor and small-group discussions. Slides will be posted on MyCourses after each lecture. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in class discussions and other course-related activities.

## 5. Course Materials

There is no required textbook for this course. The following textbook is optional:

Hellinger, Daniel C. 2021. *Comparative Politics of Latin America: Democracy at Last?* New York, Routledge, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. [hereafter: Hellinger]

All other course materials (readings, videos) will be made available through MyCourses. Journal articles and book chapters are also accessible through the McGill Library system. To facilitate learning, required readings should be completed before attending course lectures.

## 6. Course and University Policies

### Late Penalties and Extensions

Late assignments will be penalized by **10% per day** – including weekends and holidays – unless relevant documentation is provided. All assignments must be submitted on MyCourses. No assignment will be accepted through email. The final take-home exam cannot be submitted late.

### Regrading

Students that wish to have an assignment regraded should follow the procedure of the Department of Political Science ([https://mcgill.ca/politicalscience/files/politicalscience/assessment\\_and\\_re-read\\_policy\\_final.pdf](https://mcgill.ca/politicalscience/files/politicalscience/assessment_and_re-read_policy_final.pdf)). A request to regrade an assignment should be submitted within two weeks after it has been returned and presented with an email that explains the specific points of disagreement with the grade. Students will not be granted the privilege to do additional work.

### Disabilities and Other Special Needs

Students with learning disabilities should advise the instructor as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made. Arrangements can also be made to accommodate special needs such as religion, chronic illness, social discomfort or else. Please feel free to flag any issue that you might encounter as soon as possible so that we can work out a solution.

### Copyright

All slides, video recordings, lecture notes, etc. remain the instructor's intellectual property. As such, you may use these only for your own learning (and research, with proper referencing/citation) ends. You are not permitted to disseminate or share these materials; doing so may violate the instructor's intellectual property rights and could be cause for disciplinary action.

### Plagiarism

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offenses under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/integrity](http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity) for more information). In addition, students are not permitted to hand in the same assignment in two or more courses.

### Language

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

## 7. Assessments

	Dates	Value	Description
<b>Conference Participation</b>	-	10%	Attendance and participation in weekly discussions led by the teaching assistants.
<b>Midterm Exam</b>	Feb. 9 <sup>th</sup>	20%	An 80-minutes in-person exam scheduled on February 9. It will consist of short questions on the main concepts covered in the lectures and one essay question.
<b><u>Option 1:</u> Movie Essays</b>	Feb. 26 <sup>th</sup> April 8 <sup>th</sup>	40%	<p>Two short essays (1,200 ± 100 words each excluding bibliography, worth 20% each) that connect a movie with the course materials. The prompts for each essay will be made available at least three weeks before the essay due date.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> – <a href="#">The Revolution Will Not be Televised</a> (2003) OR <a href="#">No</a> (2012) OR <a href="#">The Edge of Democracy</a> (2019) OR <a href="#">The Boss: Anatomy of a Crime</a> (2014)</li> <li>Apr. 8<sup>th</sup> – <a href="#">The Official Story</a> (1985) OR <a href="#">Elite Squad</a> (2007) OR <a href="#">Finding Oscar</a> (2016) OR <a href="#">A Cop Movie</a> (2021) OR <a href="#">7 Prisoners</a> (2021)</li> </ul>
<b><u>Option 2:</u> Case Study</b>	April 1 <sup>st</sup>		<p>A research paper (3,000-3,500 words excluding bibliography) that builds on and applies the literature seen in the course to one or two cases.</p> <p>Detailed instructions and a list of suggested topics will be distributed by the instructor. Students must get their topic and research question approved by their TA by March 1<sup>st</sup> at the latest.</p>
<b>Take-Home Exam</b>	April 16 <sup>th</sup> - 18 <sup>th</sup>	30%	A 72-hours take-home exam to be completed at the end of the semester. The exam will consist of two open-ended questions that should be answered with short essays (1,000 ± 100 words each). <u>The final take-home exam cannot be submitted late.</u>

## 7. Course Schedule

1	Jan. 5	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Introduction to the course. Central questions in the study of Latin American politics.  <u>Optional:</u> Hellinger, introduction</p>
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### Part I: Historical Context and Legacies

