COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Striking political changes have swept Latin America since the 1980s: dictatorships fell, transitions to democracy took place and democracy has since seen ups and downs. What explains transitions from authoritarian regimes to democracies? Why do some democracies survive and others break down? What are some of the key pressing political issues in contemporary Latin America? We will discuss issues and patterns that affect the region as a whole, but we will focus on certain countries (Argentina, Mexico, Chile, Brazil and Venezuela, among others) to examine in more detail some of these trends. As a central part of our course we will watch and analyze movies and a documentary that are related to some of the political processes we study. To create a space for this critical inquiry, you will acquire basic tools to conduct film analysis. These tools will allow you to see these pieces not as historically accurate representations but to critique them as social, political and cultural products of their times.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

* Distinguish key concepts in political science (democracy, authoritarianism, regime change, political inclusion and political participation, amongst others) and use them to explain and analyze politics in Latin America.
* Sharpen your reading and writing skills by engaging with original social science research.
* Develop analytical skills that will help you think critically and independently about politics.
* Creatively and critically engage with some visual representations of Latin American Politics.

Left: Joaquín Torres García. Uruguay. “América Invertida” (1943)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Required Books (available on amazon.com and thriftbooks.com):
Both books are also under reserve at the Hatfield Library.

Additional readings will be made available on WISE. This is an advanced upper-level seminar: we will read original social science research and we will read a lot. Please bring a printed copy of the day's reading to class.
Willamette’s Credit Hour Policy holds that for every hour of class time there is an expectation of 2-3 hours work outside of class. You should anticipate spending at least 6-9 hours outside of class engaged in course-related activities.

Grading Policy:
Your final grade in this course will be broken down as follows:

Active Participation (includes short response papers and leading discussions) 25%
Mid-term 25%
2 Film Analysis Papers 25%
Final 25%

Grading Scale:
A = 95-100  C+ = 77-79
A- = 90-94  C = 74-76
B+= 87-89  C- = 70-73
B = 84-86  D = 60-69
B- = 80-83  F = 0-59

Short Response Papers (450 words max): Each student will write three short response papers exploring questions raised by the readings for a class session. Response papers help you work through the readings, prepare for the exams and give me a chance to provide you with feedback on your writing. They are due in hard copy at the beginning of class. Late response papers will not be accepted.

Mid-term and Final Exam: Both exams will consist of analytical essays.

Viewing the Films: I will organize informal group screenings for two of the longer films on Thursday nights and we will watch one of the shorter films during class time. You are responsible for watching two of the films outside of regular class time and coming prepared to discuss them. Copies of the first three movies are under reserve in the library—a link for online access to the documentary (The Revolution will not be Televised) will be posted to WISE.

You should read the required readings that pertain to a film before you watch it. This means that you may encounter “spoilers,” but it is important that you anticipate the key scenes, characters, and images emphasized by the authors. Take notes when you are watching (see the Corrigan reading for tips on how to do this.) Remember that our task as scholars is not to determine whether a movie is good or bad, but to analyze how a film works and what it means.

Film Analysis papers (1,300 words max): You are asked to choose two of the first four films we will watch and write a short paper on each. In these papers you will analyze the film/documentary and link it with our discussions about Latin American politics. We will talk about the format of this assignment in class.

Optional: If you would like to drop the grade on one of your two film papers, you can write a third paper on a different film. The grade on your third paper will be averaged with your lowest of the other two. You can choose a third film to write on from among those assigned as part of our course or from those posted in the “Recommended Films” document on WISE. You are responsible for locating recommended films.
All written work should be submitted in the following format: Times New Roman, 12 pts, double-spaced, 1 inch margins. Please use in text citations (Author Year) following the Chicago Style and include a word count.

Attendance and Participation: Attendance does not equal participation. Classes are driven by group discussion; reading all the material and watching the films is the minimum you need to do. I expect everyone to come prepared to class, contribute at least once during every session, listen actively and respectfully, asking questions.

Each student is allowed three unexcused absences throughout the semester. More than three unexcused absences will result in your grade being lowered by a full grade (e.g.: B to C). Excused absences will only be granted in cases of documented medical illness and documented emergencies. If you observe a religious holy day or participate in a scheduled university-sponsored event that prevents you from attending class, please notify me by the second week of class (or as soon as possible). Should you need to miss a class, it is your responsibility to inform me and stay on track according to the syllabus. If you are late to class, I reserve the right to count you as absent.

