

GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Sam Nunn School of International Affairs

INTA 3243/8803JL - U.S. Foreign Policy Toward Latin America

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Syllabus – January 8, 2018 / corrected to January 22, 2018

Scope

This course examines the policymaking process for U.S. Foreign Policy toward Latin America, principally since WWII. Students will study the government structures and non-governmental influences that determine U.S. policy and analyze the effectiveness of the political, economic, and military instruments of power used to promote U.S. interests in Latin America. Countries to be studied include: **Colombia; Cuba; Mexico, Central America including Northern Triangle of Guatemala/Honduras/El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica; Panama; Peru; and Venezuela.** The Summit of the Americas – a meeting of all heads of state of the hemisphere held every three years – will be held in April in Lima, Peru. Transnational issues such as corruption, drug-trafficking, human rights and immigration will be studied, as well.

Students will student analyze U.S. Foreign Policy toward Latin America issues through the following questions:

What is U.S. Foreign Policy in Latin America?

Who makes U.S. Foreign Policy toward Latin America? ***How?***

When / where have U.S. Foreign Policy priorities changed in the hemisphere?

The course is designed to provide real-world practical application of knowledge and skills in exercises similar to what would be expected of a staff-person in a governmental or non-governmental organization in the realm of U.S.- Latin American Foreign Policy.

Course Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. To gain area specialty knowledge that provides an understanding of the political context of Latin America (Knowledge acquisition)
2. To be able to analyze and explain current U.S. foreign policy toward Latin America (Analytical Abilities)
3. To be able to utilize a variety of research methodologies for policy issue areas related to career interests regarding Latin America (Research Skills)
4. To be able to work effectively in small groups / teams to produce policy-relevant analysis under real-world (read: tight) deadlines (Team-building skills)
5. To be able to present research and policy positions clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing (Effective Communication Skills)

Course Materials and Design:

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

Principal Sources include:

Textbook Required: (available through Barnes and Noble Book Stores)

Jorge I. Dominguez and Rafael Fernandez de Castro, *Contemporary U.S. – Latin American Relations – Cooperation or Conflict in the 21st Century?* 2nd edition. NY: Routledge, 2016.

Recommended:

William M. LeoGrande and Peter Kornbluh, *Back Channel to Cuba – The Hidden Story of Negotiations between Washington and Havana – Updated edition, with a new epilogue (re: December 2014 renewal of U.S. – Cuban relations.* Chapel Hill, N.C.: UNC Press, 2015.

Charles A. Stevenson, *America's Foreign Policy Toolkit – Key Institutions and Processes.* Los Angeles: Sage / CQ Press, 2013.

Additional articles posted on TSquare

Online and other sources:

U.S. Dept of State website for Western Hemisphere Affairs: <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/>

*Register for **Electronic Newsletter**

<https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/USSTATEBPA/subscriber/new>

to receive news relating to Western Hemisphere Affairs.

U.S. Dept of State DipNote Blog – Western Hemisphere

<https://blogs.state.gov/regions/western-hemisphere>

U.S. Congress

<https://www.foreign.senate.gov/about/subcommittees/>

Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Transnational Crime, Civilian Security, Democracy, Human Rights, and Global Women's Issues

Hearing: January 9, 2018 – Attacks on U.S. Diplomats in Cuba: Response and Oversight

<https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/subcommittee/western-hemisphere/>

Hearing: January 4, 2018 – Elections in the Western Hemisphere: Implications for U.S. Policy

U.S. Congress. Library of Congress. Congressional Research Service (CRS) Reports

British Broadcasting News - www.bbcnews.com (www.bbcmundo.com for Spanish readers)

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

Organization of American States: www.oas.org

Course Requirements:

General: Course members will be expected to attend all classes, complete all assigned readings, participate in classroom discussions, and submit all written assignments on time. 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.

All classroom discussions will be conducted with a high level of diplomatic civility and respect for divergent opinions. No hats in class. No fidget spinners. No cellphone use. Laptops may be used in class for notetaking, but should not interfere with active participation in class discussions (i.e. distractions).

Class Format: Because of the size of the class, the course will be mostly taught in a combination of lecture format with class discussion/questions/answers. Students are encouraged to raise questions or comments at any time during the sessions. Students will be organized into U.S. Embassy Country Teams responsible for presenting information and guiding discussions on select countries throughout the semester.

The 3 hour class format will be divided into component parts that include lectures / presentations; exercises and team assignments; and group discussions. Throughout the semester there will also be guest lectures and outside-of-class opportunities for enrichment opportunities with career contacts in mind.

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

Class Assignments	20% (5% each x 6)
Current events blog postings	
Peer reviews of country teams	
U.S. Congress assignment	
OAS assignment	
Summit of the Americas assignment	
Peer reviews of debates	
Country Team Final Presentation	20
U.S. Foreign Policy Issue Brief	20
U.S. Foreign Policy Debate	20
Attendance/Class Participation	10
Total:	100%

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

Week 1 – Jan 8 // Course adjusted for GT storm cancellation of classes Course Overview /

Week 2 - Jan 15 - Martin Luther King Holiday – No class.

