

POLI 490 – Latin America in World Affairs
Fall 2008
Tuesdays 5:30-7PM, CCC 114

Professor Jennifer Collins
E-mail: Jennifer.Collins@uwsp.edu
Phone: x2439

Office: CCC 474
Office Hours: Thurs. 2-4PM
and by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

Historically and even today the United States has often viewed Latin America as “our backyard”. What does this mean and what have been the historical manifestations of this relationship? Do Latin Americans share this view? What views do they hold of our country and their relationship to the “colossus of the north”? Is Latin America important to the U.S.? Have we lost control of “our backyard”? Where is Latin America headed today?

This course is intended to provide a roadmap for understanding Latin America’s position in the international system. We will explore ways in which choices have been constrained and impacted by actors and developments outside the region and, in turn, how leaders and citizens in Latin America have responded to these constraints and opportunities. The course focuses on the post-1945 period, but earlier patterns will be reviewed at the beginning of the semester.

The course is divided into three sections. Weeks 2-4 are devoted to the history of Latin America’s international relations, with predominant focus on relations with the U.S. This section provides a foundation for the rest of the course, as the U.S. was the dominant outside power in the region throughout the twentieth century. In the second unit (weeks 5-11) we will analyze the international dimensions of several important regional issues: human rights, conflict resolution, democratization, and drug trafficking. The third and final section (weeks 12-15) focuses on the fascinating present moment. We will consider whether or not recent developments, including the resurgence of the left and steps toward greater regional integration, represent a break with previous patterns.

By the end of this course students will possess a more nuanced and deeper understanding of the current political dynamics in the region and their historical origins. Students will be able to identify key historical periods and reasons for policy shifts. They will also acquire or deepen their knowledge of some key theoretical concepts in IR as they relate to Latin America. They will be able to identify major geographical regions and nation-states in Latin America. The research paper will afford students the opportunity to explore and analyze an important international issue from the perspective of a Latin American actor.

Assigned Texts and Materials

Text Rental

- Peter Smith. *Talons of the Eagle, 3rd Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Available for purchase at the UWSP Bookstore

- Coletta A. Youngers and Eileen Rosin, eds. *Drugs and Democracy in Latin America*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2004.
- Peter Kornbluh. *The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability*. New York: The New Press, 2003, 2004.
- *NACLA: Report on the Americas*, Vol. 41, No. 5 (September/October, 2008).

E-Reserves

Additional readings are available on D2L and E-Reserves.

Course Requirements and Grading

Your grade will be based on your performance in the following areas:

Attendance and Participation	20%
Reaction Papers (2)	10%
Mid-term Exam – Take home	20%
Research Paper, including précis, & presentation	30%
Final Exam	20%

Attendance and Participation: Class sessions will combine both lecture and discussion. Attendance and participation in class discussions are crucial parts of this course and will count towards 20% of your grade. You are expected to attend all class sessions and to come prepared to discuss the readings assigned for that day, as well as any films that are shown that week. More than **one** unexcused absence will result in a lowering of your participation grade and if you miss more than **three** classes during the semester (3 weeks) you will forfeit any points for attendance and participation. In addition to regular attendance, active participation in class discussions is important. I will keep a record of student participation and will refer to this when I calculate this portion of your final grade.

Reaction Papers: During the course of the semester you will write two brief reaction papers (2-4 double-spaced pages) on the assigned readings. For each set of readings, I will provide some key questions to help focus your reading and you may use these to structure your reaction papers as well. These reaction papers will be shared with the rest of the class and students will have the opportunity to briefly discuss their papers in class. Reaction papers *must either be posted on D2L or e-mailed to the class and to me by midnight of the day before the class for which the reading is assigned*. Barring some emergency, you must be in class to discuss your reaction paper on the assigned day. A sign-up sheet will be passed around at the beginning of the semester.

Research Paper Project: The major written assignment in the course is a 9-12 page research paper that explores a current international issue from the perspective of a Latin American actor (a particular country, regional organization, or sector of civil society). During the first half of the semester you will draft a brief paper proposal and at the end of the semester you will be expected to present your paper to the class. Detailed instructions, guidelines, and topic suggestions will be provided early on in the semester. Paper proposals will be due on **Thursday, October 23** (you will e-mail them to me) and I will return them to you with comments and suggestions in class on **October 28**. Final papers will be due in class on **December 2**. Half of two class sessions (**Nov. 25 & Dec. 2**) are set aside for student presentations.