COURSE POLICIES:

Academic Integrity: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. If you have any questions about properly referencing work, come to my office hours and/or look here: http://libguides.willamette.edu/c.php?g=56952&p=370307. All students are bound by Willamette’s Academic Policies and Procedures, available here: http://www.willamette.edu/cla/catalog/resources/policies/index.php.

Classroom climate: I expect students to engage one another with respect, courtesy, and sensitivity inside and outside the classroom. In this class we will touch upon contentious topics: one of our main tasks is to learn to respectfully engage with different opinions and with other people’s perspectives. Discussions will be a very important part of our class: together we will come up with guidelines for these. I welcome your ideas and suggestions about how to foster a diverse and inclusive learning environment.

Cell phones/computer use: Texting, chatting and browsing distract you from what is going on in the classroom and they distract those around you. Cell phones and laptops are not allowed. If you require a laptop for note-taking, contact me in the first two weeks of class.

Disabilities: Any student who has a documented disability and is registered with Disability Services should contact me early on in the course. I will respect any accommodation authorized in advance by the Office of Student Disability Services (http://www.willamette.edu/dept/disability/).

Availability: If you have any questions or concerns, don’t hesitate to contact me. I am available during office hours and by email. If you are sending questions by email, please allow at least 24 hours for a response.
CLASS SCHEDULE

We may discover that we want to spend more time on certain topics and less on others. I may consider making changes to the class schedule if such a change would benefit most students' learning in this course. All readings, audio or visual assignments should be completed before class.

Part I. Democratic Breakdowns & Authoritarian Regimes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mon 1/18:</th>
<th>Introduction to the course.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed 1/20:</td>
<td>Overview of Democratic Ups and Downs in Latin America</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 1/25:</td>
<td>Chile's Military Dictatorship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 1/27:</td>
<td>Intro to Film Analysis – Honing our critical viewer skills</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Corrigan, Timothy. 2004. Chapter 2 in “Short Guide to Writing About Film.” P. 17-34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th 1/28 7-9pm:</td>
<td>Screening of the movie “Machuca” (Location: ART 212)</td>
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<td>• After you watch the movie, use the Film Analysis “Cheat Sheet” (posted on WISE) and your viewing notes to analyze one scene that caught your attention.</td>
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<td>Mon 2/1:</td>
<td>Student-led Discussion of Chile &amp; Machuca</td>
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<td>• [movie response paper on “Machuca” is due in class]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Bring your Film Analysis “Cheat Sheet” and your viewing notes to class: join in the discussion!</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Salvador Allende’s Last Speech. 6:21 min. (September 11, 1973): <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HC8UirZLCZQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HC8UirZLCZQ</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 2/3:</td>
<td>Argentina’s Military Dictatorship</td>
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<td>Mon 2/8:</td>
<td>Single Party Rule: Authoritarian Mexico</td>
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Part II. Transitions to Democracy

**Wed 2/10:** The Mexican Transition to Democracy

**Mon 2/15:** The Argentine Transition to Democracy
- Review pgs 14-17 of the Feitlowitz reading assigned for 2/3.
- Verbitsky, Horacio. Confessions of a dirty warrior. Chapters 1-7

**Wed 2/17:** The Chilean Transition to Democracy

**Th 2/18**
**7-9pm:** Screening of movie “No”. (Location: ART 212)
- After you watch the movie, use the Film Analysis “Cheat Sheet” (posted on WISE) and your viewing notes to analyze one scene(s) that caught your attention.

**Mon 2/22:** Student-led discussion of "No"
- Bring your Film Analysis “Cheat Sheet” and your viewing notes to class: join in the discussion!
- **[movie response paper on “No” is due in class]**

**Wed 2/24:** Transitions to Democracy in Comparative Perspective

**Mon 2/29:** MIDTERM (due via WISE) No class.

**Wed 3/2:** Transitional Justice in Chile

**Mon 3/7:** Transitional Justice in Argentina

**Wed 3/9:** Transitional Justice: El Salvador
- Reading TBA
Mon 3/14: Transitional Justice in a Comparative Perspective

Part III. Contemporary Issues in Latin American Politics

Wed 3/16: The Politics of Market Reforms

3/21 – 3/25: SPRING BREAK

Mon 3/28: The Erosion of Democracy - Venezuela

Wed 3/30 Screening of “The Revolution will not be Televised” in class
   • Bring a printed copy of the Film Analysis “Cheat Sheet” with you to take notes during the screening.

