

**GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**  
**Sam Nunn School of International Affairs**

**International Affairs 3241/8803: LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS**  
TTh: 1:35-2:50pm - Instr Center 115

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**Syllabus – January 10, 2012**

**Course Objectives:**

1. To gain area specialty knowledge that provides an understanding of the political context of Latin America
2. To explore U.S. – Latin America foreign policy issues
3. To become familiar with research methodologies for policy issue areas related to career interests regarding Latin America

**Course Design:**

This course will utilize primary and secondary materials available through the internet and TSquare that will provide students with both background information and current policy issues Latin American politics.

Principal Sources include:

Textbook: (available through Barnes and Noble and Engineer's Book Stores)  
Howard Wiarda and Harvey Kline, eds. *Latin American Politics and Development* – 7<sup>th</sup> edition. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2011.

[www.bbcnews.com](http://www.bbcnews.com) ([www.bbcmundo.com](http://www.bbcmundo.com) for Spanish readers)

U.S. Dept of State [www.state.gov/p/wha](http://www.state.gov/p/wha) - for U.S. Foreign Policy toward Latin America and country study background from DoS websites noted on the syllabus

Latin American Network Information Center <http://lanic.utexas.edu/>

Organization of American States: [www.oas.org](http://www.oas.org)

**Course Requirements:**

General: Course members will be expected to attend all classes, complete all assigned readings, and participate in classroom discussions on the subjects addressed in the readings and lectures. Key information will be updated continuously on TSquare. Lectures during the course may not cover the readings and will often present new ideas and information. Students are responsible for the information contained in the reading, whether it is covered or not in lectures, as well as for the information in the lectures and class discussions.

Examinations . A medical or other Georgia Tech approved excuse is the only permissible reason for missing a quiz, the mid-term or final examination.

**Class Format:** Because of the size of the class, the course will be mostly taught in the lecture format with class discussion/questions/answers. Students are encouraged to raise questions or comments at anytime during the sessions.

**\*Grading:** A = 90-100; B = 80-99; C = 70-79; D = 60-69; F = below 60

Quizzes/Class Assignments	10% (5% each x 2)
Mid-term	25
Issue Brief	30
Final Examination	25
Attendance/Class Participation	10
	100%

**\*Graduate students** will be required to present a 15 min version of the assigned research project to the class with power point slides. Topics to be confirmed with Dr. Lincoln NLT Jan 31<sup>st</sup>.. Presentation dates will be coordinated with the syllabus topics as much as possible.

**Course Schedule of Topics/Assignments: [Readings in addition to text are posted regularly on TSquare]**– Subject to adjustments, as required.

<b>Week 1 - Jan 10-12</b>	Course Overview / Introduction January 10 –Inauguration of Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega January 14 – Inauguration of Guatemalan President Otto Perez Molina  Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 1 – The Context of Latin American Politics –
<b>Week 2 - Jan 17-19</b>	Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 2 – The Pattern of Historical Development Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 3 – Interest Groups & Political Parties Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 4 – Government Machinery, the Role of the State , and Public Policy
<b>Week 3 - Jan 24-26</b>	Tuesday / Jan 24 – Out of Class Assignment (no class mtg) – Organization of American States. <a href="http://www.oas.org">www.oas.org</a>  Thursday / Jan 26 – Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 5 – The Struggle for Democracy in Latin America

- Week 4 – Jan 31-Feb 2**      **MEXICO** - Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 16 – Mexico: Democratization, Development and Internal War by Judith Gentleman  
U.S. Dept of State – MEXICO <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/mx/>  
**Jan 31<sup>st</sup> – Country/Policy Issue Topic Choice Due**
- Week 5 – Feb 7-9**      Tuesday / Feb 7 – No class mtg. – Research Day  
Thursday / Feb 9 – NICARAGUA – Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 19 – Nicaragua: The Politics of Frustration by Richard Millett  
U.S. Dept of State – NICARAGUA <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/nu/>
- Week 6 – Feb 14-16**      Tuesday / Feb 14 – EL SALVADOR – Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 20 – El Salvador: Civil War to Uncivil Peace by Tommie Sue Montgomery & Christine J. Wade.  
U.S. Dept of State – EL SALVADOR <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/es/>  
  
