

## US - Latin American Relations (Spring 2022)

---

**Professor:** Miguel Carreras

**Lectures:** Lectures will be delivered via YuJa on Canvas

**Weekly online session:** Monday 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm (via zoom)

**Email:** [carreras@ucr.edu](mailto:carreras@ucr.edu)

**Office hours:** Monday: 9 am - 11 am (via zoom) or by appointment

### Course Description

This course studies the relations between the United States and Latin America. We begin with an overview of the theories and concepts employed by political science in the study of international relations, and examine how these may be applied to international relations in the Americas. We will then identify the main actors in U.S. policymaking in the region, discuss different theories that seek to explain U.S.-Latin American relations, and examine the history of U.S.-Latin American relations from the colonial period to World War II. The second part of the course will deal with U.S.-Latin American relations during the Cold War, from 1945 to 1990. The topics examined here will include the Cuban missile crisis and the Bay of Pigs, U.S. support for South American military regimes, and U.S. policy toward guerrilla movements in Central America. The final section of the course will examine current issues in U.S.-Latin American relations, including economic ties, immigration, narcotics and the promotion of democracy.

### Course Requirements

There will be two online take-home exams, held in week 5 and finals' week. The first exam will count for 35% of your grade and the final exam also 35%. In the exams, you will have to answer two essay questions. The remaining portion of your grade (30%) will be based on your participation in section. That participation will be evaluated based on your attendance, contribution to the discussion and on quizzes or assignments to be determined by your TA. You will receive a separate syllabus for the section and you should first address any concerns you may have regarding the section with the TA.

### Grading

Mid-term exam: 35%

Final exam: 35%

Participation in section: 30%

### Grading Scale

A+ 100 – 97 / A 96.9 – 93 / A- 92.9 – 90

B+ 89.9 – 87 / B 86.9 – 83 / B- 82.9 – 80

C+ 79.9 – 77 / C 76.9 – 73 / C- 72.9 – 70

D+ 69.9 – 67 / D 66.9 – 63 / D- 62.9 – 60

F / Below 60

## **Game Plan for a Successful Online Course**

The COVID-19 situation appears to be much better than in previous quarters with a rapid decrease in cases in recent weeks. Still, I am aware that uncertainty remains and that some students' daily lives have been disrupted. This situation of course creates some challenges for instruction and requires a number of adjustments. The TA and myself will try our best to be responsive and accommodating, but we also ask you to be a little bit patient if there are some delays or issues that cannot be resolved immediately.

I have tried to organize the course in a way that facilitates student learning and success despite the challenges of remote instruction. This section gives you all the information you need to do well in this online course.

### 1) Lectures

Some of you may not have reliable internet access at all times, so I have decided to pre-record the lectures and post them on Canvas (using YuJa). This way, you can watch the lectures on your computer, TV, or smartphone even if you have intermittent internet connection or you have other impediments. I will upload two lectures every week (1 on Monday and 1 on Wednesday).

### 2) Answering student questions

One drawback of following the asynchronous approach to online teaching (i.e. posting pre-recorded lectures) is that students cannot ask questions while I am lecturing. In order to provide an opportunity for students to ask questions about the lectures and the readings, I will connect every Monday from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm via Zoom. See details on how to connect to this weekly session on zoom below.

I will not lecture during the live session, but will use the time to discuss some key concepts from the lectures, talk about some examples (beyond those mentioned in the lectures), discuss the readings, show you short videos illustrating a concept or political phenomenon, or engage in similar pedagogical activities.

Attending the live sessions is optional. However, these sessions will not be recorded so you are highly encouraged to attend these online discussions to take full advantage of the course material and to prepare for the exams.

In addition to this weekly Zoom session with me, you will also have a weekly discussion section with your TA which will also provide plenty of opportunities for you to ask questions about the material if something is not clear.

Zoom link live session: <https://ucr.zoom.us/j/97007074351?pwd=a00xU29rcGpqOTJkYm1OTUN4MEk3UT09>

### 3) Office hours

The office hours will be held online via zoom. I will be connected on a zoom session every Monday from 9 to 11 am and I will be available to meet with students. There is a waiting room feature in Zoom so I will chat with students one by one (and of course other students will not be able to listen to these conversations). If there are many students waiting, I will set a 10-minutes limit per meeting so I can talk to as many students as possible.

Zoom link office hours: <https://ucr.zoom.us/j/97403738368?pwd=NHY0QVNsemcKVFDhcFg1L0l2VWp6UT09>

If Monday 9-11 am does not work for you, please send me an email and we can try to schedule a meeting at a different time.