Mon 4/4: Student-Led Discussion of “The Revolution will not be Televised"
   • Nelson, Brian A. 2009. The Silence and the Scorpion. [pgs. 181 - 293]
   • Bring your viewing notes and “Cheat Sheet” to use during the discussion.
   • [response paper on "The Revolution will not be Televised" is due in class]

Wed 4/6: Venezuela Post-Chavez
   • Reading TBA

Mon 4/11: Bolivia
   • Reading TBA

Wed 4/13 Democracy and Violence

Mon 4/18 Student-led Discussion of “City of God”
  • Watch “City of God” (Under reserve in the Hatfield Library and also available on Netflix). Take notes as you watch the movie and bring them to class.
  • [movie response paper on “City of God” is due in class]

Wed 4/20: NO CLASS: Student Scholarship Recognition Day! Make sure to check out a few presentations—support and learn from your peers.

Mon 4/25: Violence & Politics in Mexico

Wed 4/27: Democratic Chile

Mon 5/2: Student-led discussion of a film of your choice.
  • We will discuss an additional film selected from the list below. You must cite at least one scholarly or critical essay in our class discussion.
    o The Tiniest Place.
    o Granito: How to Nail a Dictator.
    o El Secreto de sus Ojos (The Secret in their Eyes).

Mon 5/9

2-5pm: FINAL EXAM
Student-Led Film Discussion Assignment

Once per semester, you—along with some of your colleagues—will lead a film discussion. Your task is not merely to inform, but to inspire discussion. First and foremost, your presentation must engage the class with our ongoing class discussions regarding Latin American politics and the political meaning of films. I am especially impressed with presentations that are creative, passionate, and deviate from the work of your colleagues who have already presented. In other words, do not copy the format of presentations that you have seen in class already; instead, find an innovative way to answer the questions listed below. This page is meant as a guide for your presentation—not as a formula.

Your presentation must also address—but should not be limited to—the following questions:

- **Production**
  - When and where was this film made? Who was responsible for its production?
  - Is this film based on actual events or is it purely fictional?
  - What casting decisions were made in the production of this film? Were these decisions controversial or inappropriate in any way?

- **Text**
  - Who are the main characters in this film? What do the characters want? How do they interact with one another?
  - How was this film shot? Describe the mise-en-scene and lighting choices. What camera angles were employed? How do editing choices affect how we view it?
  - What is the style of this film? Is it realistic?

- **Reception**
  - How did audiences respond to this film? How did critics? Why would viewers have liked or disliked this film? Was it controversial, and if so why?
  - What did you like and dislike about this film?

**NOTE:** You are responsible for finding sources pertaining to this film text beyond those that you encounter in the course. A good place to find production and reception information is on DVD “extras.” Make sure to listen to the director’s commentary at least once when preparing to lead discussion (if available; otherwise, I suggest trying to locate a video or printed interview with the director online). You can also find information about films’ critical receptions online—at www.nytimes.com and www.newyorker.com, for ex.

Finally, the most important category of questions:

- What does this film have to say about Latin American politics? What, in your view, is this film’s political meaning?
- What political processes and/or political concepts are depicted in the film? How are they depicted?
- How does this film relate to the readings that we have encountered this week and in previous weeks? How does it relate to other films we have watched?
- Which specific scenes speak most clearly to the matters that we have discussed this semester? How would you apply the vocabulary offered by Lacey to these scenes?

Student-led film discussions should last about 40/45 minutes, including selected film clips. The format must be interactive—that is: speakers should present their analysis and bring to the group’s attention key facts but you should also ask questions and lead discussion. The presentation should include one scene analysis, and must also address the readings assigned for that and the previous class meeting. Powerpoint presentations are welcome but not required.

Creativity is strongly encouraged for your presentations. 10 points will be added to the individual participation grade of all members of the group that leads the best discussion session.

The day of your presentation, please submit to me a printed bibliography listing the sources cited in and consulted for your presentation. As always, I am available for consultation before you lead the film discussion. Please make an appointment to see me in office hours as early as possible.

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