

Political Science 261/261W
Latin American Politics
Wednesday 2:00 - 4:40
Harkness Hall 210

Professor Gretchen Helmke
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Office Hours: Thursday: 2-4, or by appointment
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This course focuses on the process of democratization and the emergence and consolidation of political institutions in contemporary Latin America. The first part of the class discusses the region's experience with dictatorship and introduces students to competing theories of democratization. The second half of the course concentrates on the performance and functioning of key democratic processes and institutions. The course draws on a broad range of theoretical and methodological perspectives to analyze the quality and stability of democracy throughout Latin America.

Organization and Course Requirements

For students registered to take the class without a writing credit, grades will be based on the following assignments:

Participation: 20%
Midterm Exam: 40 %
Final Exam: 40%

For students registered with a "W," grades will be based on the following assignments:

Participation: 20%
First Midterm Exam: 25%
Second Midterm Exam: 25%
Research Paper 30%

Participation

Participation makes up a significant part of your grade for this course. This class is a discussion seminar, not a lecture course. It is essential that students be prepared to discuss all of the readings each and every class. Many of the works that we will read are intellectually demanding; be sure to leave yourself enough time to do all of the readings carefully.

Student responsibilities include being prepared each week to discuss news from the *Latin American Weekly Reports* at the beginning of each class. In addition, each student will sign up to present at least one of the weekly readings during the semester. The student should prepare a 10-15 minute presentation that briefly summarizes the argument and

raises important questions and criticisms for discussion. Please send me via email no later than Tuesday night a one-two hand out of your summary of the readings, which I will copy for the entire class (25 students). The precise number of readings each student is responsible for leading will depend on the size of the seminar. A sign-up sheet will be circulated the first week of class.

Exams

There will be two in-class midterms (October 17, December 12). Both exams will be based on the assigned readings and class discussion. The midterms will contain identification terms, short questions, and essays. A list of possible identification terms will be distributed prior to each exam.

Make-Up Policy

Make-up exams and assignments will be given only under the most exceptional circumstances. Exams will not be re-scheduled to accommodate other courses. Missed exams or assignments due to illness require a doctor's note.

Term Paper (Only for Students Taking the Course for "W")

Each student will choose a country and topic on which they will write a 10-12 page research paper. **To qualify for a W, you must meet each deadline:**

9/26 2-3 paragraph statement of your research topic. Please include the question(s) that you want to focus on, the materials that you anticipate using, and your working hypotheses.

10/10 1-2 page annotated bibliography. Please begin with a statement of your research topic and hypotheses and then briefly describe how each of the sources on your bibliography will contribute to your paper.

11/14 Last day to turn in required drafts.

12/5 Research Papers Due at the beginning of Class- LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

Books

The following books are required and available for purchase at the Campus Bookstore:

Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter. 1986. *Transitions From Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions About Uncertain Democracies*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Susan C. Stokes. 2001. *Mandates and Democracies: Neoliberalism By Surprise in Latin America*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Carey, John. 2009. *Legislative Voting and Accountability*. Cambridge University Press

Articles

All articles are available on-line through the University of Rochester library course reserves.

Weekly Class Schedule:

Week 1, September 5: Course Introduction (short class)

Course Introduction and Presentation Assignments

Week 2, September 12: Latin American Political Development

Skidmore, Thomas and Peter Smith. 2005. "The Transformation of Modern Latin America: 1880's-1990's" in *Modern Latin America* (sixth edition) pages 42-68.

[Douglass North, Barry Weingast and William Summerhill](#). 2000. "Order, Disorder, and Economic Change: Latin America v. North America" in Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Hilton Root, eds. *Governing for Prosperity*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Week 3, September 19: Democratic Breakdowns

O'Donnell, Guillermo. 1973. "An Impossible 'Game': Party Competition in Argentina, 1955-1966" in *Modernization and Bureaucratic Authoritarianism*. Berkeley: IIS Publications.

Valenzuela, Arturo. 1978. "The Move to a Socialist Society and the Erosion of the Political Center" in *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Chile*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Londregan, John and Keith Poole. 1990. "Poverty, the Coup Trap, and the Seizure of Executive Power." *World Politics* 42:151-83.

Week 4, September 26: Development, Diffusion, and Democratization

[Przeworski, Adam and Fernando Limongi](#). 1997. "Modernization: Theories and Facts." *World Politics* 49: 155-83.

Mainwaring, Scott and Aníbal Pérez-Liñán,. "Latin American Democratization Since 1978: Democratic Transitions, Breakdowns, and Erosions," (Chapter 1) in *The Third Wave of Democratization in Latin America*. New York: Cambridge University Press Books.

Brinks, Daniel and Michael Coppedge. 2006. "Diffusion Is No Illusion: Neighbor Emulation in the Third Wave of Democracy" *Comparative Political Studies* 39(4): 463-489.

Week 5, October 3: Games of Transition I

Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter 1986. *Transitions From Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions About Uncertain Democracies*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. (Chapters 1-7)

Elizabeth Jean Wood. 2000. "The Structural Foundations of a Pact" from *Forging Democracy from Below: Insurgent Transitions in El Salvador and South Africa*. NY: Cambridge University Press.

Week 6, October 10: Games of Transition II

Adam Przeworski, "Transitions to Democracy," in *Democracy and the Market*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (Chapter 2)

Geddes, Barbara. 1999. "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?" *Annual Review of Political Science*. 2:115-44

Week 7, October 17: First Midterm Exam

Week 8, October 24: TBA

Week 9, October 31: Accountability and Representation

Susan C. Stokes 2001. *Mandates and Democracies: Neoliberalism By Surprise in Latin America*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (Entire book)

Week 10, November 7: Voting and Elections in Latin America

Magaloni, Beatriz. 2006. (Chapter TBA) from *Voting for Autocracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Helmke, Gretchen. 2008. "Ticket-Splitting as Electoral Insurance: The Mexico 2000 Elections" *Electoral Studies*

Valeria Brusco, Marcelo Nazareno, and Susan C. Stokes. 2004. "Vote Buying in Argentina" *Latin American Research Review*, Vol 39, No.2.

Week 11, November 14: Presidential Systems

O'Donnell, Guillermo. "Delegative Democracy" *Journal of Democracy* 5(1):55-69.

Mainwaring, Scott. 1993. "Presidentialism, Multipartyism, and Democracy: The Difficult Combination" *Comparative Political Studies* 26: 198-228.

Cox, Gary and Scott Morgenstern. 2002. "Epilogue: Latin America's Reactive Assemblies and Proactive Presidents" in *Legislative Politics in Latin America*. Edited by Scott Morgenstern and Benito Nacif. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Week 12, November 21: Thanksgiving Break

Week 13, November 28: Legislative Accountability

Carey, John. 2009. *Legislative Voting and Accountability*. Cambridge University Press.

Week 14, December 5: Institutional Instability in Latin America

"W" Students Only: Papers are due at the beginning of class today—NO EXCEPTIONS

Valenzuela, Arturo. 2004. "Latin American Presidencies Interrupted" *Journal of Democracy* 15(4).

Pérez-Liñan, Aníbal. 2005. "Democratization and Constitutional Crises in Presidential Regimes: Toward Congressional Supremacy?" *Comparative Political Studies* 38(1): 51-74.

Helmke, Gretchen. 2010. "The Origins of Institutional Crises in Latin America: A Unified Strategic Model and Test" *American Journal of Political Science*

Week 15, December 12: Second Midterm