2	Jan. 10	<p><b>Pre-Colonial and Colonial Legacies</b></p> <p>Navarrete, Frederico, and Ellen Jones. 2020. <a href="#">“The Myth of Mestizaje.”</a> <i>Los Angeles Review of Books</i>.</p> <p>Galeano, Eduardo. 1973 [1971]. <i>Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of Pillage of a Continent</i>. New York: Monthly Review Press, introduction (1-8).  <u>Optional:</u> Hellinger, chapter 3</p>
3	Jan. 12	<p><b>Independence and State Formation</b></p> <p>Centeno, Miguel A. 1997. “Blood and Debt: War and Taxation in Nineteenth-Century Latin America.” <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 102 (6): 1565–1605.  <u>Optional:</u> Hellinger, chapter 4</p>
4	Jan. 17	<p><b>Mass Politics, Political Inclusion, and Populism</b></p> <p>Muno, Wolfgang, and Christian Pfeiffer. 2023. <a href="#">“Peronism in Argentina Exemplifies the Chameleonic Nature of Populism.”</a> <i>The Loop: ECPR’s Political Science Blog</i>.</p> <p>Weyland, Kurt. 2001. “Clarifying a Contested Concept: Populism in the Study of Latin American Politics.” <i>Comparative Politics</i> 34 (1): 1-22.  <u>Optional:</u> Hellinger, chapter 5</p>
5	Jan. 19	<p><b>The Economic Policies of Populism</b></p> <p>Kaufman, Robert R., and Barbara Stallings. 1991. “The Political Economy of Latin American Populism.” In <i>The Macroeconomics of Populism in Latin America</i>, eds., Rudiger Dornbusch and Sebastian Edwards (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), chapter 2 (15-43).</p>
6	Jan. 24	<p><b>Debt Crisis and Globalization</b></p> <p>Matamala, Daniel. 2021. <a href="#">“The Complicated Legacy of the “Chicago Boys” in Chile.”</a> <i>Promarket</i>.</p> <p>Staudt, Kathleen. 2018. “How NAFTA Has Changed Mexico.” <i>Current History</i> 117 (796): 43-48.  <u>Optional:</u> Hellinger, chapter 6</p>
7	Jan. 26	<p><b>Democratic Breakdowns and Authoritarianism</b></p> <p>Collier, David. 2001. <a href="#">“Bureaucratic Authoritarianism.”</a> in <i>The Oxford Companion to Politics in the World</i>, ed., Joel Krieger (New York: Oxford University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition), 93-95.</p> <p>Schamis, Hector. 1991. “Reconceptualizing Latin American Authoritarianism in the 1970s: From Bureaucratic Authoritarianism to Neoconservatism.” <i>Comparative Politics</i> 23 (2): 201-220.  <u>Optional:</u> Hellinger, chapter 7</p>

