

**(PALAS 360) Political and Social Change in Latin America:
Pursuing Democracy and Identity
between Underdevelopment and Globalization**

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Program in Argentinean and Latin American Studies
Universidad de Belgrano
Course Syllabus 2025-1

Course Information

Discussion session: Monday 10:00 am – 11:30 pm BA time
Lecture session: Wednesday 10:00 am – 11:30 pm BA time

Hours of Instruction: 60

Instruction in English

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Course Description

This survey course focuses on the instrumental role that the dynamics of political and social change have had in the formation of the national identity of the Latin American countries. Students will get familiar not only with the various institutional systems and political parties of selected countries but also with the social processes of strong popular participation that led to the establishment of democracy, to its recovery from authoritarian regimes, and to its current vibrant dynamics that include the emergence of autonomous, new social movements. The course also addresses the role that citizenship and institutions have played to manage the heritage that the succession of civilian-military dictatorships has left on national memory. Failed or incomplete attempts for industrialization and development have determined that most of the region is currently joining the mundialization process in the stage of economic underdevelopment and social exclusion. While the course is organized on a historical approach, the bulk of the study focuses on the period between post-World War II and the present, drawing on various national sources—academic texts, primary sources, and film and media resources—that include the cases of Mexico, Brasil, Chile, Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia, and Argentina, among others.

Course Requirements

Following UB policies, students need a minimum of 75% of attendance to be in good standing for the final exam. This course will be taught remotely. The teaching dynamics will include an asynchronous weekly lecture available online previously at UB

Campus Virtual <https://campus.ub.edu.ar/login/index.php>. Also, there will be a synchronous weekly lecture every Monday at 11:30-13:00 BA time, focusing on open discussion of key concepts of the lecture as well as on the interpretation of specific case studies.

The course evaluation will seek various instances and formats to adapt to and profit from remote teaching, including forum participation, individual online presentations of text reviews, production of short records, brief reports on a specific case study, a midterm exam, and a final exam.

Students are expected to do close readings of the required bibliography and documents in order to participate in class actively. Wikipedia is not an acceptable source for research. UB holds to the view that plagiarism constitutes intellectual theft and is a serious breach of acceptable conduct. Any student caught plagiarizing will immediately be given a "no credit" for all courses taken in the semester. The teaching process, through theoretical and practical activities, seeks to stimulate active and reflexive, individual and group participation through critical reading.

Grading Policy

Participations, presentations and reports	20%
Midterm exam	40%
Final exam	40%

For a better understanding of the comparable table for grading: check the student handbook (page 9) in orientation kit packet.

Course Content:

Unit 1: The political system of a new society (1810-1920)

The crisis of the Spanish Colonial Empire, the Spanish heritage, and the formation of the new republics. The emergence of new regional political units: Caudillos, regional differences, ethnic groups, and the formation of a new society in the oligarchic republics. Modernization, urbanization, and democratization: European immigration, new ideologies and political parties, emerging social actors, and a modern identity.

Unit 2: Populism (1920-1955)

Local transformations within the impact of the international cyclical crises. The emergence of Populism: organized labor, imports substitution, Nationalism, and the State; Peronismo, Varguismo, Ibañismo, and Cardenismo. Ideological dynamics within Populism: Revolution or Reform? Upward social mobility, the new middle classes, and the emergence of youth.

Unit 3: Authoritarianism (1955-1985)

Limits to the social transformation within the context of the Cold War. The Bureaucratic Authoritarian State. Crisis in the industrialist alliance: military intervention, social repression, and the search for sustainable growth. The Doctrine of National Security: foreign military intervention and resistance movements. Wars of national/popular liberation and anti-Imperialism. The radicalization of moderate social and political actors. Increasing social and regional polarization.

Unit 4: Redemocratization (1985-present)

New power relations in the emerging democracies through the structural transformation of globalization. The human rights movement and the heritage of State terrorism. The cyclical debt crises as an expression of class tension and imperial domination. The search for sustainable development. The new agenda: ecology, regional migration, drugs and money laundering, social polarization and exclusion. The search for a continental identity.

Academic Calendar

5 March / Week 1

The Encounter: Tensions in the Colonial society

Lecture session: John Charles Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire

Chapter 1

Discussion session: John Charles Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire

Chapter 2

For all units, annotated historical sources available in:

Gabriela Nouzeilles & G. Montaldo (eds.), The Argentina Reader.