Exams: The midterm will be a take-home exam due in class on **October 14**. The final will be an in-class exam and a study guide will be provided.

Current Events: We will begin each class by discussing current events in Latin America. Read the articles on Latin America in the *New York Times* each week and come prepared to discuss current events in the region in class. You can read the *New York Times* online for free at www.nytimes.com. Once during the course of the semester, each student will make a brief presentation at the beginning of class on an article of interest related to Latin American international affairs. A sign-up sheet will be passed around at the beginning of the semester. You will not be graded for this. In addition to the *New York Times*, other recommended newspapers with decent coverage of Latin America include: *The Los Angeles Times* and *The Guardian* (London), for a non-US perspective. If you read Spanish, *Pagina 12* (Argentina) and *La Jornada* (Mexico) are also excellent sources. All of these and most other major newspapers can be accessed for free on the web.

Movies: In an effort to bring to life the issues and events we will be studying, I will show several documentaries. At least one of these will be shown during class, but others will be shown outside of class. ***These movies are an important part of the curriculum, and viewing them is mandatory.*** If you cannot make an out-of-class screening please let me know so that we can make other arrangements for you to view the film.

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Week 1 - Introductions

9/2 – Introductions, Course Overview, and Key Concepts

Weeks 2-4 – Historical Legacies & Patterns

9/9 - Historical Legacies: Latin America's International Relations in the 19th & Early 20th Centuries

Reading: Smith, Introduction & Part I - "The Imperial Era"

9/16 – The Cold War in Latin America

Reading: Smith, Part II – "The Cold War"

9/23 – 1980s & 1990s: Economics Takes Center Stage & A Case Study of NAFTA

Readings:

1. Smith, Ch. 7 & pp. 257-262.
2. Alan Knight. 2005. "Empire, Hegemony and Globalization in the Americas." *NACLA: Report on the Americas*. Vol. 39, No. 2 (September/October 2005): 8-12. (D2L)
3. Christian Stracke. "Mexico – The Sick Man of NAFTA." *World Policy Journal*, Vol. 20 Issue 2 (Summer 2003): 29-36. (D2L)
4. *NACLA* (Sept./Oct. 2008) articles by David Bacon and Sergio Zermeno: "Displaced People" and "Desolation", pp. 23-32.

Weeks 5 & 6 – U.S. Covert Action in Chile and Human Rights Legacies

9/30 – U.S. Involvement in the Overthrow of Chilean Democracy & U.S. Relations with Pinochet

Reading: Kornbluh, Introduction and Chs. 1-4

**Film screening: "The Battle of Chile"*

10/7 - State Terrorism, Human Rights Advocacy Networks and International Law

Readings:

1. Kornbluh, Chs. 5 -7
2. Darren Hawkins. 2002. "Human Rights Norms & Networks in Authoritarian Chile." In *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks and Norms*, Sanjeev Khagram, James V. Riker, and Kathryn Sikkink, eds. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 47-70. (E-reserves)

Week 7 - MID-TERM EXAM & Plan Condor

10/14 – Mid-term and Movie

- No assigned readings
- **Take-Home Exam due in class**
- **In-class screening and discussion of "Death Squadrons" (Running time: 60 minutes)*

Week 8 - International Institutions and Democratization

10/21 –Inter-American & International Organizations

Readings:

1. G. Pope Atkins. 1999. *Latin America and the Caribbean in the International System, 4th Edition*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. Ch. 8 “The Inter-American System”, and pp. 242-254 in Ch. 9 “Global and Extraregional Arrangements.” (E-reserves)
2. Smith, Ch. 8, pp. 251-256 & 263-269.
3. Domingo E. Acevedo and Claudio Grossman. 1996. “The Organization of American States and the Protection of Democracy.” In *Beyond Sovereignty: Collectively Defending Democracy in the Americas*, Tom Farer, ed. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 132-149. (E-reserves)
4. Patricia Weiss Fagen. 1996. “El Salvador: Lessons in Peace Consolidation.” In *Beyond Sovereignty: Collectively Defending Democracy in the Americas*, Tom Farer, ed. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 213-237. (E-reserves)

Weeks 9-11 - Drugs and Democracy

10/28 – Drug Trafficking as an International Problem & U.S. Responses

Readings:

1. Youngers and Rosin, Chs. 1-3.
2. Smith, Ch. 8, pp. 241-251 and 269-272.

11/4 – Plan Colombia

Readings:

1. Youngers and Rosin, Ch. 4
2. Ricardo Vargas. 2004. “State, Esprit Mafioso, and Armed Conflict in Colombia.” In *Politics in the Andes*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, pp. 107-125. (E-reserves)
3. Robert B. Charles, from “U.S. Policy and Colombia,” Testimony Before Chairman Tom Davis and the House Committee on Government Reform (June 17, 2004). In Analisa DeGrave, Eva Santos-Phillips, and Jeff DeGrave, eds. *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Latin American Issues*. Dubuque, IA: McGraw-Hill Contemporary Learning Series, 2007. (E-reserves)

11/11 – The War on Drugs in Bolivia and the Rise of the *Cocalero* President

Readings:

1. Youngers and Rosin, Chs. 5 & 10.
2. James Rochlin. “Latin America’s Left Turn and the New Strategic Landscape: the case of Bolivia.” *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 7 (October 2007): 1327-1342. (E-reserves).
3. Simon Romero. “Bolivian Is an Uneasy Ally as U.S. Presses Drug War.” *New York Times*, August 29, 2008. (D2L)
4. Jennifer Collins. “‘Stalemate’ as Counter-Revolution in Bolivia.” NACLA: North American Congress on Latin America Website. August 25, 2008. <http://nacla.org/node/4931> (D2L)

**Film Screening: “Our Brand is Crisis” (Running time: 87 minutes)*

Weeks 12-14 – Beyond U.S. Hegemony?: Emerging Trends in the New Millennium & Student Presentations

11/18 – Bush & the New Latin American Left

Readings:

1. Smith, Chs. 10 & 11. Note: Focus more on chapter 11.
2. “Issue 2. Is Democracy Threatened by Social Unrest and the Rise of Latin America’s Left?” In Analisa DeGrave, Eva Santos-Phillips, and Jeff DeGrave, eds. *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Latin American Issues*. Dubuque, IA: McGraw-Hill Contemporary Learning Series (2007): 15-26. (E-reserves)
3. Mark Weisbrot. “Gap between Latin America and Washington still growing.” *ALAI, América Latina en Movimiento*. July 11, 2008. <http://alainet.org/active/24921> (D2L)

11/25 – I. Student Research Presentations

II. Latin American Integration: *La Patria Grande* at last?

Readings:

1. Smith, Ch. 9
2. Sean W. Burges. “Building a Global Southern Coalition: The Competing Approaches of Brazil’s Lula and Venezuela’s Chavez.” *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 7 (October 2007): 1343-1358. (D2L)
3. Mario E. Carranza. 2004. “Mercosur and the end game of the FTAA negotiations: challenges and prospects after the Argentine crisis.” *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (March): 319-337. (D2L)
4. Jared Ritvo. “Brazil Spearheads UNASUR Defense Council, but in a Surprise move, Colombia Withdraws.” Council on Hemispheric Affairs Website. May 28, 2008. <http://www.coha.org> (D2L)

12/2 – I. Student Research Presentations

II. Latin America’s Expanding Extra-Hemispheric Relations

Readings:

1. Jean B. Grugel. 2004. “New Regionalism and Modes of Governance – Comparing US and EU Strategies in Latin America.” *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (December 1): 603-626. (D2L)
2. He Li. “Red Star Over Latin America.” *NACLA: Report on the Americas*, Vol. 40, No. 5 (Sept./Oct. 2007): 23-27. (D2L)
3. Steve Ellner. “Toward a ‘Multipolar World’: Using Oil Diplomacy to Sever Venezuela’s Dependence.” *NACLA: Report on the Americas*, Vol. 40, No. 5 (Sept./Oct. 2007): 15-22. (D2L)
4. James C. McKinley Jr. 2005. “Mexico Builds Trade Ties with China.” *The New York Times*, September 13. (D2L)
5. Juan Forero. 2005. “China’s Oil Diplomacy in Latin America.” *The New York Times*, March 1, p. C6. (D2L)

Week 15 - Conclusions: Whither U.S.-Latin American Relations in a Post-Bush Era

12/9 –Workshop: What should a post-Bush era look like for U.S.-Latin American relations? What would you recommend to our next President?

Readings:

1. Smith, Ch. 12 & Conclusion
2. *NACLA* (Sept./Oct. 2008) article by Juan Gabriel Tokatlian, “A New Doctrine of Insecurity?,” pp. 6-10.

FINAL EXAM - TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 7:15-9:15 PM