#### 4) Online take-home exams

Another challenge of online courses is the administration of online exams. I have opted for a “low-tech” option. You will receive the exams by email on the day the exam is scheduled at 9 am and you will have three days to complete the exam. The exam will be open book, which means you can consult your lecture notes as well as the readings.

The format will be exactly the same for the midterm and for the final exam. You will have to answer two essay questions. The essay questions will not be about narrow details in the readings or lectures. They will be broad and will require a good understanding of the main concepts and historical periods covered in the course. Each answer should be around 4 pages (double spaced). I will give you more details on how to prepare for the exams when we approach the exam date.

#### 5) Accommodating students' needs in challenging times

We will try our best to accommodate any special needs you may have during the quarter. But, if something comes up that is affecting your ability to do well in the course, we ask you to please communicate with me or your TA via email in a timely fashion so we can try to help you.

---

### **Attendance and Participation**

Being engaged and participating in course meetings and discussions is important. Since the lectures are pre-recorded, you can watch them at a time that works for you. But it is essential that you watch the lectures, take notes, and write down questions in a timely manner. You are required to virtually attend the lectures and do the readings associated with that lecture during the week in which those lectures are scheduled and before the discussion sections in which those readings/lectures are discussed.

My lectures do not simply review the assigned readings. I will cover materials during class that are not in the readings (and I will not cover every single point from the readings in the lectures that will be posted online). “Virtual” attendance is, therefore, imperative. You are responsible for all materials covered in class.

The participation in the weekly session will not be recorded, but you are highly encouraged to attend and prepare questions in advance. Attending these sessions will allow you to clarify things that are not clear in the readings or in the lectures.

In addition to the lectures, students must participate in a weekly discussion section. Your attendance and active participation are vital to the success of these discussion sections. Attendance in those discussion sections will be recorded. Your TA will provide more detailed information about the expectations regarding participation and assignments in the sections.

### **Tips for Success:**

- Take notes on the readings and during lecture.
- Keep up with the weekly reading assignments and attend the weekly online session and the discussion section ready to discuss the readings.
- Attend my online office hours. This is a two-hour window when I will be available to talk with you on a one-to-one basis. You should feel free to bring questions, discuss assignments, or just stop by (virtually) to talk about contemporary political issues (related to the course).

### **Students with Disabilities**

Every effort will be made to accommodate students with disabilities. Please contact me or your TA as early as possible in the course about your needs, and we will treat the matter confidentially and with the resources provided by Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC).

### **Academic Integrity**

Cheating in any form is a deeply serious offense. Students who attempt to cheat will be subject to disciplinary procedures. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with UCR's Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures available here: <https://conduct.ucr.edu/policies/academic-integrity-policies-and-procedures>

### **Readings**

There is **one required book** for this course:

Smith, Peter H. and Ana Covarrubias. 2021. *Talons of the Eagle: Latin America, the United States, and the World* (fifth edition). New York: Oxford University Press.

We are also going to be reading selected chapters from the following books:

Schoultz, Lars. 1998. *Beneath the United States: A History of U.S. Policy Toward Latin America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Rabe, Stephen. 2012. *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Crandall, Russell C. 2008. *The United States and Latin America after the Cold War*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

We will also read (and discuss) a few primary documents every week, which will be taken from the following book:

Holden, Robert H. & Eric Zolov. 2011. *Latin America and the United States: A Documentary History* (second edition). New York: Cambridge University Press.

These books are not required for purchase, although you might consider making some of the titles part of your personal library. *All these readings are available on Canvas.*

---

No prior knowledge of Latin American history and politics is assumed or required in this course, but for students who are not familiar with the region it is highly recommended to read this great introductory book to the history of Latin America:

Chasteen, John C. (2016) *Born in Blood & Fire: A Concise History of Latin America* (fourth edition). New York: W. W. Norton.

## Course Schedule and Readings

### March 28 **General Introduction**

Live session #1 (syllabus presentation).

No readings.

### March 30-April 4 **Framework for US-Latin American Relations**

Watch “Lecture 1: Framework for US-LA Relations” on YuJa

Live session #2 on April 4

Smith and Covarrubias, introduction

Schoultz, preface

Galeano, Eduardo (1973). *The Open Veins of Latin America*. New York: Monthly Review Press, introduction.

Mingst, Karen & Arreguin-Toft, Ivan (2017). *Essentials of International Relations*. New York: Norton, pages 72-95.

Ferraro, Vincent (2008). "Dependency Theory: An Introduction," in *The Development Economics Reader*. London: Routledge, pages 58-64.