Part II: Democracy and Citizenship

8	Jan. 31	<p><b>Democratic Transitions</b></p> <p>O'Donnell, Guillermo, and Philip Schmitter. 1986. <i>Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies</i>. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, ch. 3 (15-36).</p> <p><u>Optional:</u> Hellinger, chapter 8</p>
9	Feb. 2	<p><b>Democratic Consolidation</b></p> <p>Friedman, Elisabeth Jay, and Kathryn Hochstetler. 2002. "Assessing the Third Transition in Latin American Democratization: Representational Regimes and Civil Society in Argentina and Brazil." <i>Comparative Politics</i> 35 (1): 21–42.</p> <p><u>Skim:</u> Alonso, Rosa Cañete, and Luis Bonilla. 2018. <a href="#">Captured Democracies: Government for the Few</a>. Even It Up, Oxfam, and CLACSO.</p> <p><u>Optional:</u> Hellinger, chapter 2</p>
10	Feb. 7	<p><b>The Pink Tide and Beyond</b></p> <p>Kapiszewski, Diana, Steven Levitsky, and Deborah J. Yashar. 2021. "Inequality, Democracy, and the Inclusionary Turn in Latin America." In <i>The Inclusionary Turn in Latin American Democracies</i>, eds. Diana Kapiszewski, Steven Levitsky, and Deborah J. Yashar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), chapter 1 (1-56).</p>
11	Feb. 9	<p><b>Midterm exam (20%)</b></p>
12	Feb. 14	<p><b>Presidentialism</b></p> <p>Linz, Juan J. 1990. "The Perils of Presidentialism". <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 1(1): 51-69.</p> <p>Pereira, Carlos, and Marcus André Melo. 2012. "The Surprising Successes of Multiparty Presidentialism." <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 23 (3): 156-170.</p> <p><u>Optional:</u> Hellinger, chapter 13</p>
13	Feb. 16	<p><b>Political Parties</b></p> <p>Casas-Zamora, Kevin. 2023. "<a href="#">Look at Latin America: This Is How Democracies Fail.</a>" <i>New York Time</i>.</p> <p>Carreras, Miguel. 2012. "Party Systems in Latin America after the Third Wave: A Critical Re-assessment." <i>Journal of Politics in Latin America</i> 4(1): 135–153.</p> <p><u>Optional:</u> Hellinger, chapter 12</p>
14	Feb. 21	<p><b>Clientelism and Local Politics</b></p> <p>Brusco, Valeria, Marcelo Nazareno, and Susan C. Stokes. 2004. "Vote Buying in Argentina." <i>Latin American Research Review</i> 39 (2): 66–88.</p> <p>Hilgers, Tina. 2011. "Clientelism and Conceptual-Stretching: Differentiating Among Concepts and Among Analytical Levels." <i>Theory and Society</i> 40: 567-588.</p>
15	Feb. 23	<p><b>Civil Society and Participatory Democracy</b></p> <p>Goldfrank, Benjamin. 2007." The Politics of Deepening Local Democracy: Decentralization, Party Institutionalization, and Participation." <i>Comparative Politics</i> 39 (2): 147-168.</p>
Feb. 26, 11:59pm		<p><b>Movie essay #1 due (20%)</b></p>

16	Feb. 28	<p><b>Race and Ethnicity</b></p> <p>Hooker, Juliet. 2005. "Indigenous Inclusion/Black Exclusion: Race, Ethnicity and Multicultural Citizenship in Latin America." <i>Journal of Latin American Studies</i> 37(2): 285–310.</p> <p>Van Cott, Donna Lee. 2005. <i>From Movements to Parties in Latin America: The Evolution of Ethnic Politics</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, chapter 2 (22-48).</p> <p><u>Optional</u>: Hellinger, chapter 11</p>
17	Mar. 1	<p><b>Gender and Sexual Diversity</b></p> <p>Daby, Mariela, and Mason W. Mosely. 2024. <i>Mobilizing for Abortion Rights in Latin America</i>. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, chapter 1 (1-18).</p> <p><u>Optional</u>: Piscopo, Jennifer M. 2015. "States as Gender Equality Activists: The Evolution of Quota Laws in Latin America." <i>Latin American Politics and Society</i> 57 (3): 27–49.</p> <p><u>Optional</u>: Corrales, Javier. 2020. "The Expansion of LGBT Rights in Latin America and the Backlash." In <i>The Oxford Handbook of Global LGBT and Sexual Diversity Politics</i>, eds., Michael J. Bosia, Sandra M. McEvoy, and Momin Rahman (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 184-200.</p>
<b>READING WEEK</b>		