(Duke UP, 2002)

<https://www.dukeupress.edu/the-argentina-reader>

Robert Levine & John Crocitti (eds.), The Brazil Reader (Duke UP, 1999)

<https://www.dukeupress.edu/the-brazil-reader>

Gilbert Joseph & Timothy Henderson (eds.), The Mexico Reader (Duke UP, 2003)

<https://www.dukeupress.edu/the-mexico-reader>

Orin Starn, Robin Kirk & C. Degregori (eds.), The Peru Reader (Duke UP, 2005)

<https://www.dukeupress.edu/the-peru-reader>

Carlos De la Torre & Steven Striffler (eds.), The Ecuador Reader (Duke UP, 2009)

<https://www.dukeupress.edu/the-ecuador-reader>

10 March / Week 2

The Crisis of independence and the Challenges of Post-Independence

Lecture session:

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise II-5

John Charles Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire Chapter 3 - 4

Discussion session:

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise II-5

John Charles Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire Chapter 5 - 6

17 March / Week 3

Progress and the Neocolonial Order

Lecture session:

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise II-6

John Charles Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire Chapter 7

Discussion session:

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise II-6

John Charles Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire Chapter 8a

24 March / Week 4

The Nationalist Reaction and Populism

Lecture session:

Holiday

Discussion session:

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise II-6

John Charles Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire Chapter 8b

31 March / Week 5

Authoritarianism

Lecture session:

Leslie Bethell, "From the Second World War to the Cold War: 1944-1954," in Lowenthal (ed.), Exporting Democracy

Discussion session:

Holiday

7 April / Week 6

Redemocratization

Lecture session:

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise II-6

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise III-7

Discussion session:

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise III-8

John Charles Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire Chapter 9

14 April / Week 7

Redemocratization

Lecture session:

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise III-8

John Charles Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire Chapter 10

Discussion session:

Karen Remner, "The Political Impact of Economic Crises in Latin America in the 1980s," The American Political Science Review 85:3 (Sept 1991) 777-800

Judith Teichman, "Latin America in the Era of Globalization," University of Toronto, CIS Working Paper, 2001-02

21 April / Week 8

Neoliberalism

Lecture session: **Midterm**

Discussion session:

Dello Buono & J. B. Lara, "Neoliberalism and Resistance in LA," José Bell Lara & Delia López, "The Harvest of Neoliberalism in LA," in Richard Dello Buono & José Bell Lara, Imperialism, Neoliberalism, and Social Struggles in Latin America

28 April / Week 9

Lecture session:

Oliver Stone, Film "South of the Border"

Discussion session:

Comments on Oliver Stone, Film "South of the Border"

5 May / Week 10

Neoliberalism

Lecture session:

Susan Gratius, "The Third Wave of Populism in Latin America," Fride, Working Paper 45 (Octubre 2007)

Discussion session:

De la Torre & Arnson, "Meaning and Future of LatAm Populism,"

in Carlos De la Torre & Arnson, Latin Am Populism in the 21st Century
Pía Rigirozzi & Grugel, "Post Neoliberalism: Rebuilding and Reclaiming
the State in Latin America," Unpublished working document

12 May / Week 11

Country presentation-Mexico and Central America

Lecture session:

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise VI

Discussion session:

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise VI

19 May/ Week 12

Country presentation-Cuba and the Caribbean

Lecture session:

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise VII

Discussion session:

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise VII

26 May / Week 13

Country presentation-The Andean Region

Lecture session:

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise VIII

Discussion session:

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise VIII

2 June / Week 14

The Southern Cone

Lecture session:

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise IX

Discussion session:

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise IX

9 June / Week 15

Lecture session: **Final exam**

Final Grade & Signature of *Hoja de situación* (attendance is mandatory)".
Students with a hold on the Student Visa will not be allowed to final exams

Discussion session: Course closure

Bibliography

Jan Knippers Black, Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise (New York: Routledge, 2010)

John Charles Chasteen, Born in Blood and Fire: A Concise History of Latin America (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001)

Bradford Burns, Latin America: Conflict and Creation (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1993)

Daniel James, Resistance and Integration (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988)

John Charles Chasteen and Joseph S. Tulchin (eds.), Problems in Modern Latin American History: A Reader (Wilmington: Scholarly Res., 1994)

Richard Dello Buono & José Bell Lara, Imperialism, Neoliberalism, and Social Struggles in Latin America (New York: Haymarket Books, 2009)

Carlos De la Torre & Cynthia Arnson, Latin American Populism in the 21st Century (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2013)

Cardoso, Fernando Enrique & Enzo Faletto, Dependency and Development in Latin America Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979)

Galeano, Eduardo. Las venas abiertas de América Latina (Buenos Aires:

Sudamericana, 1973)

Halperín Donghi, Tulio. Contemporary History of Latin America (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987)

Gilbert Joseph and Timothy Henderson, ed. The Mexico Reader. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002)

Levine, Robert M & John Crocitti, ed. The Brazil Reader. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003)

Chomsky Aviva et al. The Cuba Reader. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003)

Nouzeilles, Gabriela and Graciela Montaldo, ed. The Argentina Reader. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002)

Starn et al. The Peru Reader. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005)

Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley, Guerrillas & Revolution in Latin America, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992)