

**Room:** 101 Woodburn Hall

**Dates:** 01/11/16 - 04/29/16

**Time:** T & Th 1:00 PM-2:15 PM

**Professor:** Matthew Wilson

**Email:** mhwilson1@mix.wvu.edu

**Office:** 315D Woodburn Hall

**Office Hours:** T & Th 2:15-3:45 PM  
& by appointment

### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course provides a broad coverage of the political landscape of countries in Latin America. It involves comparing and contrasting institutions and aspects of government performance in different countries, and analyzing their differences against the backdrop of social and demographic attributes. The first part of the course introduces students to the dominant actors in Latin American politics and situates them within a general history of development in the region; the second part examines specific countries in greater detail and provides students with the contextual information to understand each country relative to others in the region. The goal of the course is to characterize the politics of the region as a whole, and at the same time to elucidate the unique paths of political development that each country has taken. As a result, students will better understand the intricacies of politics within Latin America, as well as the generalizability of politics in the region.

### EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

As a result of the class, students will be able to:

- Develop a working knowledge of historical and contextual specificities in Latin America
- Identify dominant actors and institutions in Latin American politics
- Critically evaluate the similarities and differences of governments in Latin America

### READING MATERIALS (Required):

- Wiarda, Howard J. and Harvey F. Kline. 2006. *A Concise Introduction to Latin American Politics and Development*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. Second edition.
- Skidmore, Thomas E., Peter H. Smith, and James N. Green. 2013. *Modern Latin America*. New York: Oxford University Press. Eighth edition.

Additional readings will be available online or through the West Virginia University library.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** Students are expected to

- (1) read assigned materials **before** the start of each class;
- (2) attend all lectures and participate in in-class exercises;
- (3) complete two in-class exams;

*Exams will be a combination of multiple choice and short answer based on the readings*

- (4) construct a detailed timeline of political events for one country

*Each student will be assigned one country to research and will be required to track executive changes, major conflicts, constitutions, and notable laws that affected political development. (More information will be provided separately.)*

### GRADES:

Two in-class exams @ 20% (40%); Country timeline (50%); Participation (10%) = 100%

*(Student's participation grade is determined by pop-quizzes and in-class responses)*

A: 90-100; B: 80-89.9; C: 70-79.9; D: 60 to 69.9; F: 0-59.9

**CLASS RULES:**

1. The use of cell phones is **not** permitted.
2. Computers are allowed to take notes **only**.
3. Please do **not** read outside materials.
4. Sleeping in class is **not** allowed.
5. Grades will **not** be changed if an issue is reported after two weeks have passed.

**FINE PRINT:**

Academic Integrity. The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the West Virginia University Academic Catalog at <http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/coursecreditstermsclassification/#academicintegritytext>. Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see me before the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

Adverse Weather Commitment. In the event of inclement or threatening weather, everyone should use his or her best judgment regarding travel to and from campus. Safety should be the main concern. If you cannot get to class because of adverse weather conditions, you should contact me as soon as possible. Similarly, if I am unable to reach our class location, I will notify you of any cancellation or change as soon as possible (at least one hour before class starts), using MIX to prevent you from embarking on any unnecessary travel. If you cannot get to class because of weather conditions, I will make allowances relative to required attendance policies, as well as any scheduled tests, quizzes, or other assessments.

Inclusivity. The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Accessibility Services (293-6700). For more information on West Virginia University's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, please see <http://diversity.wvu.edu>.

Sexual Misconduct and Resources. West Virginia University (WVU) does not tolerate sexual misconduct, including harassment, stalking, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, or relationship violence [BOG Policy 44]. It is important for you to know that there are resources available if you or someone you know needs assistance. You may speak to a member of university administration, faculty, or staff, but keep in mind that they have an obligation to report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator. If you want to speak to someone who is permitted to keep your disclosure confidential, please seek assistance from the Carruth Center, 304-293-9355 or 304-293-4431 (24-hour hotline), and locally within the community at the Rape and Domestic Violence Information Center (RDVIC), 304-292-5100 or 304-292-4431 (24-hour hotline).

Veterans. In accordance with the "Veteran Friendly" designation, WVU faculty may allow students who are members of the US Armed Forces to make up tests and assignments that are missed during a semester if the student is officially called up for military service requirements for a limited period; and if the delayed coursework completion will not irreversibly impact the students' ability to appropriately master the required subject matter.

**CLASS SCHEDULE:<sup>1</sup>**

**I. Actors and Interactions in Latin America**

*Introduction to Latin American Politics*

**01/12** *Introduction*

Wiarda and Kline, Chapter 1

*The History of Latin America*

**01/14** Wiarda and Kline, Chapter 2

**01/19** [No class]

Read: Skidmore et al., Chapter 2

Assignment: Online quiz

**01/21** [No class]

Assignment: Work on timeline

*Major actors in Latin America*

**01/26** Wiarda and Kline, Chapter 4

**01/28** (*Additional reading to be determined*)

**02/02** Wiarda and Kline, Chapter 5

**02/04** (*Additional reading to be determined*)

**02/09** Wiarda and Kline, Chapter 6

**02/11** (*Additional reading to be determined*)

**02/16** Wiarda and Kline, Chapter 7

**02/18** (*Additional reading to be determined*)

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**02/23** *Study session;*

*Part I of timeline assignment due*

**02/25** Midterm Exam

**II. Country Profiles**

*Mexico and Central America*

**03/01** Skidmore et al., Chapter 3

**03/03** Skidmore et al., Chapter 4

*The Andes*

**03/08** Skidmore et al., Chapter 6

**03/10** (*Additional reading to be determined*)

*Colombia and Venezuela*

**03/15** Skidmore et al., Chapter 7

**03/17** Skidmore et al., Chapter 8

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**03/22** [Spring Recess]

**03/24** [Spring Recess]

*Argentina and Chile*

**03/29** Skidmore et al., Chapter 9

**03/31** Skidmore et al., Chapter 10

*Uruguay and Paraguay*

**04/05** (*Additional reading to be determined*)

**04/07** [No class]

Assignment: Work on timeline

*Brazil*

**04/12** Skidmore et al., Chapter 11

**04/14** (*Additional reading to be determined*)

*The Caribbean*

**04/19** Skidmore et al., Chapter 5

**04/21** (*Additional reading to be determined*)

*Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana*

**04/26** (*Additional reading to be determined*)

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**04/28** *Study session;*

*Part II of timeline assignment due*

**TBD** Final exam

<sup>1</sup>Students are responsible for knowing both university and course schedules.

The academic calendar is available at: [http://provost.wvu.edu/academic\\_calendar](http://provost.wvu.edu/academic_calendar).