In spite of the proximity of Latin America and the Caribbean to the United States, most U.S. citizens have little understanding of political life in the region. They tend to rely on alarmist reports about sweeping violence and instability, and suffer from misperceptions about the patterns of poverty and economic dislocation. This course attempts to move beyond the headline analysis to explore institutions, processes, social movements and political trends in the region, especially those that have emerged in the last decade. Recognizing that Latin American countries differ among themselves, we pay attention to important variations within the region. In the process of exploring these patterns, we will tackle some of the thorniest questions in the field of political science, including debates about the meaning of “democracy.” We will draw on a range of theories and arguments about interplay of political actors and processes to interpret trends and dynamics. This work will help you to identify the circumstances under which democracy deepens and/or erodes.

The first part of this course provides a conceptual overview of Latin American politics. We will spend time analyzing the political institutions, political parties, social forces, and domestic and international actors that have shaped governments in the region. You will have the opportunity to discuss the complex nature of democracy and its diverse forms of expression in Latin America. In the process, you will increase your understanding of the varieties of democracy; explore the configurations and roles of the State; and analyze multiple forms of civic participation that have emerged in this politically innovative region. This discussion will also pay special attention to the problems posed by the persistence of high levels of inequality and external intervention in the region.

The second section of the course focuses on four Latin American countries: Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela and Chile. This section uses diverse readings to examine the ways in which democratic and undemocratic processes shift and combine in each of these settings. This focused analysis allows us to explore the relationship between electoral democratization, market opening, civic engagement and ideological shifts in Latin America. We will spend some time thinking about the meaning of “left” and “right” in the Latin American context, and we’ll review various interpretations of what’s behind recent ideological shifts in the region. We will explore the sources of elite power in Latin America, while we also trace the development of new social movements pushing for fuller inclusion and challenging established approaches to development. The countries
that we highlight illustrate many of the opportunities and challenges associated with political contestation. As we progress through these four case studies, you will have the opportunity to participate in a set of debates about the democratic and anti-democratic features that are found in each of these political systems.

This course examines the relationship between institutional politics, as expressed in campaigns, elections and the formal structures of government, and the non-institutional, informal forms of political life that emerge in street politics, social movements and protest campaigns. It should deepen your understanding of the multidimensional character of democratic institutions and processes; highlight the complex ways in which democratic and undemocratic features combine in the contemporary political world; and alert you to the struggles ahead as Latin Americans seek to strengthen the quality of their political systems.

**READINGS:**
2. Readings linked electronically to the syllabus at the D2L website and PDFs located under the D2L readings tab.

**GRADING**

<table>
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<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Daily class participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes (40 points x 5 quizzes)</td>
<td>200</td>
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<td>Mid-term exam</td>
<td>200</td>
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<td>Case assessment</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Debate brief (1-2 page overview) and debate participation</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country case analysis (8-10 pages)</td>
<td>250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final take-home exam (5-7 pages)</td>
<td>200</td>
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**Total:** 1000 points

930-1000 points = A
900-929 points = A-
870-899 points = B+
840-869 points = B
800-839 points = B-
770-799 points = C+
740-769 points = C
700-739 points = C-
670-699 points = D+
640-669 points = D
600-639 points = D-
Below 600 points = F
**Daily class participation**

We only have twenty class sessions, and we have a great deal of material to cover. Please plan to attend all class sessions, and come prepared to discuss the material assigned for the day. We will also have periodic writing exercises during class, which will contribute to your participation points. Missing more than two classes will result in the lowering of your score for participation.

**Quizzes (five quizzes, 40 points each)**

These will include a set of multiple choice or identification questions that review the material we’ve covered for each of the country cases. The four country quizzes will focus on major political features in each country (president, political parties, social movements, organizations, policy initiatives, historical turning points, etc.), and will take place prior to each debate. We will also have a map quiz early in the quarter.