Thursday / Feb 16 – GUATEMALA – Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 21 – Guatemala: Democracy by Default by Dwight Wilson  
U.S. Dept of State – GUATEMALA <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/gt/>
- Week 7 – Feb 21-23**      Tuesday / Feb 21 – HONDURAS – Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 22 – Honduras: Democracy in Distress by J. Mark Ruhl  
U.S. Dept of State – HONDURAS <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/ho/>  
  
Thursday / Feb 23 – PANAMA – Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 23 – Panama: new Politics for a New Millennium? by Steve C. Ropp  
U.S. Dept of State – PANAMA <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/pm/>
- Week 8 – Feb 28**      **Tuesday: Catch-up / Review**  
**March 1**      **Mid-Term Exam [Note: March 2 deadline to drop class with W]**
- Week 9 – Mar 6-8**      Tuesday / Mar 6 – ARGENTINA – Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 6 – Argentina in the Twenty-first Century by Linda Chen  
U.S. Dept of State – ARGENTINA <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/ar/>  
  
Thursday / Mar 8 – BRAZIL – Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 7 – Brazil’s New Way: The BRIC Road to Progress by Ieda Siqueira Wiarda  
U.S. Dept of State – BRAZIL <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/br/>
- Week 10 – Mar 13-15**      Argentina / Brazil continued & CHILE – Wiarda and Kline – Chapter 8 by Paul Sigmund  
U.S. Dept of State – CHILE <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/ci/>

- Week 11 – Mar 19-23**      **SPRING BREAK [also beginning of Pope Benedict XVI visit to Mexico and Cuba]**
- Week 12 – Mar 27-29**      COLOMBIA – Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 9 – Colombia: Violence, Resource Wealth, Transnational Forces and a Vibrant Civil Society  
U.S. Dept of State – COLOMBIA <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/co/>
- Week 13 – Apr 3-5**      PERU – Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 10 – Peru: Authoritarian Traditions, Incomplete Democracy by David Scott Palmer  
U.S. Dept of State – PERU <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/pe/>  
**Research / Briefing Papers Due.**
- Week 14 – Apr 10-12**      BOLIVIA – Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 14 – Bolivia: From Neoliberal Democracy to Multiethnic, Plebiscitarian Politics by Fabrice Leboucq  
U.S. Dept of State – BOLIVIA <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/bl/>
- ECUADOR – Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 15 – Ecuador: From Crisis to Left Turn by Catherine M. Conaghan  
U.S. Dept of State – ECUADOR <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/ec/>
- Week 15 – Apr 17-19**      VENEZUELA – Wiarda & Kline – Chapter 11 - Can Democracy Survive Electoral Caudillismo? by David J. Myers  
U.S. Dept of STATE – VENEZUELA <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/ve/>
- Week 16 – Apr 24-26**      CUBA – Wiarda & Kline Chapter 17 – Cuba: Development, Revolution, and Decay by Juan M. del Aguila  
U.S. Dept of State – CUBA <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/cu/>

**Final Exam: Tuesday, May 1<sup>st</sup> – 2:50-5:40pm**

**Office Hours: Tuesday / Thursday – 3:15-4pm and by appointment.**

## **Country Study: Issue Briefing Assignment**

**Purpose:** to prepare a policy overview briefing on a critical issue for the new U.S. Ambassador.

Assuming the role of the Political Counselor in the U.S. Embassy [i.e. Country Political Expert], students will prepare a 3 page single-spaced overview brief of one (1) current issue/concern for the incoming U.S. Ambassador. This briefing will inform the Ambassador of the background to the issue, current host country concerns and possible requests for assistance from the U.S. Government (USG). The briefing will also inform the Ambassador of interactions of the host country government on this issue with other nations that may be of interest to the USG.

**Be prepared to identify your first and second choices in writing for country/policy issue area no later than class on Tuesday, Jan 31st.** In order to minimize duplication of effort and to assure hemispheric-wide coverage, there should be no more than 4 students for any one country or topic without approval of exception.

Briefing Papers will be due: **April 5th**

GRADUATE STUDENTS will prepare a 15 minute presentation (with power point slides) on their briefings to present to the class.