Week 3 - Jan 22 – Introduction – U.S. Foreign Policy in Latin America

Dominguez and Fernandez – Chapter 1 – The Changes in the International System since 2000, pp. 1-29

Class exercise: Inventory of current issues in U.S. Foreign Policy toward Latin America
Sources: 1) Sullivan, Mark. Latin American and the Caribbean: Key Issues and Actions in the 114th Congress. U.S. Congressional Research Service (CRS) – January 4, 2017

2) U.S. Dept of State – Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs <http://www.state.gov/p/wha>

Cuba Intro: Documentary: *The Fog of War* / Cuban Missile Crisis exercise (quiz)

Week 4 – Jan 29 – CUBA - Renewal and reversal of U.S. Foreign Policy

Assignment due (at beginning of class) – U.S. Congressional committee meeting brief.

Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Transnational Crime, Civilian Security, Democracy, Human Rights, and Global Women's Issues - Hearing: January 9, 2018 – Attacks on U.S. Diplomats in Cuba: Response and Oversight

Readings:

Marifeli Pérez-Stable, “The United States and Cuba: Intimate Neighbors?” Chapter 3 in Dominguez and Fernandez

U.S. CIA World Fact Book – Cuba <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cu.html>

U.S. Embassy in Havana, Cuba <https://cu.usembassy.gov/>

Epilogue from William M. LeoGrande and Peter Kornbluh, *Back Channel to Cuba – The Hidden Story of Negotiations between Washington and Havana – Updated edition, with a new epilogue (re: December 2014 renewal of U.S. – Cuban relations.* Chapel Hill, N.C.: UNC Press, 2015.

Stevenson, *America’s Foreign Policy Toolkit* – Chapter 4 “Congress’s Toolkit”

Week 5 – Feb 5 - CENTAM – Northern Triangle (Guatemala/Honduras/El Salvador) Costa Rica Presidential Election (Feb 4, 2018)

Assignment Due: Topic Selection and preliminary bibliography for LATAM Issue Brief/Policy Recommendation to be submitted.

Country Team and Debate Teams assigned.

Readings:

Stevenson, *America's Foreign Policy Toolkit* – Chapter 3 “The President’s Toolkit”

Meyer, Peter J. U.S. Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the **Caribbean**: Trends and FY2017 Appropriations. U.S. Congressional Research Service (CRS) – February 8, 2017.

<https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R44647.pdf>

Meyer, Peter J. U.S. Strategy for Engagement in **Central America**: Policy Issues for Congress. U.S. Congressional Research Service (CRS) – June 8, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R44812.pdf>

Guatemala - <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gt.html>

U.S. Dept of State Guatemala page: <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2045.htm>

Honduras - <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/ho.html>

U.S. Dept of State Honduras page: <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/1922.htm>

El Salvador - <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/es.html>

U.S. Dept of State El Salvador page: <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2033.htm>

Week 6 – Feb 12 – CENTAM continued / NICARAGUA**Readings:**

Stevenson, *America's Foreign Policy Toolkit* – Chapter 6 – The Diplomatic Instrument

Nicaragua - <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/nu.html>

U.S. Dept of State Nicaragua page: <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/1850.htm>

Week 7 – Feb 19 & Week 8 – February 26**COLOMBIA****Readings:**

Cynthia J. Arnson and Arlene B. Tickner, “Colombia and the United States: The Path to a Strategic Alliance,” Chapter 7 in Dominguez and Fernandez de Castro.

June S. Beittel, **Colombia**: Background and U.S. Relations. U.S. Congressional Research Service (CRS) - November 14, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R43813.pdf>

Colombia - <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/co.html>

U.S. Dept of State Colombia page - <https://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/co/>

Week 9 – Mar 5 - MEXICO**Readings:**

Jorge I. Dominguez and Rafael Fernández de Castro, “U.S. Mexican Relations: Coping with Domestic and International Crises,” Chapter 2 in Dominguez and Fernández de Castro.

INTA 3243/8803 JL – Spring 2018

U.S. Foreign Policy toward Latin America

Dr. Jennie K. Lincoln

Clare Ribando Seekle and Kristin Finklea. U.S.-**Mexican** Security Cooperation: The Mérida Initiative and Beyond. U.S. Congressional Research Service (CRS) – June 29, 2017.
<https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R41349.pdf>

Mexico: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/mx.html>
 U.S. Embassy in Mexico - <https://mx.usembassy.gov/>
 U.S. Dept of State Mexico page: <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/35749.htm>

Week 10 – Mar 12 – MEXICO continued

Assignment Due: LATAM Issue Brief / Policy Recommendation

Debate: U.S. Foreign Policy toward Mexico

Mar 14 – Final day to change grade mode or to drop class with “W”

Week 11 - Mar 19-23 - Spring Break

Week 12 – Mar 26 – VENEZUELA

Readings:

Javier Corrales and Carlos A. Romero, “U.S. – Venezuelan Relations after Hugh Chavez: Why Normalization Has Been Impossible,” Chapter 9 in Dominguez and Fernández de Castro
 Mark P. Sullivan. **Venezuela**: Issues for Congress, 2013-2016. U.S. Congressional Research Service (CRS) – January 23, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R43239.pdf>

Venezuela - <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/ve.html>
 U.S. Embassy in Venezuela - <https://ve.usembassy.gov/>
 U.S. Dept of State Venezuela page: <https://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/ve/>

Documentary: PBS Frontline *The Hugo Chavez Show*.

