

---

**Department of Political Science**

POLI 332 (001)

The Politics and Government of Latin America

2009-10 2<sup>nd</sup> Term

Tuesday and Thursday 9:30 am to 11:00 am

---

**Professor: Maxwell A. Cameron**

**Office hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 2 pm - 4 pm. Or by appointment.

E-mail: [Cameron@politics.ubc.ca](mailto:Cameron@politics.ubc.ca)

Tel. (604) 822-3129

Weblog: <http://blogs.ubc.ca/cameron>

Fax. (604) 822-5540

---

**Short Course Description:** A comparative examination of democracy and authoritarianism in Latin America. Since the transitions from authoritarian rule in the 1980s, most Latin American nations have been classified by political scientists as electoral democracies, however, the precariousness of these new democratic regimes can be traced to high levels of inequality and poverty, weak representative institutions, a tendency for power to be centralized in the executive branch of government, the refusal of the military to accept civilian supremacy, and, in some areas, pervasive and systemic violence. A major goal of this course is to survey the quality and diversity of democratic institutions in the region and provide students with a detailed look at some of the most important issues the region faces, as well as the historical sources of these issues. Some of the most important concepts and theories in the field of comparative politics, including bureaucratic authoritarianism, dependency, corporatism, populism, transitions to democracy, and delegative democracy, have originated or been refined in studies of Latin America. Special attention will be given to the problem of democracy without checks and balances: that is, democracy in the absence of the inherent checks on state power that derived from a clear separation of powers among the branches of government.

Prerequisites and/or Course Restrictions: Third year standing.

---

**Required Reading:**

Skidmore, Thomas E., Peter H. Smith and James N. Green. Modern Latin America, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Smith, Peter H. Democracy in Latin America: Political Change in Comparative Perspective. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Smith, William C. Latin American Democratic Transformations: Institutions, Actors, and Processes. Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.

Available for purchase in the UBC bookstore.

---

**Course Assignments, Due dates and Grading:**

Mid-term exam, February 11: 1/3<sup>rd</sup> final grade

Term paper (10 pages), March 18: 1/3<sup>rd</sup> final grade

Final exam, during scheduled exam period: 1/3<sup>rd</sup> final grade

---

**Course Policies:**

Attendance: Attendance is expected of students in all classes.

**Reasonable Accommodation:** The University accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with the Disability Resource Centre. The University accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled tests and examinations. Please let your instructor know in advance if you will require any accommodation on these grounds.

**Late assignments:** Late penalty for papers submitted after the deadline is 2% per day (including weekends and holidays). Papers more than one week late will not be accepted. The only exceptions are for students who have a medical, compassionate, or other legitimate reason for being late and can produce supporting documentation. Final papers should be submitted by electronic means to TurnItIn.com (see [UBC Calendar](#)) where they will be analyzed for plagiarism.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Please review the [UBC Calendar](#) for the university policy on cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty. The Library also has a helpful web page on plagiarism. See: <http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/plagiarism/>

### **Guidelines For Assigning Grades:**

#### **80% to 100% (A- to A+)**

*This grade is reserved for exceptional papers.* An exceptional paper must demonstrate strong evidence of original thinking around a clearly articulated thesis; the paper should have a good structure and be well organized; the paper should demonstrate a capacity to analyze and synthesize; it should also demonstrate superior grasp of the subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base is expected; clear and effective writing style and appropriate referencing format are also expected.

#### **68% to 79% (B- to B+)**

*Grades in this range are given for competent papers.* A competent paper will have a clear if not original thesis statement and develop the thesis with sound argumentation; a reasonably coherent structure and organization of the material is expected; the paper will show evidence of a good grasp of subject matter; some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability is expected as well as a reasonable understanding of relevant issues; although a substantial research effort may not have been made, there should be evidence of familiarity with the most relevant literature.

#### **50% to 67% (D to C+)**

*An adequate paper will be awarded a grade in this range.* Such a paper lacks or does not develop a coherent or clear thesis statement, but some effort is made to structure the paper around an argument; nevertheless, there is little attempt to develop or sustain a coherent argument *throughout* the paper; the paper should demonstrate an understanding of the subject matter; it should also show an ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material; normally, a paper in this range will reflect acceptable but uninspired work; it will not be seriously faulty but will lack style and vigour (especially in argumentation).

#### **00% to 49% (F)**

*Inadequate paper.* This grade is reserved for papers with little or no evidence of understanding of the subject matter; no thesis statement is made; there are weaknesses in critical and analytic skills; major errors are made in discussions of the subject matter; the literature used is limited or irrelevant; or the subject is not on list of paper topics or has not received prior approval by the instructor.

**Readings** (\* Recommended)*Week 1. January 5-7. Introduction to Latin America*

- Skidmore, Smith & Green, Modern Latin America chapter 1.
- Smith, Democracy in Latin America Introduction.

*Week 2. January 12-14. Latin America from Colony to Independence*

- Skidmore, Smith & Green, Modern Latin America chapter 2, 14.\*
- Video *Duel with the Devil*.

*Week 3. January 19-21. Latin America Since Independence*

- Skidmore, Smith & Green, Modern Latin America chapter 12-13.
- Smith, Democracy in Latin America chapter 1.

*Week 4. January 26-28. Transitions to Democracy*

- Smith, Democracy in Latin America chapter 2.
- Smith, ed. Latin American Democratic Transformations, chapter 9 (Uggla).

*Week 5. February 2-4. The Military and the Rule of Law*

- Smith, Democracy in Latin America chapter 3.
- Smith ed. Latin American Democratic Transformations, chapter 4 (Foweraker and Krznaric).

*Week 6. February 9-11. Types of Constitutions*

- Smith Democracy in Latin America chapter 5-6.
- Smith, ed. Latin American Democratic Transformations, chapter 5 (Carey).

**Midterm Exam on February 11.**

*February 15-26 extended break*

*Week 7. March 2-4. The Quality of Democracy*

- Smith Democracy in Latin America chapter 8-9.

*Week 8. March 9-11. Illiberal Democracy?*

- Smith Democracy in Latin America chapter 10-11.
- Smith ed. Latin American Democratic Transformations, chapter 2 (Smith and Ziegler).

*Week 9. March 16-18. Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Venezuela*

- Skidmore, Smith & Green, Modern Latin America chapters 8-11.
- Smith ed. Latin American Democratic Transformations, chapter 12 (Bonner),\* chapter 8 (Wampler),\* chapter 13 (Samuels)\*, chapter 14 (Pereira).\*

**Papers due on March 18.***Week 10. March 23-25. Peru, Colombia, Mexico*

- Skidmore, Smith & Green Modern Latin America chapters 3,7.
- Smith ed. Latin American Democratic Transformations, chapter 18 (Levitsky and Cameron), chapter 10 (Finkel).\*

*Week 11. March 30-April 1. Central America, the Caribbean and Cuba*

- Skidmore, Smith & Green Modern Latin America chapters 4-5.

*Week 12. April 6-8. Indigenous politics in the Andes*

- Skidmore, Smith & Green Modern Latin America chapters 6.

- Smith ed. Latin American Democratic Transformations, chapter 11 (Madrid) and chapter 7 (Van Cott),\* chapter 15 (Zamosc).

*Week 13. April 13. The International Context*

- Smith Democracy in Latin America chapter 4.

*Week 13. April 15. Taming or Deepening Democracy?*

- Smith Democracy in Latin America chapter 12.