**In-Class Mid-Term Exam**

The in-class exam will focus on key concepts and major theoretical debates introduced in the first four weeks. You will be asked to write (1) short definitions of a set of concepts that we’ll be using during the rest of the quarter (100 points), and (2) an interpretive essay that tackles a major theoretical issue (100 points).

**Case Assessments**

This class will take a close look at the political systems in four Latin American countries (Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela, and Chile). Each of you will sign up to work on one of these countries. For each case, we will try to identify the characteristics that are building and strengthening democracy and those that challenge or diminish the quality of democracy in this country.

**Debates and debate briefs**

Each of our four country case studies will conclude with a debate about the character, extent and quality of democracy found in that system. Each member of the class will participate in one of these debates. For purposes of the debate, your team will highlight either the democratic or the undemocratic features found in that country. Teams are composed of five students, who will present the arguments and evidence in support of their position and challenge the arguments and evidence presented by the opposing side.

You will need to decide which country you want to focus on and which side you want to defend in the debate. I will circulate a sign-up sheet early in the quarter so that you can make your selection and begin collecting and reviewing research materials with your teammates. This assignment requires you to read the assigned material carefully, conduct additional research as needed, and compile an outline of arguments and evidence on both sides of the debate. Debate preparation involves meeting with your teammates to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the position you will be defending and to divide up additional research required for the debate. You’ll want to review the opposing position carefully, looking for the weaknesses in their arguments and preparing to rebut those that are likely to be leveled against your team’s position.
On the day of the debate, each person will submit an individual 1-2 page debate brief, outlining the main arguments and evidence they plan to present during the debate. Make sure you cover the assigned course readings carefully, giving page numbers and specific references to bolster your claims. This brief should include a bibliography of any additional sources you draw on. Keep in mind that a brief is not just a list of topics. In collaboration with your team, you need to identify three or four key issues (for example, freedom of the press, accurate vote counting, corruption, or minority rights protection), explain the arguments you plan to advance, and summarize the evidence that supports your team’s position. A good brief will also include your main criticisms of the opposing team’s perspective.

**Country case analysis**

Your main project in this class is a formal paper analyzing the democratic and undemocratic features of the country you analyzed in the debate. This project will require you to 1) define and justify the concept of democracy that you are employing; 2) provide a brief overview of the main political characteristics of the country; 3) discuss the most important democratic and undemocratic features found in that political system; and 4) assess the extent to which, on balance, you would define that political system as a functioning democracy (of some type). This paper should present and defend your personal perspective on the question, which may diverge from the position you argued for during the class debate.

**Final take home exam**

This 5-7 page paper will allow you to compare and contrast all four of the country cases that we’ve explored, assessing the democratic and undemocratic features in each and ranking them relative to the concept of democracy that best aligns with your views.

**CLASS POLICIES:** My office is in room 2102 in 990 W. Fullerton, and my office hours are TTh 11:30-12:30 and 3:00-4:00, and by appointment. The best way to contact me is by email: rspaldin@depaul.edu. I hope each of you will come by to talk with me at some point in the quarter.

**Late work:** Please be aware that, unless special arrangements are made due to illness or unavoidable delays, any late papers will lose 30 points for each day they are late, and no papers will be accepted more than one week after the due date.

**Extra credit:** Extra credit may be earned by attending one of the events announced in the syllabus and writing a 1-2 page report describing what transpired. You may also earn extra credit by volunteering for any additional debate roles that remain unfilled after everyone in the class has signed up.

**Use of laptops in class:** You may bring and use your laptops and tablets to class for purposes of (1) taking notes; (2) consulting the required readings or assignments for this course; and (3) when so authorized, conducting searches related to topics under
discussion. Using your electronic devices for any other purposes is prohibited. That means no texting, social media updating, doing homework for other classes, or conducting any other activity unrelated to our class. If I find anyone violating this rule, they will be asked to leave class, and all future use of electronics in our class will be banned.

**SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:** Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss their specific concerns. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive reasonable accommodation based on your needs, contact me as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class). Students seeking disability-related accommodations are required to register with DePaul's Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) to access accommodations and support services. CSD has two office locations: Lincoln Park Campus - Student Center #370 - (773) 325-1677 Loop Campus - Lewis Center #1420 - (312) 362-8002 Students can also email the office at csd@depaul.edu

The Dean of Students Office (DOS) helps students navigate the university, particularly during times of personal, financial, medical, and/or family need. This office can help students in crisis who may need absence notifications sent to faculty, late withdrawals, and Community Resource Referrals. DOS staff members support students both in and outside of the classroom. Additionally, this office has resources and programs to support health and wellness, violence prevention, substance abuse and drug prevention, and LGBTQ student services. For further information, please visit DOS at http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/ DOS office locations are Lincoln Park Office, Student Center Suite 307; Loop Office, 1 E Jackson Blvd., DePaul Center, Suite 11001.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others, and for society as a whole. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are detrimental to the values of DePaul, to your own development as a responsible member of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct.

There are strong sanctions against academic integrity violations at DePaul. If proven, an academic integrity charge could result in an automatic F in the course, formal notification of your college dean, and possible expulsion. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit the Academic Integrity website at https://offices.depaul.edu/academic-affairs/faculty-resources/academic-integrity/Documents/Academic%20Integrity%20Policy_Spring%202016.pdf
If you have any additional questions or doubts about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials, be sure to discuss these concerns with me.

**COURSE TOPICS AND CALENDAR:**

I. Introduction to course objectives, requirements, and design (Jan. 7)

1. Latin American Political Transitions (Jan. 9)
   A. A trajectory overview
   B. Concepts of democracy
      1. Liberal and “Illiberal” democracy
      2. Procedural and Substantive democracy
   **Readings:** Vanden and Prevost, chs. 1, 3;

2. Structural legacies and social stratification (Jan. 14)
   A. Ethnicity, race and gender: historical divisions and new forms of empowerment
   **Readings:** Vanden and Prevost, chs. 4-5;

**EXTRA CREDIT: Public Lecture**

Aaron Bobrow-Strain’s book presentation: *The Death and Life of Aida Hernández*
When: Wednesday, January 15, 2020 at 5 PM – 7 PM
Where: The Theater School Lobby, 2350 N. Racine Ave.

3. Politics and religion (Jan. 16)
   A. Political currents within the Catholic Church
   B. Religious competition and the rise of evangelical groups
   **Readings:** Vanden and Prevost, ch. 6

4. Political economy and development models (Jan. 21)
   A. From Import substitution industrialization to Neoliberalism
   B. The ‘Pink Tide,’ ‘Rise and Fall of Left Alternatives
   **Readings:** Vanden and Prevost, ch. 7;
      --Thomas Chiasson-Lebel and Manuel Larrabure, ‘Latin America’s Changing Balance of Class Forces: An Introduction,’ in ‘Special Collection: Elite and

5. Authoritarianism and Democracy (**Jan. 23**)
   A. Varieties of authoritarianism: dictatorship, military rule, and electoral authoritarianism
   B. Re-democratization: pacted democracies and transitions
   C. Constitutions, accountability, and political institutions
   D. Presidential power, presidential failure (coupes and impeachment)
   **Readings:** Vanden and Prevost, chs. 8-9;

**Country case debate sign up**

**EXTRA CREDIT: Public Lecture**
Tatiana Clouthier, the campaign manager for Mexican President Lopez Obrador, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tatiana_Clouthier](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tatiana_Clouthier). The tentative date for her visit is Thursday, January 23rd for an afternoon talk, beginning at around 4:30pm. Details to come.