Part III: Violence, Insecurity, and the (Un)Rule of Law

18	Mar. 13	<p><b>Measuring and Studying Violence</b></p> <p>Daudelin, Jean. 2017. "Not Killer Methods: A Few things We Get Wrong when Studying Violence in Latin America," in Tina Hilgers and Laura Macdonald, eds., <i>Violence in Latin America and the Caribbean: Subnational Structures, Institutions, and Clientelism</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), chapter 2 (39-56).</p> <p><u>Optional</u>: Rivera, Mauricio. 2016. "The Sources of Social Violence in Latin America: An Empirical Analysis of Homicide Rates, 1980–2010." <i>Journal of Peace Research</i> 53 (1): 84–99.</p>
19	Mar. 15	<p><b>External Interventions, Cold War Politics, and Peace Processes</b></p> <p>Huggins, Martha K. 1987. "U.S.-Supported State Terror: A History of Police Training in Latin America." <i>Crime and Social Justice</i> 27/28: 149–171.</p> <p>Pearce, Jenny. 1998. "From Civil War to 'Civil Society': Has the End of the Cold War Brought Peace to Central America?" <i>International Affairs</i> 74 (3): 587-615.</p> <p><u>Optional</u>: Hellinger, chapter 16</p>
20	Mar. 20	<p><b>Authoritarian Legacies and Police Reform</b></p> <p>Pinheiro, Paulo Sérgio. 2000. "Democratic Governance, Violence, and the 'Un'Rule of Law" <i>Deadalus</i> 129 (2): 119-143.</p> <p><u>Optional</u>: Davis, Diane E. 2006. "Undermining the Rule of Law: Democratization and the Dark Side of Police Reform in Mexico." <i>Latin American Politics and Society</i> 48 (1): 55-86.</p> <p><u>Optional</u>: Hellinger, chapter 14</p>

21	Mar. 22	<p><b>Zero Tolerance and <i>Mano Dura</i> Policies</b></p> <p>Davis, Diane. E. 2013. "Zero-Tolerance Policing, Stealth Real Estate Development, and the Transformation of Public Space: Evidence from Mexico City." <i>Latin American Perspectives</i> 40 (2): 53–76.</p> <p>Holland, Alisha. 2013. "Right on Crime? Conservative Party Politics and "Mano Dura" Policies in El Salvador." <i>Latin American Research Review</i> 48 (1): 44-67.</p>
22	Mar. 27	<p><b>Privatization of Security</b></p> <p>Ungar, Mark. 2007. "The Privatization of Citizen Security in Latin America: From Elite Guards to Neighborhood Vigilantes." <i>Social Justice</i> 34 3/4:20-37.</p>
<b>Apr. 1, 11:59pm</b>		<b>Case study due (40%)</b>
23	Apr. 3	<p><b>Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime</b></p> <p>Gootenberg, Paul. 2012. "Cocaine's Long March North, 1900–2010." <i>Latin American Politics and Society</i> 54 (1), 159-180.</p> <p>Cruz, José Miguel. 2010. "Central American <i>Maras</i>: From Street Youth Gangs to Transnational Protection Rackets." <i>Global Crime</i> 11 (4): 279-298.</p>
24	Apr. 5	<p><b>Gendered and Sexual Violence</b></p> <p>Wright, Melissa W. 2011 "Necropolitics, Narcopolitics, and Femicide: Gendered Violence on the Mexico-U.S. Border." <i>Signs</i> 36 (3):707-731.</p> <p>Theory and Philosophy. 2021. "<a href="#">What is Necropolitics?</a>" [9 minutes]</p> <p><u>Optional:</u> Santos, Cecília MacDowell. 2004. "En-Gendering the Police: Women's Police Stations and Feminism in São Paulo." <i>Latin American Research Review</i> 39 (3): 29-55.</p>
<b>Apr. 8, 11:59pm</b>		<b>Movie essay #2 due (20%)</b>
25	Apr. 10	<p><b>Extractivism, Violence, and the Canadian Mining Sector</b></p> <p>Svampa, Maristella. 2015. "Commodities Consensus: Neoextractivism and Enclosure of the Commons in Latin America." <i>South Atlantic Quarterly</i> 114 (1): 65–82.</p> <p>Gordon, Todd, and Jeffery R Webber. 2008. "Imperialism and Resistance: Canadian Mining Companies in Latin America." <i>Third World Quarterly</i> 29 (1): 63-87.</p> <p><u>Skim:</u> Working Group on Mining and Human Rights in Latin America. 2014. <a href="#">The Impact of Canadian Mining in Latin America and Canada's Responsibility: Executive Summary of the Report Submitted to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.</a></p>
26	Apr. 12	<b>Review and Conclusion</b>
<b>Apr. 16-18</b>		<b>Final Take-Home Exam (30%)</b>