Week 13 – Apr 2 – VENEZUELA continued

Debate: U.S. Foreign Policy toward Mexico

Country Team Presentations preparation.

Week 14 – Apr 9 – SUMMIT / PERU

Assignment Due: OAS Assignment

Readings:

Summit of the Americas - http://summit-americas.org/default_en.htm

Cynthia McClintock, “U.S. – Peruvian Relations: Cooperation within the International System of the Twenty-First Century,” Chapter 8 in Dominguez and Fernández de Castro.

Peru - <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/pe.html>
 U.S. Dept of State Peru page: <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/35762.htm>

Week 15 - April 16 –

Assignment Due: Blog Post Tracking Report Due.
Assignment Due: Summit of the Americas Report

Preparation for Country Team Presentations

Week 16 – April 23 - Country Team Presentations and Course Review

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Final Exam *Scheduled*: Wednesday – May 2 – 2:50-5:40pm – Final Exam Optional

Office Hours: Monday 6-6:30pm and by appointment.

CURRENT EVEN BLOG ASSIGNMENT 5% of total grade

Each student is responsible for posting at least fifteen (15) items (approximately one/week) to his/her blog that represent additional information on any Latin American subject that may be of broader interest to the class. In addition, each student is responsible for posting at least ten (15) comments on another student’s blog postings – for a total of 25 postings. A blog tracking report form will be posted on Tsquare and must be submitted by April 16th – at the beginning of class – 3:05pm.

PEER Reviews of Debates and Country Team Student Presentations – 5% of total grade (each)

Each student will complete a peer review of the Foreign Policy Debates and the Country Team Final presentations. Attendance and participation in these exercise is required.

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M: 3:05-5:55pm – Habersham G17

USFP – LATAM Issue Brief / Policy Recommendation – Due: March 12, 2018

***Submit by email with the following subject line:**

Last name.First Name – [Name of Country] Issue Brief on _____

AND deliver printed copy to class – 3:05pm – March 12, 2018

Purpose: to prepare a briefing on a critical issue and a policy recommendation for the new U.S. Ambassador in [Country X]

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 impact on U.S. relations with [Country X], including possible requests for assistance from the U.S. Government (USG). The briefing will also inform the Ambassador of interactions of [Country X] on this issue with other nations that may be of interest to the USG. Again, this issue brief is to be written from the perspective of a country expert [Country X] politics and directed toward maintaining or changing current U.S. policy.

The Issue Brief should be no less than three (3) single-spaced pages and no more than (4) four pages of text, not counting space for footnotes and bibliography. All recommendations should have the following components: (hint: use headings)

1. **Use Memo Format** and section headings.

To: AMB _____

From: (Your) Name, Political Counselor

Date: March 12, 2018

Re: (Issue) in (Country)

Policy Recommendation: (The U.S. government should)

2. **Introduction** to the recommendation that should read as a **stand-alone Executive Summary** (1/2 page). In other words, if the Ambassador reads only the first half-page of the brief, he/she would have a familiarity with the issue, its significance to the U.S. and the recommendation for a course of action.
3. **Background** to the issue (1 page max)
4. **Current conditions** re: issue – including strengths and weaknesses or threats and risks – i.e. why is this issue important to U.S. – Country X relations? (1/2 page)
5. **Analysis:** explain Country X government actions with regard to the issue – and – identify the significance of the issue for U.S.-Country X relations. (1-1 ½ pages)
6. **Policy Recommendation: Should the U.S. continue or change its policy toward Country X with regard to this issue area? Explain.**
7. **Bibliography** of works cited (not included in page count requirement)

Guidelines for evaluation of project:

- 1. All ideas that are quoted or referenced must be footnoted. *Plagiarism will not be tolerated.***
- 2. Note: BOTH footnotes AND a bibliography are required and do not count in the page requirement**
- 3. Expanded footnotes/endnotes (Chicago/Turabian style) are required.**
- 4. Grammar / spelling and presentation will be taken into consideration.**
- 5. Organization of the study and evidence to support the analysis are critical.**
- 6. *Papers submitted electronically without proper subject & attachment labeling will NOT be accepted. Subject line and attached file should have the SAME label.**

Latin Americaa and the Caribbean Geography

Name _____

Identify (label) as many countries and capital cities as possible. Add Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti to the map. Locate: Panama Canal, Amazon River, Andes Mountains, Putumayo River

