This course draws on two fundamental concepts in political science—states and regimes—to make sense of two significant problems in Latin American politics:

The first is the struggle to build democratic societies, and to overcome the legacies of colonialism, exclusion, and authoritarianism. Democracy has historically had a precarious hold in the region, yet in recent decades the bulk of the continent has become at least formally democratic. How strongly rooted is democracy in Latin America? Is there a single model of democracy or is democracy different from country to country? To what extent have democratic regimes overcome legacies of authoritarianism and exclusion? Is democracy backsliding in the region, after decades of democratic advances?

The second problem is insecurity, in the form of political and criminal violence. Although inter-state wars have been rare, intra-state violence has been all-too common. What are the historical roots and contemporary dimensions of violence? Why has it been so pervasive, and can it be overcome?

We will address these questions from a comparative perspective by exploring different sets of literatures, including on military rule and democracy in Chile, on the civil war in Colombia, on the problems of criminal violence throughout the continent, and on the struggle to create more inclusive democracies.

By the end of this course, you certainly won’t know everything there is to know about Latin American politics. (No one does.) Instead, if you do your part through careful study, you will emerge with something simpler but also more powerful: a better understanding of some of
the region’s fundamental political challenges, along with a comparative framework for making sense of them.

**Required readings** are available as links in this syllabus, for download from D2L, either directly from the course site or as external links to other sites. The Diving deeper readings will be helpful for more in-depth research in the specific area. Other readings beyond the syllabus may be Diving deeper as appropriate.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES**

This course presumes some background in political science, and some familiarity with Latin America. In addition, you would be well advised to keep track of current events in Latin America in the national and international press. Reading knowledge of Spanish is an asset, though not required.

We will use D2L, where I will post lectures at the start of each unit, along with messages and grades, and other relevant course materials (such as readings and quizzes).

You will be required to complete:

Eight online quizzes on the course material, a research paper, and participation in class discussion (either asynchronously online and/or through the optional synchronous class on Fridays). The quizzes will contain brief identification and multiple-choice questions and will be posted online via D2L after the end of each unit (from 1-8).

For the research paper, you may work on a topic of your own choosing, but which meets the following conditions:

- It must be clearly connected to the themes of the course. This is not your chance to write on a topic you’ve always wanted to write about, but which has no connection to the course. It is your chance to explore the themes of the course in greater depth. The Diving deeper readings are a good place to start.
- Because this is a course in comparative politics, the project must also be comparative in some way: by focusing on more than one case. I will explain this in greater detail in class.
- It must be clearly analytical—in the sense of explaining or making better sense of a problem—rather than descriptive. Again, I will explain this in class.

The research paper should be between 4,000-5,000 words in length, submitted as a Word file or PDF, through D2L.

You are required to submit a proposal of the research project (roughly 600-1,000 words) by February 12. The proposal should clearly state the main question you will focus on, the argument you will formulate, and how you plan to do what you propose. I will post further details online.

Finally, a participation mark will be assessed through the asynchronous discussion forum in D2L and the optional synchronous class, based on the quantity and quality of your contributions to discussions. A person who makes a small number of intelligent comments will receive a higher grade than one who makes more frequent but less intelligent remarks. At the same time, a person who makes intelligent contributions with higher frequency will
receive a higher mark than one who participates less frequently. You are **required** to participate asynchronously online via D2L, at the very least. The synchronous Friday meeting is **optional** but presents another opportunity to take part in class discussion and to make better sense of the material.

Your final grade will be distributed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eight quizzes (@5% each)</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research paper (due April 14)</td>
<td>45% (including proposal 5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lectures, discussions, and readings are connected but distinct streams. The lectures comment on the readings but will not necessarily follow them precisely: listening to the lectures is *not* a substitute for doing the readings. All course material—including lectures and readings—are fair game for the quizzes. If you listen to the lectures, do the assigned readings carefully, understand the main ideas, and can comment on them critically in the research paper, in the quizzes, and in discussion, you will be well on your way to success in the course.

I will be available for consultation by email, during office hours, or by appointment. Office hours held every Friday after class, except for February 12 and March 12. Instead of office hours on those days, students are invited to join that day’s Rethinking Latin American Studies from the South (RLASS) seminar: [https://live-ucalgary.ucalgary.ca/rethinking-latin-american-studies/events](https://live-ucalgary.ucalgary.ca/rethinking-latin-american-studies/events)

