BOSTON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENTS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & POLITICAL SCIENCE
PARDEE SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES

IR367/PO360 INTRODUCTION TO LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

FALL 2017 MWF 10:10-11:00 ROOM CAS B06A

Emeritus Professor of International Relations & Political Science
David Scott Palmer

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Course Rationale, Goals, & Organization

This course, which assumes no prior knowledge of Latin America or U.S.-Latin American Relations, is intended to introduce you to a part of the world that, in the words of long-time New York Times correspondent Tad Szulc, “Americans will do anything for Latin America except read about it.”

But you’re in the course to help prove him wrong – and I’m here to help you do that. During our weeks together you’ll read and reflect on a novel or testimony by a Latin American author. You’ll learn where all Latin American and Caribbean countries and capitals are. You’ll capture a sense of the enduring impact of the colonial experience and major patterns of post-independence politics. You’ll learn about each of the 20 Latin American republics and become especially knowledgeable about at least one of them (your choice). You’ll become acquainted with the ways the United States has related to the region over the past two centuries, as well as with some of the most pressing issues in our current policies. We’ll also take some time each week to discuss what’s been happening in the region.

When you complete the course, you will have a good grasp of the history of Latin American politics, the major contemporary characteristics, and explanations for the distinctive patterns of politics in the region and among individual countries. You will also have an understanding of the major developments over the decades in inter-American relations and the most pressing concerns today.
Readings (Available at the BU Barnes & Noble Bookstore at IR367 and/or PO 360)

One novel or testimony by a Latin American author from the following list (*your choice*):


Mario Vargas Llosa, *Death in the Andes* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2007) [ISBN 9780312427252] A Peruvian novelist and Latin America’s most recent Nobel Laureate depicts the intertwining of myth and reality in a sierra mining town during the Shining Path guerrillas’ “People’s War”

In addition, there are some readings (noted with an *) posted on the IR 367 Blackboard website, along with announcements and basic course materials

Finally, the *Latin American Weekly Report* (LAWR) covers current developments in the region and is available in an on-line 10-week subscription at a special student rate of $25 (regular cost is $100). LAWR is valuable as a resource for our regular discussions of current events. Sign up during the first class meetings.

You are responsible for knowing & understanding the provisions of the CAS Academic Conduct Code, at bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code
Grading:

1. **Map Quiz** (10%) On a blank map of Latin America & the Caribbean, Identify & locate the 33 independent countries & 34 capitals (**M 11 Sep**)
2. **Short paper** (15%) A three page reflection on historical/political aspects of the novel or testimony you read (**Due F 22 Sep**)
3. **Participation** (20%) The quality of your questions, comments, & observations on readings, presentations, & class discussion
4. **Research Paper** (25%) About 10-12 pages explaining some important aspect of politics of either one Latin American country or a paired comparison of two (**Papers on Mexico through Venezuela due M 23 Oct**); (**Papers on Colombia through Brazil due W 15 Nov**).
5. **Final Exam** (30%) About half will cover Latin American politics, & about half will deal with elements of U.S.-Latin American relations (**TBA**)

Classes, Topics, & Assignments:

**Getting Started**

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<td>W 6 Sep</td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
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<td>F 8 Sep</td>
<td>Latin America Today: The Big Picture</td>
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<td>Reading: LAPD, 3-18</td>
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<td>M 11 Sep</td>
<td><strong>Countries of Latin America I</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Map Quiz</strong></td>
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<td>Reading: LAPD, 89-100</td>
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<td>W 13 Sep</td>
<td><strong>Countries of Latin America II</strong></td>
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<td>Make an initial selection of “your” country</td>
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**Novels & Testimonies**

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<tr>
<td>F 15 Sep</td>
<td><strong>Novels &amp; Testimonies I</strong></td>
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<td>M 18 Sep</td>
<td><strong>Novels &amp; Testimonies II</strong></td>
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W 20 Sep  Novels & Testimonies III
Reflection Presentations

F 22 Sep  Novels & Testimonies IV
Reflection Presentations

**Short Papers on Novels & Testimonies Due**

**Overview of Latin American History**

M 25 Sep  Latin American Political History I
Reading: LAPD, 19-27

W 27 Sep  Latin American Political History II
Reading: LAPD, 28-57

F 29 Sep  Latin American Political History III
Reading: LAPD, 59-74, 89-100

**Latin America Country Studies, from North to South**

We are studying each of the 20 independent countries usually identified as comprising Latin America. Reading assignments include one broad overview from *Latin American Politics & Development (2017 edition!)* and one or two short analyses of current issues and concerns. In addition, you will find more up-to-date information in *Latin American Weekly Report* and other on-line publications:

Inter-American Dialogue [thedialogue.org]

Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) [wola.org]

Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA) [coha.org]

Insight Crime [insightcrime.org]

Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies [chdsstratcom.ndu.edu]

Americas Barometer [americasbarometer.org]

Americas Program, Center for International Policy [cipamericas.org]
Americas Program, Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS) [csis.org/Americas]

Finally, the Library of Congress’s Hispanic Division Handbook of Latin American Studies contains short summaries by experts of the best books and articles written about their country of specialization [loc.gov/hlas]

M 2 Oct  Introduction to Country Studies

Make the final selection of “your” country

W 4 Oct  Mexico I
Reading: LAPD, José Luis Velasco, 319-44

F 6 Oct  Mexico II

TU 10 Oct  Central America I: Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras

W 11 Oct  Central America II: Nicaragua, Costa Rica

F 13 Oct  Panama
Reading: LAPD, Orlando Pérez, 435-47
M 16 Oct  **Cuba**

W 18 Oct  **Hispañola: Dominican Republic & Haiti**
Reading: LAPD, Dominican Republic, Lilian Bobea, 449-63; Haiti, Georges Fauriol, 465-76

F 20 Oct  **Venezuela**

M 23 Oct  **Colombia I**
Reading: LAPD, Harvey Kline, 169-94

**Mexico to Venezuela Research Papers Due**

W 25 Oct  **Colombia II**
Reading: *Lindsay R. Mayka, “Colombia’s Surprising Resilience,”* *Journal of Democracy* 27:3 July 2016, 139-47; *Eduardo Posada-Carbó, “The Difficult Road to Peace in Colombia,”* *Current History* 116:787 February 2017, 74-6

F 27 Oct  **Ecuador**

M 30 Oct  **Peru**
Reading: LAPD, Julio Carrión & David Scott Palmer, 195-216; *Alberto Vergara & Aaron Watanabe, “Peru since Fujimori,”* *Journal of Democracy* 27:3 July 2016, 148-57; *Eduardo Dargent & Paula

W 1 Nov **Bolivia**

F 3 Nov **Chile**

M 6 Nov **Argentina**
Reading: LAPD, Linda Chen, 103-22; *“Argentina’s new, honest inflation statistics: The end of bogus accounting,” The Economist, May 24, 2017

W 8 Nov **Uruguay & Paraguay**
Reading: LAPD, Uruguay, Martin Weinstein & Jorge Rebella, 245-63; Paraguay, Sebastian Meyer, 265-82

F 10 Nov **Brazil I**
Reading: LAPD, Britta Crandall, 123-39

M 13 Nov **Brazil II**

W 15 Nov **Countries Reviewed and Compared**
*Colombia to Brazil Research Papers Due*
U.S.-Latin American Relations: History & Current Issues

F 17 Nov  U.S.-L.A. Relations: Introduction
Palmer, Chap 1, 1-8

M 20 Nov  U.S.-L.A. History: Monroe Doctrine to the Good Neighbor
*Weeks, Chaps 2-4, 14-96

M 27 Nov  U.S.-L.A. History: The Cold War
Palmer, Chap 2, 9-21
*Weeks, Chap 5, 97-123, & 7, 148-76

W 29 Nov  U.S.-L.A. History: Post-Cold War & Intro to Issues

F 1 Dec  U.S.-L.A. Current Issues I

M 4 Dec  U.S.-L.A. Current Issues II
*Sonja Wolf, “Chronicles of Everyday Lawlessness,” Current History 116:787 February 2017, 77-9; *Michael Shifter, “The U.S.-Cuba Thaw and Hemispheric Relations,” Current History 115:778 February 2016, 75-6; Review websites (pp. 4-5, plus your own research) for the most recent analyses of other issues (e.g., drug trafficking, immigration, NAFTA, military & economic aid, investment)

W 6 Dec  Conclusions: What have we learned?

TBA  Final Exam  1/2 History & Countries; 1/2 U.S.-L.A. Relations