CPO 3033 Latin American Politics
Spring 2003, Florida Gulf Coast University

Panorama of Sao Paulo, Brazil

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Internet Resources
http://itech.fgcu.edu/faculty/rcoughlin/sites.htm - a list of sites on global studies annotated and compiled by Richard Coughlin.
The Americas ICONS simulation website Note – we are simulation Americas 2003b. Our password in “sunsphere”
Bibliography for ICONS simulation
Brazil’s Washington Embassy.

Course Website
http://itech.fgcu.edu/faculty/rcoughlin/cpo3033s03.htm

Course Listserv
crn10899@eagle.fgcu.edu

Further Study in Political Science or Global Studies:
Political Science Major
Global Studies Minor

Required Texts:
Vanden and Prevost, The Politics of Latin America (Oxford University Press, 2001)
Place, ed., Tropical Rainforests, second edition (Scholarly Resources, 2002)

Course Notes:
Argentina; Mexico; Cuba

Overview of the Course
This course is an introduction to contemporary Latin America. It presumes no prior background knowledge about the region. The course begins with an historical, cultural, political and economic overview of the region. Following this introduction, we turn our attention to case studies on Latin American states and preparation for the ICONs simulation. The simulation, which occurs from 3/24 to 4/11, will engage our class in online interactions between other classes at other colleges and universities. We will be representing the countries of Cuba and Brazil in the simulation. The focus of discussion will be negotiations are shared approaches to issues of environmental sustainability, drug trafficking, and economic integration.

**Main Questions Posed in this Course:**

1. Why is Latin America poor in comparison with the United States?
2. What is the nature of Latin America’s relationship with the United States? Is it based on conflict and domination or cooperation?
3. Latin American is not a homogenous region. What are the key political, economic, and cultural differences between the major states in the region? And how do these differences explain the different paths of development followed by these countries?
4. What is the future of the region? Can it overcome its current problems? Is progress possible?

**Major Assignments**

1. Current events report: on Tuesdays we will do current events report. Each student is required to do one report. The report involves bringing three news stories on Latin America and briefly reported on them. To earn credit for this assignment, submit copies of the articles to the instructor.
2. Class presentation: each of you will prepare a 10 to 15 minute class presentation on one of the topics that we will be discussing in this course. Each presentation must be structured as an answer to one of the major questions posed in this class. Be ready to answer questions during the course of your presentation.
3. Mid-term examination: there will be a midterm examination that will focus on linking together different aspects of Latin America’s historical, political, economic and cultural realities in order to understand the present.
4. ICONs simulation position paper: as the ICONs simulation begins, you will develop, collaboratively, a position paper on your country’s approach (Brazil or Cuba) to one of the topics to be discussed in the ICONs simulation.
   1. Statement of Brazil’s positions
   2. Position paper assignment
5. ICONs portfolio: the purpose of the ICONs portfolio will be for you to demonstrate the connections between reflection, research, and participation in the scenario. Maintain a
journal that includes reflections on the simulation, research undertaken to participate more effectively in the simulation and interventions into the simulation that stem from your research and reflections.

6. **Final Exam**: the point of the final exam is to engage in comparative analysis of Latin American countries. How can the different paths of development illustrated by the case studies be understood in terms of both internal differences and the way in which countries have linked themselves to the global economy?

### Grading

1. Current events report                20 points  
2. Class presentation                     25 points  
3. Mid term                                  100 points  
4. ICONs position paper              50 points  
5. ICONs portfolio                       50 points  
6. Final Examination                      100 points  

Your grade will be based on the percentage of these points that you accumulate, based on the following scale: 93-100 = A; 90-93 = A-; 88-90 = B+; 83-88 = B; 80-83 = B-; 78-80 = C+; 73-78 = C; 70-73 = C-; 68-70 = D+; 63-67 = D; 60-63 = D-; below 60 = F.