6. Revolution and U.S. hemispheric involvement (**Jan. 28**)
   A. Revolution and counterrevolution
   B. US intervention, national sovereignty, and democracy
   **Readings:** Vanden and Prevost, chs. 10-11;

**Mid-term exam: Jan. 30**

II. Case studies and debates
   1. **BRAZIL:** (**Feb. 4-11**)
      A. Military retreat and the return of party competition
      B. PT government: civic expectations and rising discontent
      C. Illiberal democracy/Authoritarian populism
      **Readings:** --Wilber Albert Chaffee, “Brazil,” in Vanden and Prevost, ch. 14;
Feb. 11: Brazil quiz and first debate--Competing views concerning the type and quality of democracy in Brazil
Brazil paper due in D2L Dropbox on Feb. 13 at midnight

2. MEXICO (Feb. 13-20)
   A. The historical hegemony of the PRI
   B. Multiparty transitions and formal democratization
   C. Clients versus citizens: contemporary challenges
   **Readings:** Nora Hamilton, “Mexico,” in Vanden and Prevost, ch. 12;
   --Freedom House, “Mexico” (2019)
   --Congressional Research Service, “Mexico: Background and U.S. Relations,”
   **CRS Report**, Updated May 2, 2019, pages 1-17 (PDF);
   --David Bacon, “In Mexico, A New Dawn for Independent Unions?” NACLA Report on the Americas 51, 3 (Sept. 2019): 268-275 (PDF);

Feb. 20: Mexico quiz and second debate--Competing views concerning the type and quality of democracy in Mexico
Mexico paper due in D2L drop box on Feb. 22 at midnight

3. VENEZUELA (Feb. 25-March 3)
   A. From Partyarchy to a Bolivarian Republic
   B. “Radical democracy”? “Ililberal democracy”? “Authoritarian regime”? 
   C. Concepts and debates about 21st Century Socialism
   **Readings:** --Daniel Hellinger, “Venezuela,” in Vanden and Prevost, ch. 17;


**March 3: Venezuela quiz and third debate--Competing views concerning the type and quality of democracy in Venezuela**

**Venezuela paper due in D2L Dropbox on March 5 at midnight**

4. **CHILE (March 5-12)**
   
   A. The “peaceful road to socialism” and the rise of military rule
   B. Neoliberal transition
   C. Redemocratization, Concertación, and Party Rotation
   D. The Overflow of Discontent: what next?

   **Readings:**
   --Eduardo Silva, “Chile” in Vanden and Prevost, Ch. 15;
   --Manuel Larrabure, “Chile’s Democratic Road to Authoritarianism: From Neostructuralist Bargain to State of Emergency,” *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 108 (July-December 2019): 221-243 (PDF);
   --Nicolás Saldías, “Chile’s Protests are a Rejection of the Excesses of Neoliberalism, *World Politics Review*, Nov. 4, 2019 (PDF);

**March 12: Chile quiz and fourth debate--Competing views concerning the type and quality of democracy in Chile**

**Chile paper due in D2L Dropbox on March 12 at midnight**

5. Conclusions: Which of these Latin American political systems is, on balance, most democratic? Which is least? What brings you to these conclusions? (**March 12**) 

Take home exam due March 19th, at noon in D2L drop box.
## Winter 2020 PSC 252 Latin American Politics

### Debate Roles Sign Up

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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Democratic</th>
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<td>Venezuela</td>
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<td>Chile</td>
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</table>
Additional resources for Brazil:
--Petra Costa, The Edge of Democracy (2019) — a Netflix documentary (2 hours);
--Pact for Democracy, “Public Statement,” Nov. 5, 2019,
https://www.pactopelademocracia.org.br/english-page;

Additional resources for Mexico:
--Wilson Center expert comments on Andrés Manuel López Obrador, PODCAST | Feb 26, 2018 (25 minutes) https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/podcast-experts-andres-manuel-lopez-obrador;
--“Undercurrents,” Interview with Andrés Rozental, Senior Adviser, Chatham House; Former Mexican diplomat; Founding President, Mexican Council on Foreign Relations, Aug. 1, 2019, (34 minutes) https://www.chathamhouse.org/file/undercurrents-summer-special-andr-s-rozentals-mexican-politics

Additional resources for Venezuela:
--Center for Preventive Action, “Stabilizing Venezuela: Scenarios and Options: Contingency Planning Memorandum Update,” Council on Foreign Relations, June 14, 2019,
https://www.cfr.org/report/stabilizing-venezuela;

Additional resources for Chile: