

**BOSTON UNIVERSITY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**  
**IR 566 / PO 580 Democracy in Latin America and its Challenges**

**Syllabus**

Fall 2007

Professor Carlos Blanco

Tuesdays / Thursdays 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

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**Introduction**

The objective of this course is to enhance understanding of the democratic process in Latin America over the last two decades.

Stable democracy has been a goal for many decades in the region. Twenty five years ago, only three countries were democratic. In the 1990s all countries have democratic systems, with the only exception of Cuba. This has been a major achievement and has brought a sensation of freedom all over the continent. Beside this good news, there is also bad news. The decade in which democracy was established all over Central America and South America was the time-period in which a huge economic crisis shattered the region with its political and social consequences. Governability, the ability to govern in democratic terms, became under siege.

In the 1980s electoral democracy spread throughout Latin America. The commitment of enthusiastic citizens to freedom and openness, after many years of military rule, brought a sensation of new stability in a historically turbulent region. Nevertheless, in a short time, economic crisis appeared and many governments had to take strong economic medicines like those proposed by the Washington Consensus. The economic crisis and the policies pursued to overcome it, in the context of a sharp deterioration of social conditions, provoked major challenges for the political system.

These new Latin American democracies initiated economic reforms but also, over time, produced progressive erosion in citizen support for the democratic political systems themselves. This did not mean, however, that people favored authoritarianism over democracy. Instead, they tended to blame political parties and politicians, who came to be seen as corrupt elites at odds with common people.

In this context, demands for political renovation, either peaceful or violent, came from civil society, both from political parties' constituencies and from Non-

Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The elected governments of some countries responded to these demands by carrying out economic reforms. However, in many cases such reforms, far from satisfying citizen concerns, simply fueled more protests and demands, and forced more comprehensive approaches to political and institutional change.

This course explains the way in which authoritarianism was overcome, the profiles of the postauthoritarian Latin American societies, the democracy-building process, and the risks and challenges that many democratic countries are now facing from social unrest, increased poverty, major threats (drug traffic, terrorism, etc.) and new forms of military interventions.

### **PLAGIARISM: WHAT IT IS AND HOW TO RECOGNIZE AND AVOID IT**

#### **“What is Plagiarism and Why is it Important?”**

In college courses, we are continually engaged with other people’s ideas: we read them in texts, hear them in lecture, discuss them in class, and incorporate them into our own writing. As a result, it is very important that we give credit where it is due. Plagiarism is using others’ ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information.

#### **How Can Students Avoid Plagiarism?**

To avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you use:

- another person’s idea, opinion, or theory;
- any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings—any pieces of information—that are not common knowledge;
- quotations of another person’s actual spoken or written words; or
- paraphrase of another person’s written or spoken words.”

The above quotation is taken from a website of the Writing Tutorial Services of Indiana University. For information about how to recognize unacceptable and acceptable paraphrases, strategies for avoiding plagiarism, and a discussion of what common knowledge consists of, please see [www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml](http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml)

### **Plagiarism Will Not Be Tolerated at Boston University**

Since plagiarism is a form of theft (in this case, theft of ideas or words), it is not tolerated in this university and is punished very severely by the Dean’s Office of the College of Arts and Sciences. Please be certain that you understand exactly what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.

## **Grading**

1. Two research papers (30 % each) to be selected from one of the following topics:
  - a. Roots of Authoritarianism in Latin American Countries
  - b. Forces that stimulated transitions to democracy
  - c. Causes of unstable Latin American democracies
  - d. New authoritarianism or process of democratic adaptation?
  - e. Risks for democracy in a selected country
2. Attendance and Participation (20 %). The course will operate as a seminar with short presentations and discussions on readings and papers.
3. Final Exam (20%)

## **Classes, Topics and Reading Assignments**

TU September 4

### **Introduction**

#### **What Democracy Is**

Phillipe Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl in Kingstone (22-33)

TH September 6

### **Conditions and Problems for Democracy**

Diamond (24 – 116)

TU September 11

### **Situation of Democracy in Latin America I**

UNDP (25 – 73)

Dominguez 3 (351 – 381) in Dominguez and Shifter

TH September 13

### **Situation of Democracy in Latin America II**

UNDP (131 – 147 / 75 - 129)

Valenzuela (5 – 19)

TU September 18

### **Economic Conditions in Latin America**

Duncan Green in Kingstone (68-83)

TH September 20

### **The Washington Consensus**

John Williamson in Kingstone (83-89)

TU September 25

**Review of the Washington Consensus**

James Mahon in Kingstone (89-100)

TH September 27

**Scopes and Limits of the Economic Reform**

Kuczynski / Williamson (1-71)

TU October 2

**Roots of Authoritarianism**

Loveman and Davies (3 – 27)

TH October 4

**The Military and Its Political Role**

Fitch (1 - 35)

THU October 11

**Civil-Military Relations in Argentina, Brazil and Chile**

Hunter (299 – 318) in Aguero & Stark

TU October 16

Video: Video: Chile – Video: “Defeat of a Dictator”

THU October 18

**Challenges for Democracy**

Loveman (366 – 419) in Loveman and Davies

Roett (191 – 200) in Crandall, Paz & Roett

**(First paper due at the start of class)**

TU October 23

**The New Military Autonomy**

Consuelo Cruz & Rut Diamint in Kingstone (119-129)

THU October 25

**Challenges of Political Representation**

Hagopian (99 – 128) in Aguero & Stark

Dominguez 4 (100 – 113)

TU October 30

**The Decay of the Political Parties**

Lechner (21 – 39) in Aguero & Stark

THU November 1

**Citizens’ Participation**

Varas (145 – 163) in Aguero & Stark

TU November 6

**Reforms in Latin America**

Grindle (1 – 36)

Dominguez and Giraldo (3 – 38) III section in Dominguez and Lowenthal I

THU November 8

**Challenges for Democracy in the Andes**

Wilson Center# 1 (3 – 77)

TU November 13

**Colombia**

Sweig and McCarthy (11 – 37) in Crandall, Paz & Roett

Kline (20 – 41) in Dominguez and Lowenthal I

THU November 15

**Bolivia**

Orias (45 – 62) in Crandall, Paz & Roett

**(Second paper due at the start of class)**

TU November 20      Venezuela – Video: A Revolution?

THU November 22      **FALL RECESS**

TU November 27

**Brazil**

Lamounier (166 – 187) in Dominguez and Lowenthal I

THU November 29

**Mexico**

Dresser (159 – 184) in Dominguez and Lowenthal II

TU December 4

**Ecuador**

Vélez and Ramírez (121 – 144) in Crandall, Paz & Roett

Isaacs (42 – 57) in Dominguez and Lowenthal I

THU December 6

**Peru**

Orias 67 – 85) in Crandall, Paz & Roett

Stokes (58 - 71) in Dominguez and Lowenthal I

Levitsky and Cameron (1 – 27)

TU December 11

### **Venezuela**

Ottaway (71 - 90)

Sainz Borgo and Paz (91 – 116) in Crandall, Paz & Roett

Martz (31 – 53) in Goodman et al

Coppedge (3 - 19) in Dominguez and Lowenthal I

### **Readings**

#### **Required Books and Texts**

**Aguero, Felipe and Stark, Jeffrey** - Fault Lines of Democracy in Post-Transition Latin America - North-South Center Press at the University of Miami, 1998

**Crandall, Russell; Paz, Guadalupe and Roett, Riordan** – The Andes in Focus, Security, Democracy & Economic Reform - Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005

**Kingstone, Peter R.** Editor – Readings in Latin American Politics / Challenges to Democratization – Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston – New York, 2006

**UNDP** - Democracy in Latin America - Towards a Citizens' Democracy / 2004 in <http://democracia.undp.org/Informe/Default.asp?Menu=15&Idioma=1>

**Wilson Center # 1** - The Crisis of Democratic Governance in the Andes - Woodrow Wilson Center Reports on the Americas - Edited by Cynthia Arnson in <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/pubs/Crisis%20Dem%20Gov%20Rpt%20on%20Amer%202.pdf>

#### **Chapters in Texts / Articles**

**Diamond, Larry** - Developing Democracy, Toward Consolidation - Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003

**Dominguez Jorge I. and Lowenthal, Abraham F. # 1** - Constructing Democratic Governance in Latin America, South America in the 1990s - The John Hopkins University Press, 1996

**Dominguez Jorge I. and Lowenthal, Abraham F. # 2**- Constructing Democratic Governance in Latin America, Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean in the 1990s - The John Hopkins University Press, 1996

**Dominguez, Jorge I. and Shifter, Michael # 3** - Constructing Democratic Governance in Latin America Taking Stock of the 1990s in [http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~jidoming/images/jid\\_constructing.pdf](http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~jidoming/images/jid_constructing.pdf)

**Dominguez, Jorge I. # 4** - Latin America's Crisis of Representation – Foreign Affairs – January / February 1997 – Volume 76, Number 1 in [http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~jidoming/images/jid\\_latin.PDF](http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~jidoming/images/jid_latin.PDF)

**Fitch, John Samuel** - The Armed Forces and Democracy in Latin America - The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998

**Goodman, Louis W. et al** - Lessons of the Venezuelan Experience - Wilson Center Press 1995

**Grindle, Merilee S.** - Audacious Reforms, Institutional Invention and Democracy in Latin America / The John Hopkins University Press, 2000

**Pedro Pablo Kuczynski and John Williamson** - After the Washington Consensus Institute for International Economics Washington D.C., 2003

**Levitsky, Steve and Cameron, Maxwell A.** - Democracy without Parties? Political Parties and Regime Collapse in Fujimori's Peru in <http://136.142.158.105/Lasa2001/LevitskySteve.pdf>

**Loveman, Brian and Davies, Thomas** - The Politics of Antipolitics: The Military in Latin America : The Military in Latin America (Latin American Silhouettes) - SR Books; Rev&Updtd edition (October 28, 1997)

**Ottaway, Marina** - Democracy Challenged, The Rise of Semi-Authoritarianism Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003

**Valenzuela, Arturo** - Latin American Presidencies Interrupted / Journal of Democracy - Volume 15, Number 4, October 2004