Class participation is highly encouraged. Meaningful and consistent class participation over the course of the semester may add up to 2 points to your overall grade percentage in the course.

### Course Policies

1. Consistent class attendance is essential to success in this class. You are allowed three unexcused absences. After that point, each unexcused absence will result in 5 percentage points being dropped from your final grade.
2. Excused absences are for family emergencies and personal health reasons. Unexcused absences include missing class for work, to study for other classes, or to run errands.
3. Quizzes and small group work exercises will be periodically given. If you are absent, for whatever reason, you will receive a zero on these assignments. If the absence is excused, the zero will not count against your grade.
4. No incompletes for this class will be given except in the case of dire personal or family emergencies that make it impossible for you to complete this class within the academic calendar.
5. Except in the case of dire family or health emergencies, there will be no make up examinations given. If you miss class on the day of the exam, you will get a zero.
6. This syllabus will be maintained and updated on line over the course of the semester.
You are expected to follow the online version of the syllabus. There will be numerous
electronic and reserve readings. These may be easily accessed from the online syllabus.
7. Class participation is highly encouraged. Meaningful and consistent class participation
over the course of the semester may add up to 2 points to your overall grade percentage in
the course. Non-participation, on the other hand, is not penalized.
8. Plagiarism is a rampant problem on college campuses. You are to read the following
links on plagiarism. You will be tested on them. Papers with serious instances of
plagiarism will earn grades of zero.
   a. A Statement on Plagiarism
   b. Plagiarism: What It is and How to Recognize and Avoid It

Course schedule

Note that VP refers to Vanden and Prevost’s Politics of Latin America

1/14
Introduction to the course

1/16
Latin America as it is
VP, ch. 1
Response to main question – 1-2 pages long. (worth 10 points)

1/21
Historical background – Conquest, Colonization, and National Independence
VP, ch. 2-3

1/23
Cultural context – race and ethnicity
VP, ch. 4

1/28
Cultural context – gender, religion, political culture
VP, ch. 5-6

1/30
Political Economy
VP, ch 7 and Teivainen, “Politics of Latin American Debt Crises”

2/4
Politics of Control
VP, ch. 7 and Sherman, “The Politics of Control”

2/6
Revolutionary Social Change
VP, ch. 8

2/11
Overflow class

2/13
Take home exam 1

2/18
Case Study: Brazil

2/20
More on Brazil – reserve readings: Geisa Maria Rocha, “Neo-Dependency in Brazil” and the Economist on Lula (articles from 2/1/03 and 2/15/03.

2/25
Place, Tropical Rainforests
Ch. 3-8

2/27
Place, Tropical Rainforests
Ch. 9-12
Presentation - MIMI

3/4
Place, Tropical Rainforests
Ch. 14, 15, 18, 19, 20, 23
Presentation: AMANDA

3/6
Developmental Essay, part 2 due

3/18
Narco-Diplomacy and the War on Drugs
Readings, TBA
3/20
Economic Integration
Readings, TBA
Presentation: RACHEL

3/25
ICONS simulation begins – group work (develop strategies for the week)
    Position papers due

3/27
Case Study – Mexico
VP, ch. 11

4/1
ICONS simulation – group work (develop strategies for the week)

4/3
Case Study – Argentina
VP, ch. 13
Presentation: KERRY

4/8
ICONS simulation – group work (develop strategies for the week)

4/10
Case Study – Cuba
VP, ch. 12
Presentation: KELLY

4/15
ICONS portfolio - due

4/17
Case Study – Chile
VP, ch. 15

4/22
Case Study – Guatemala
VP, ch. 10
Conclusions – Whither Latin America
Developmental essay, part 3 due

Exam Week – Final Exam

Websites on the Americas:

**The Miami Herald:** Miami is often termed the capital of Latin America. It has large emigrant communities from the Caribbean, Central American and the South American continent. Accordingly, its coverage of the Americas surpasses that of any other major newspaper. [http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/world/americas/](http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/world/americas/)