**GRADING CRITERIA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Example Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A- (80-84%)</td>
<td>Exceptional performance: strong evidence of original thinking; good organization; capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base. Work at this level is clearly written, with no spelling or grammar faults.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A (85-89%)</td>
<td>A+ (90% +)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B- (70-73%)</td>
<td>Competent performance: evidence of grasp of subject matter; some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature. Work at this level is generally clearly written, containing at most a few, if any, spelling or grammar faults.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (74-76%)</td>
<td>B+ (77-79%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C- (60-62%)</td>
<td>Adequate performance: understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material; acceptable but uninspired work, not seriously faulty but lacking style and vigour. Work at this level is sometimes or often unclear and contains from some to many spelling and/or grammar problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C (63-66%)</td>
<td>C+ (67-69%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D (50-54%)</td>
<td>D+ (55-59%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E (49-44%)</td>
<td>Inadequate performance: little or no evidence of understanding of the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature. Work at this level is usually poorly written, with numerous spelling and grammar problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F (0-49%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

Computer with reliable Internet connection and capability to participate in optional Zoom meetings.

READING AND WRITING SKILLS

An academic discipline such as political science requires immersing yourself in and critically engaging a substantial body of work. That means quite a bit of reading and writing.

As you manage the reading for this course, you are likely to find that there is little correlation between effort and outcome. It's possible to spend hours reading something without “getting it,” and equally possible to spend very little time reading something else and getting quickly to the heart of it. Reading is not an ability that either comes naturally or does not—it’s a skill that must be learned. Figure out the heart of the argument before you read deeply. When you know the article’s centre of gravity, you read more efficiently. Read actively. Be skeptical, approach the text with questions, and try to answer these for yourself as you make your way through it. The more actively you read, the more you will retain, and the easier it will be to write about it.

You should also keep in mind that it’s not only what you write that matters in how you will be evaluated, but also how you write it. Crisp, clear, effective writing counts. That includes such things as grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, clarity, citation, and organization. As George Orwell noted, “the slovenliness of our language makes it easier for us to have foolish thoughts.” The advice in these articles should help you avoid slovenly writing, at least:


Further help with writing is available through Writing Support Services in the Student Success Centre: [http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support](http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support).

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1 Adapted from K. Chandra and D. Woodruff, MIT.
COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to modification)

January 15  Introduction and overview

January 22  1. The comparative method


Diving deeper:

January 29

2. **Basic concepts: state and regime**

- Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*, Chapter I “Bourgeois and Proletarians”; [https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/ch01.htm#007](https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/ch01.htm#007)

Diving deeper:


February 5-12

3. **States and regimes in Latin America**

- Miguel Angel Centeno and Agustín E. Ferraro, eds. *State and Nation Making in Latin America and Spain* (Cambridge University Press, 2013); Ch. 1 Centeno and Ferraro, “Republics of the Possible: State Building in Latin America and Spain”; and Ch. 2 Safford “The Construction of National States in Latin America, 1820-1890”, pp. 3-55; [https://ebookcentral-proquest.com](https://ebookcentral-proquest.com)
Proposals due Feb. 12


Diving deeper:


Miguel Ángel Centeno and Agustín E. Ferraro, eds. State and Nation Making in Latin America and Spain (Cambridge University Press, 2013); Ch. 19 Centeno and Ferrero, “Paper Leviathans: Historical Legacies and State Strength in Contemporary Latin America and Spain,” pp. 399-416.

February 14-20  Reading week – no class

Feb 26  4. Democracy and dictatorship in Chile


Diving deeper:


- Film “Machuca”; https://ucalgary.kanopy.com/video/machuca


5. The political economy of neoliberalism in Chile


- Rossana Castiglioni and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, “Challenges to Political Representation in Contemporary Chile,” *Journal of*
Bree Busk, “The Popular Assemblies at the Heart of Chile’s Uprising,” *Roar Magazine* (December 11, 2019); https://roarmag.org/essays/the-popular-assemblies-at-the-heart-of-the-chilean-uprising/

Diving deeper:

- France 24 English, "Inside Chile’s unprecedented protest movement"; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3o55qXPWTg (warning, some strong images)
- Eric Lonergan and Mark Blyth, *Angrynomics* (Columbia University Press, 2020); also https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJH0L1KdC-A

March 19-29

6. **Democracy, inequality, and violence in Colombia**


Diving deeper:


April 2

7. Insecurity and violence


Diving deeper:


April 9

8. Democracy and inclusion


Diving deeper:


Wed. April 14   **Final class** - Papers due

**INSTRUCTOR GUIDELINES:**
Students requiring assistance are encouraged to speak to the instructor during class or their office hours. Should you wish to meet outside of office hours, please telephone or email to
make an appointment. It is to the student’s advantage to keep such appointments. All meetings will be held virtually.

Email is a common form of communication but it is not always the most effective way of answering student questions. If you cannot make office hours, please request a one on one meeting outside of these hours, to be held virtually.

