

International Affairs 4380

Latin American Politics

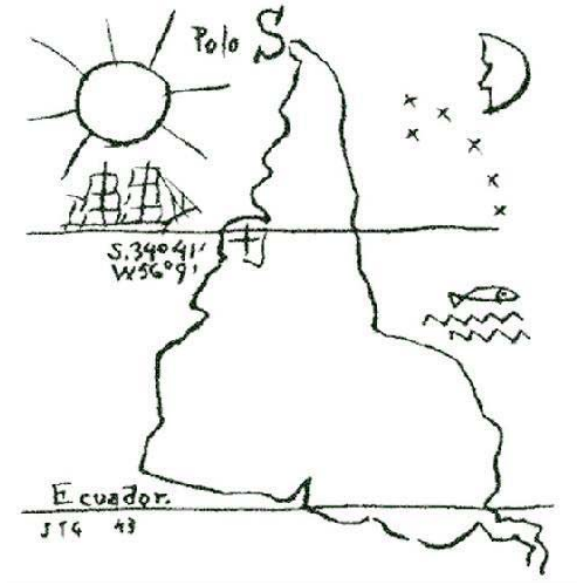
Summer 2009

Instructor:

Dwight Wilson

Contact:

dwrightwilson@gmail.com



Objectives

This class is intended to give students a survey introduction to the politics of Latin America and issues surrounding the study of a geopolitical area. Some of the topics we will cover will be the historical and cultural matrix, political and economic development, ideologies, revolution, and the currency of and challenges to democracy and neoliberalism. We will attempt to assess the importance of culture, institutions, and individuals in accounting for the political outcomes we see in these countries. To the extent that it's possible, we'll speak of trends general to Latin America while noting the peculiarities of different regions and countries. In addition to familiarizing ourselves with important political events and processes we will keep in mind questions such as: What is unique to a particular country, what general to Latin America? Can findings be connected to the politics of other parts of the world? Or do things happen in Latin America because it's Latin America? Since we'll be in Costa Rica, we'll want to think about how this country conforms to Latin American norms, and how it departs from them.

Required Texts

- Wiarda, H. & H. Kline. *Concise Introduction to Latin American Politics and Development*, 2nd ed.
- Green, D. *Faces of Latin America*, 3rd ed.
- Readings in the library

➤ Readings from the Internets

Readings are supplemental; their purpose is to give insight into a variety of perspectives and class discussions will not always repeat what they say. Students are, however, responsible for the concepts and themes contained in them.

Evaluation

Final grades will be composed of the following elements:

Attendance and Participation: Since these will be relatively small classes, everyone will be expected to have done assigned readings and be able to discuss them.

Case Study: Each student will be assigned a country to follow throughout the semester, reporting on its history, institutions, prominent personages, and contemporary issues.

Midterm: Self-explanatory.

Final Exam: Could take a variety of forms. Details will follow.

Grades are apportioned thusly:

The grading scale is as follows:

Participation	15%	93.4 – 100 = A
Case Study	15%	89.5 – 93.3 = A–
Midterm	35%	86.7 – 89.4 = B+
Final Exam	35%	83.4 – 86.6 = B
		79.5 – 83.3 = B–
		And so forth

Tentative Course Outline

As usual, this schedule is subject to announced changes according to our progress or the whim of the instructor. Daily readings will be hammered out each week.

Week 1: Intro Business

➤ W&K 1

Week 2: Historical & Cultural Matrix

- W&K 2 – 4
- Green 1, 2

Week 3: San José

Week 4: State & Society

- W&K 4, 7
- Green 3, 5

Week 5: Ideas & Action

- W&K 5, 6
- Green 4

Week 6: Latin America These Days

- W&K 8, 9