The **Council on Hemispheric Affairs** (COHA), a nonprofit, tax-exempt independent research and information organization, was founded at the end of 1975 to promote the common interest of the hemisphere, raise the visibility and increase the importance of the inter-American relationship, as well as encourage the formulation of rational and constructive U.S. policies towards Latin America. In 1982, COHA's board of trustees voted to expand its mandate to include monitoring Canadian/Latin American relations. Since its inception, COHA has been one of the most active and broadest-based U.S. private bodies dealing with the entire spectrum of political, economic and diplomatic issues, as well as the economic and political challenges confronting the nations of this hemisphere. [http://www.coha.org/](http://www.coha.org/)

The **Washington Office on Latin America:** Since 1975, when WOLA worked behind the scenes to write the first major legislation conditioning U.S. military aid abroad on human rights practices, WOLA has played a key role in all major Washington policy debates over human rights in Latin America. Today, WOLA staff are called upon regularly to provide information and analysis to the Clinton administration, to multilateral organizations, to members of Congress, and to U.S. and Latin American media. The views of WOLA are important to consider with respect to Plan Colombia. [http://www.wola.org/](http://www.wola.org/)

**School of the Americas Watch:** The US Army School of Americas, based in Fort Benning, Georgia, trains Latin American soldiers in combat, counter-insurgency, and counter-narcotics. Graduates of the SOA have been responsible for some of the worst human rights abuses in Latin America. [http://www.soaw.org/](http://www.soaw.org/)

**Sweatshop Watch:** Sweatshop Watch is a coalition of labor, community, civil rights, immigrant
rights, women's, religious & student organizations, and individuals committed to eliminating sweatshop conditions in the global garment industry. We believe that workers should be earning a living wage in a safe and decent working environment, and that those who benefit the most from the exploitation of sweatshop workers must be held accountable. [http://www.sweatshopwatch.org/](http://www.sweatshopwatch.org/)

**Resource Center of the Americas:** The Resource Center of the Americas provides information and develops programs that demonstrate the connections between the people of Latin America, the Caribbean, and the United States. For more than fifteen years we have built bridges across communities, highlighting the voices of the silenced and ignored. The Resource Center looks forward to continuing that work by defending human rights in the era of globalization. This site contains a great deal of current news reports from Latin America as well as issue analysis, including environmental, drug war and the global economy, the major topics covered in our simulation. [http://www.americas.org/](http://www.americas.org/)

**Global Trade Watch:** A part of the universe of Ralph Nader inspired public interest research groups, Global Trade Watch opposes recent trade agreements such as NAFTA, the WTO and the proposed FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas). Global Trade Watch is an important and informed voice on these agreements. [http://www.citizen.org/pctrade/tradehome.html](http://www.citizen.org/pctrade/tradehome.html)

**Readings on IMF and World Bank Reform:** From the Asian Crisis Home Page, the debate consists of official statements from key actors within these institutions and within the U.S. government. Also included are contributions by some of the NGOs calling for reform. [http://www.stern.nyu.edu/globalmacro/](http://www.stern.nyu.edu/globalmacro/) (go to IMF and World Bank Reform).

**The Development GAP:** An NGO critical of structural adjustment policies enacted by the IMF and World Bank. Good material on Latin America. The Development Gap has also been a prominent critic of IMF sponsored debt relief. [http://www.igc.org/dgap/](http://www.igc.org/dgap/)

**The Organization of America States (OAS),** a regional organization that addresses a wide range of issues of common concern to the Americas. Article one of the OAS charter reads: “The American States establish by this Charter the international organization that they have developed to achieve an order of peace and justice, to promote their solidarity, to strengthen their collaboration, and to defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity, and their independence. Within the United Nations, the Organization of American States is a regional agency.” [http://www.oas.org/](http://www.oas.org/)