**IMPORTANT POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

**Supporting Documentation and the Use of a Statutory Declaration**

As stated in the University Calendar:

Students may be asked to provide supporting documentation for an exemption/special request. This may include, but is not limited to, a prolonged absence from a course where participation is required, a missed course assessment, a deferred examination, or an appeal. Students are encouraged to submit documentation that will support their situation. Supporting documentation may be dependent on the reason noted in their personal statement/explanation provided to explain their situation. This could be medical certificate/documentation, references, police reports, invitation letter, third party letter of support or a statutory declaration etc. The decision to provide supporting documentation that best suits the situation is at the discretion of the student. Students cannot be required to provide specific supporting documentation, such as a medical note.

Students can make a Statutory Declaration as their supporting documentation (available at [ucalgary.ca/registrar](http://ucalgary.ca/registrar)). This requires students to make a declaration in the presence of a Commissioner for Oaths. It demonstrates the importance of honest and accurate information provided and is a legally binding declaration. Several registered Commissioners for Oaths are available to students at no charge, on campus. For a list of locations to access a Commissioners for Oaths, visit [ucalgary.ca/registrar](http://ucalgary.ca/registrar).

Falsification of any supporting documentation will be taken very seriously and may result in disciplinary action through the Academic Discipline regulations or the Student Non-Academic Misconduct policy.

This statement is accessible at: [https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html](https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html)

**Absence From a Mid-term Examination**

Students who are absent from a scheduled term test or quiz for legitimate reasons are responsible for contacting the instructor via email within 48 hours of the missed test to discuss alternative arrangements. A copy of this email may be requested as proof of the attempt to contact the instructor. Any student who fails to do so forfeits the right to a makeup test.
**Deferral of a Final Examination**

Deferral of a final examination can be granted for reasons of illness, domestic affliction, and unforeseen circumstances, as well as to those with three (3) final exams scheduled within a 24-hour period. Deferred final exams will not be granted to those who sit the exam, who have made travel arrangements that conflict with their exam, or who have misread the examination timetable. The decision to allow a deferred final exam rests not with the instructor but with Enrolment Services. Instructors should, however, be notified if you will be absent during the examination. The Application for Deferred Final Exam, deadlines, requirements and submission instructions can be found on the Enrolment Services website at

[https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-exams](https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-exams).

**Appeals**

If a student has a concern about the course or a grade they have been assigned, they must first discuss their concerns with the instructor. If this does not resolve the matter, the student then proceed with an academic appeal. The first step in an academic appeal is to set up a meeting with the Department Head. Appeals must be requested within 15 days of receipt of the graded assignment.

**University Regulations**

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the University policies found in the Academic Regulations sections of the Calendar at

[www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-reggs.html](http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-reggs.html).

**Student Accommodations**

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/).

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at


**Plagiarism and Other Forms of Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct in any form (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) is a serious academic offence that can lead to disciplinary probation, suspension or expulsion from the University. Students are expected to be familiar with the standards surrounding academic honesty; these can be found in the University of Calgary calendar at

[http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html](http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html). Such offences will be taken seriously and reported immediately, as required by Faculty of Arts policy.
Required Access to Technology
Please see the University’s resource page at https://ucalgary.servicenow.com/it?id=kb_article&sys_id=86e7438013753ac06f3afbb2e144b031

Copyright Legislation
As stated in the University of Calgary Calendar, Academic Regulations, “students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright and requirements of the copyright act to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.”

Instructor Intellectual Property
Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP)
FOIP legislation requires that instructors maintain the confidentiality of student information. In practice, this means that student assignment and tests cannot be left for collection in any public place without the consent of the student. It also means that grades cannot be distributed via email. Final exams are kept by instructors but can be viewed by contacting them or the main office in the Department of Political Science. Any uncollected assignments and tests meant to be returned will be destroyed after six months from the end of term; final examinations are destroyed after one year.

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources
For program planning and advice, please consult with the Arts Students’ Centre by calling 403-220-3580 or by email at artsads@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit arts.ucalgary.ca/advising for program assistance.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625].

Important Contact Information
Faculty of Arts Undergraduate Students’ Union Representatives
Phone: 403-220-6551
Email: arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca
Students’ Union URL: www.su.ucalgary.ca
The University of Calgary recognizes the pivotal role that student mental health plays in physical health, social connectedness and academic success, and aspires to create a caring and supportive campus community where individuals can freely talk about mental health and receive supports when needed. We encourage you to explore the excellent mental health resources available throughout the university community, such as counselling, self-help resources, peer support or skills-building available through the following resources:

**SU Wellness Centre:** [http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/)

**Student Wellness Services:**
[https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/services/mental-health-services](https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/services/mental-health-services)

**Campus Mental Health Strategy website:** [https://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/](https://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/)