POLI 134D Topics/Latin American Politics
Fall 2018

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9:00AM-9:50AM
Warren Lecture Hall, Room 2113

Politics, Policies, and Economic Prosperity in Latin America

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Office Hours: Monday 11:00AM-1:00PM, office SSB #365.

Course Description

This course focuses on the political economy of Latin America. We will examine the development policies followed by the countries in the region. Following a review of simple economic models of growth, we will analyze the track record of Latin American economies. Finally, we will discuss how public policies and political institutions affect economic prosperity.

Format

The class will meet three times per week for the duration of the quarter. Each meeting will be devoted to a new theme/idea. Every topic presented in class is paired with one required reading. The lectures will review the concepts discussed in these readings, but should be taken neither as a duplication nor as a substitute for them. In other words, you should not assume that because you came to class, you can skip the readings, and/or that because you made the readings you may not attend the lectures.

Assignments

Each week students are expected to read the materials. The formal examinations consist of a mid-term exam in week five and a final exam at the end of the term. The midterm exam accounts for 35% of the final grade and the final exam accounts for 50% of the final grade. Discussion and general class participation accounts for the remaining 15%. Extensions, incompletes, etc. will be given in accordance with UCSD policy. Except under very pressing circumstances, they will be discouraged.
Course Policies

Academic Integrity. Students in this course are expected to comply with UCSD’s Policy on Integrity of Scholarship. In particular, plagiarism is considered a dishonest practice and a serious academic offense. Hence, there will be a zero tolerance policy with respect to these practices: any student violating the obligation of academic integrity during the term will automatically fail the class. Copies of the current version of the UCSD Policy on Integrity of Scholarship, also commonly referred to as the Academic Dishonesty Policy, may be found on the Academic Senate webpage: http://www-senate.ucsd.edu/AcademicIntegrity/AcademicIntegrity.htm

Disabilities. If you have a disability that requires special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications, you need to notify both me and the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). You may be asked to provide documentation of your disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations. To notify the OSD, call (858) 534-4382 to schedule an appointment.

Course Materials

Readings for weeks 1-3 are drawn from the following book (available for purchase):


Additional readings come from articles available online through the UCSD Library System (marked in this syllabus by *). Finally, some others are drawn from book chapters and non-electronic journals. These readings (marked by **) can be downloaded from the course’s Ted webpage.

Course Outline and Readings

Week 0 (September 28)

Introduction

Week 1 (October 1 - October 5)

October 1: The Quest for Prosperity
October 3: Mechanics of Growth I (Easterly, ch. 2)
October 5: Mechanics of Growth II (Easterly, ch. 3)
Week 2 (October 8 - October 12)

October 8: Increasing Returns (Easterly, ch.8)
October 10: Technological Change (Easterly, ch. 9)
October 12: Contextual Factors (Easterly, ch.10)

Week 3 (October 15 - October 19)

October 15: Politics, Policies and the Economy
October 17: Bad Governments (Easterly, ch. 11)
October 19: Predatory Governments (Easterly, ch. 12)

Week 4 (October 22 - October 26)

October 22: Latin America’s track record
October 24: Populism
October 26: The Washington Consensus

Week 5 (October 29 - November 2)

October 29: Argentina’s economic implosion

Documentary – The empty ATM

October 31: Review Session

November 2: Midterm Exam
Week 6 (November 5 - November 9)

November 5: The “Pink Tide”

November 7: Economic Policies I

November 9: Economic Policies II

Week 7 (November 14 - November 17)

November 12: NO CLASS - VETERANS DAY HOLIDAY

November 14: The Great Recession

November 15: Routes to Growth

Week 8 (November 19 - November 21)

November 19: Sustaining Prosperity

November 21: Informal Economy
November 23: NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Week 9 (November 26 - November 30)

November 26: Argentina, once again

November 28: Rethinking Reforms I

November 30: Rethinking Reforms II

Week 10 (December 3 - December 7)

December 3: Policymaking

December 5: Institutions

December 7: Final Overview

Final Exam: *Wednesday December 12 - 08:00AM - 10:59AM*