### April 6 **Monroe Doctrine, Manifest Destiny, & US Imperialism**

Watch “Lecture 2: Monroe Doctrine & Manifest Destiny” on YuJa

Smith and Covarrubias, pages 13-55

Documents: Holden & Zolov, pages 13-16, 23-25, & 41-44

### April 11 **Spanish-American War & Platt Amendment**

Live session #3.

Watch “Lecture 3: Spanish-American War” on YuJa

Schoultz, chapter 8

Documents: Holden & Zolov, pages 71-77 & 82-83

- April 13**                    **Panama Canal & Intervention in Nicaragua**
- Watch “Lecture 4: Panama Canal” on YuJa
- Schoultz, chapter 9
- Documents: Holden & Zolov, pages 86-90, 93-100, 124-126
- 
- April 18**                    **The Good Neighbor Policy**
- Live session #4.
- Watch “Lecture 5: The Good Neighbor Policy” on YuJa
- Smith and Covarrubias, chapter 4
- Documents: Holden & Zolov, pages 133-140 & 147-149
- 
- April 20**                    **Framework for US-Latin American Relations during the Cold War**
- Watch “Lecture 6: Framework for US-LA Relations during the Cold War” on YuJa
- Smith and Covarrubias, chapter 5
- Documents: Holden & Zolov, pages 181-189
- 
- April 25**                    **Early Cold War Interventions: Guatemala (1954) & Cuba (Bay of Pigs)**
- Live session #5.
- Watch “Lecture 7: US intervention in Guatemala” on YuJa
- Rabe, chapter 3
- Documents: Holden & Zolov, pages 192-196
- 
- April 27**                    **Take-Home Midterm Exam distributed (no class)**
- Exam distributed at 9 AM on April 27. Exam due on Friday April 29 at 10 PM**
- 
- May 2**                        **The Cuban Missile Crisis**
- Live session #6.
- Watch “Lecture 8: The Cuban Missile Crisis” on YuJa
- Rabe, pages 59-78

Document: Letter of Fidel Castro to Khrushchev on Oct 26, 1962  
(<https://microsites.jfklibrary.org/cmc/oct26/doc2.html>)

**May 4**

**Kennedy's Alliance for Progress**

Watch "Lecture 9: The Alliance for Progress" on YuJa

Schoultz, chapter 18

Documents: Holden & Zolov, pages 221-223 & 227-229

**May 9**

**Covert Activities – U.S. & Military Regimes in South America**

Live session #7.

Watch "Lecture 10: U.S. & Military Regimes in South America" on YuJa

Rabe, chapter 6

Documents: Holden & Zolov, pages 243-247, 277-280, 284-287, & 292-293

**May 11**

**U.S. and Central America in the 1980s**

Watch "Lecture 11: U.S. and Central America in the 1980s" on YuJa

Rabe, chapter 7

Documents: Holden & Zolov, pages 302-309 & 315-318

**May 16-May 18**

**Hemispheric Relations after the Cold War**

Live session #8 on May 16.

Watch "Lecture 12: Hemispheric Relations after the Cold War" on YuJa

Smith and Covarrubias, chapter 9

Crandall, chapter 3

**May 23**

**Immigration Politics and Policy**

Live session #9

Watch "Lecture 13: Immigration from Latin America and US Responses" on YuJa

Smith and Covarrubias, chapter 13

Documents: Remarks by President Obama in Address to the Nation on Immigration (November 20, 2014)

Trump's 'Remain in Mexico' program dwindles as more immigrants are flown to Guatemala or are quickly deported (February 2020) – *The Washington Post*

**May 25**

**Drug Trafficking, Drug Wars**

Watch “Lecture 14: Drug Trafficking, Drug Wars” on YuJa

Crandall, chapter 7

Documents: Holden & Zolov, pages 378-382

**May 30**

**Memorial Day (no lecture uploaded, no live session)**

**June 1**

**Trump, Biden, and the Future of US-Latin American Relations**

Live session #10 (review for final).

Watch “Lecture 15: Trump, Biden, and US-LA Relations” on YuJa

Oliva, Carlos & Gary Prevost, “The Trump Administration in Latin America: Continuity and Change”, *International Journal of Cuban Studies*, 11(1): 13-23

“Biden’s First Year Policies toward Latin America” - Washington Office on Latin America.

Feinberg, Richard E., “Biden in Latin America: A Modest Start”, *Global Americans*

**June 3**

**Take-Home Final Exam distributed at 9 am**

**Exam due on Sunday June 5 at 10 PM**