

**CUYAMACA COLLEGE**  
**COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD**

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 145 – INTRODUCTION TO LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

3 hours lecture, 3 units

**Catalog Description**

This course provides an analysis of the politics and governance of selected Latin American countries. The course examines political and economic development of Latin America from independence to the present, structure and organization of governments, political participation, the role of religion, and civil-military relations. In addition, major developments in the area of political modernization, democratization, economic growth and modernization, questions of race and identity, and U.S.-Latin American Relations will be explored.

**Prerequisite**

None

**Course Content**

- 1) Recognize and evaluate goals, processes, and problems of government and politics in Latin America as articulated by individual leaders:
  - a. Leaders include Simon Bolivar, Porfirio Diaz, Fidel Castro, Hugo Chavez, Raul Prebisch, V Vicente Fox, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, and others.
- 2) Democracy in Latin America and how power is exercised.
  - a. Articulate and evaluate concepts including “pacted democracies” and questions of state scope and capacity in transitions to democracy (e.g., Mexico 2000-present).
  - b. Historical origins and continuing evolution of systems of government in Latin America to include an analysis of social movements, military governance, and transitions to and from democracy and authoritarianism.
  - c. Includes an analysis of the “Pink Tide” in the late 2000’s, the Bolivarian Revolution of the 1990’s-present in Venezuela, the “Junta” in Argentina during the 1970’s and 1980’s.
- 3) Authoritarian Regimes in Latin America
  - a. Analyze how authoritarian regimes come to and exercise power.
  - b. Military regimes in Latin America including the Argentinian Junta of the 1970’s and 1980’s
  - c. The origins of Military Coups in Latin America
  - d. Revolutionary regimes (including but not limited to Cuba)
  - e. PRI in Mexico in the 20th Century
- 4) The structure and functions governments of specific countries in Latin America:
  - a. Articulate and assess the role of “presidentialism” in Latin America by assessing the theory and key individuals in respective countries.
  - b. Describe and assess the role of the legislative and judicial branches of government in specific countries with a focus on assessing the separation and balance of power and institutional independence from the presidency.
  - c. Describe, criticize, and compare different structures of governance including democracy, authoritarian (from the political right and political left) and military governance.
- 5) Sources of political violence in the region:
  - a. The role of drug cartels in promulgating violence in Central America, Columbia, and Mexico (e.g., the FARC in Columbia, and the Sinaloa Cartel in Mexico)

- b. Revolutionary movements including the Wars of Independence (early 1800's), and social movements including Marxist organizations during the Cold War, and more recent movements in Venezuela (Bolivarian Revolution) and the "October Agenda" in Bolivia in the early 2000's.
- 6) Economic policy and Development:
- a. Historical and analytical exploration of colonialism and imperialism, Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI), neo-liberalism and austerity, socialism, and the role of volatile oil prices and its impact on social policy with an emphasis on Mexico and Venezuela.
- 7) U.S.-Latin American Relations
- a. Describe, categorize, and criticize the foreign policy of the United States towards Latin America from the 1800's to the Twenty-First Century
  - b. Emphasis will be given on the Monroe Doctrine, The Mexican American War (1846-1848), Spanish American War, Dollar Diplomacy, The Good Neighbor Policy, The Cold War, and Post old War Era, and economic integration including North America Free Trade Era.
  - c. Latin American governments foreign policy towards the United States including the diplomatic and military partnership during the Cold War, anti-drug policies, support for revolutionary movements, and widening economic relations beyond the Western Hemisphere.

### Course Objectives

Students will be able to:

- 1) Comprised of units to give perspectives on the origins, structure and function of Specific Governments and Politics in Latin America to include:
- a. Articulate, compare, and analyze through the use of social science methodology competing theories of political development in Latin America including colonialism, imperialism, armed conflict, and key individuals in shaping Latin American politics and institutions.
  - b. Describe and analyze Democratic political theory/development including different assessments of how political power is exercised in the Individual Latin American States.
  - c. Compare, analyze, and criticize through a comparative approach different forms of governance including democracy, authoritarianism, fascism, Marxism, and socialism.
  - d. Identify and evaluate competing theories and policies of economic development including Dependency Theory, Import Substitution Industrialization, Neo-liberalism, Modernization Theory, and oil and the creation of a "Rentier State."
  - e. Identify and evaluate the political role of specific groups and institutions including the military, religion, civil-society.
  - f. Identify and appraise U.S.-Latin American relations and competing foreign policies from the nineteenth through the twenty-first century.
  - g. Describe, compare, and appraise the impact of social movements and the role of identity in debates on social justice to include race, ethnicity, gender
  - h. Analyze and appraise the evolution of U.S. foreign policy and the roles played by the United States in Latin America from the Nineteenth to the Twenty-First Century.
    - 1. Describe, analyze, and evaluate the purpose of the Monroe Doctrine, Mexican-American War (1846- 1848), The Spanish American War (1898), The Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, Dollar Diplomacy, The Good Neighbor Policy, The Cold War, the Cuban Missile Crisis, Anti-Drug policies, and the Post-Cold War era.

### Method of Evaluation

A grading system will be established by the instructor and implemented uniformly. Grades will be based on demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter determined by multiple measurements for evaluation, one of which must be essay exams, skills demonstration or, where appropriate, the symbol system.

- 1) Quizzes and examinations, including a final exam: multiple choice, true/false questions, objective, and essay questions.

- 2) Research Paper: A semester long project where students research a question of their interest within the field of Latin American Politics and Government in which they apply social science methodology, learn to use Grossmont College Library Data Bases, and are mentored by the faculty.
- 3) Written Assignments: Written assignments include bi-weekly think pieces where students analyze and think about a particular topic in roughly two-to-three double-space pages.
- 4) Participation and Discussion: Students will be asked to evaluate and debate the themes and questions of a particular week as individuals or in a group structure during course.

### **Special Materials Required of Student**

None.

### **Minimum Instructional Facilities**

Standard classroom.

### **Method of Instruction**

- 1) Class discussions
- 2) Lecture
- 3) Multimedia presentations
- 4) Documentaries and Films
- 5) Guest lecturers

### **Out-of-Class Assignments**

- 1) Textbook reading.
- 2) Conducting research in preparation for written and/or oral projects on topics related to Latin American government and politics including, but not limited to, economic development, foreign policy, social justice, civil-military relations, religion, democracy, and authoritarianism.
- 3) Watch documentaries on specific course topics.

### **Texts and References**

- 1) Required (representative examples):
  - a. Smith, Peter H., and Ana Covarrubias. *Talons of the Eagle: Latin America, The United States, and the World*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2021.
  - b. Smith, Peter H., and James N. Green. *Modern Latin America*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2010.
  - c. Vanden, Harry and Gary Prevost. *Politics of Latin America: The Power Game*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2020
- 2) Supplemental: None

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Identify and analyze the structure of individual Latin American Governments (e.g., Cuba, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, etc.)
- 2) Assess the origins, evolution, and effectiveness of Latin American economic development from the period of colonization to the present era.
- 3) Identify the role of political ideologies and social movements have on shaping government and politics in the region.
- 4) Evaluate U.S.-Latin American relations from the Nineteenth to the Twenty-First Century with an examination of great power politics, imperialism, the Cold War, and Post-Cold War Era.
- 5) Identify and evaluate the historical, ideological, and structural sources of instability and political violence in the region from the colonial era to the present.
- 6) Identify the sources of political violence and transitions to democracy.