

International Relations of Latin America

IR 2030 / POL 2064

Spring 2024

Instructor: Quintijn Kat

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Class hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays: 11:50am – 1:20pm.

Office hours: Tuesdays, 5pm-6pm.

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What is Latin America's role in the world, and how has this role changed over time? How do Latin American states and actors influence other parts of the world (or have done so in the past)? What role does the United States play in Latin America, and what about China? What are the region's major current transnational issues, and what challenges do they pose? What do Latin American perspectives on IR contribute to IR theory and scholarship?

The purpose of this course is to help students formulate answers to these and other questions by introducing them to the international relations of the Latin American region (understood here as comprising Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and South America). The first half of the course has an historical focus, giving students a crash course in developments in Latin American international politics from colonisation to the present day with particular emphasis on the 20th century. In continuation, we look at the influence of China in Latin America, the roles and foreign policies of the region's two largest economies (Mexico and Brazil), and Latin American perspectives on IR theory and practice. In the second half of the course, we turn to important contemporary themes and issues of Latin American international relations (e.g., security, migration, the curious case of Cuba, the rise of authoritarianism, etcetera).

The course does not presume a prior knowledge of Latin American politics, history or economics.

Learning outcomes

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

- Explain and analyse the historical trajectory of Latin American states and civil society actors' engagement with other parts of the hemisphere and the world;
- Interpret and discuss the various forces driving inter-American relations;
- Analyse the relevance of distinct theoretical traditions in the study of global politics to studying Latin America's role in the world;
- Explain the main Latin American contributions to IR theory;
- Explain and develop an argument about several contemporary issues of Latin American international relations.
- Apply the insights gained from the course readings to produce an essay on a contemporary issue of Latin American international relations.

Students are expected to read extensively for this course. It is important that students read **all required materials** prior to the week for which they have been assigned.

General readings

Those seeking to expand their background knowledge of the Latin American region and its international politics are advised to consult the titles below. Certain chapters of these works feature among the required readings. Reading the complete works is by no means mandatory, but these titles may be helpful when completing course assignments.

- Michael Reid (2007), *Forgotten Continent: The Battle for Latin America's Soul* (New Haven: Yale University Press). – This is a particularly accessible work and a great contemporary overview of the region.
- Thomas E. Skidmore and Peter H. Smith (2005), *Modern Latin America*, Sixth Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press). – Provides a good general history and includes detailed country chapters.
- Lars Schoultz (1998), *Beneath the United States: A History of U.S. Policy Toward Latin America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press). – For a detailed history of US-Latin American Relations.
- Joseph Tulchin (2016), *Latin America in International Politics: Challenging US Hegemony* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner). – A colourful narration of the changing nature of US-Latin American relations.
- Jorge I. Domínguez and Ana Covarrubias (eds.) (2014), *Routledge Handbook of Latin America in the World* (New York: Routledge). – Includes themed chapters on a variety of issues and individual Latin American states and is a good starting point for those in search of further readings on specific topics.

Besides the major IR journals, Latin American studies journals are a good source of information and in-depth treatment of specific topics. These include *Latin American Politics and Society*, the *Latin American Research Review*, the *Journal of Latin American Studies*, *Latin American Perspectives*, the *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, the *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, *Latin American Policy*, and the *Journal of Politics in Latin America*.

Required readings for each week have been indicated in the schedule below. Some should be available physically in the Ashoka Library. Others will be shared digitally or can be found online via the Ashoka E-resources. In case you do not have access to a reading, please inform me immediately so that I can make it available to all.

Assessment and grading

The course is graded as follows:

Attendance and participation	10%
Presentation	20%
Mid-term exam (19 March)	30%
Final 3000-word essay (deadline Tuesday 7 May)	40%

Attendance in class is mandatory, but students are allowed to miss a maximum of four sessions. Missing more than four sessions will result in a downgrading of your final grade for the course by one letter grade per absence. For example, a student who scored an A- for the course but missed five sessions will end up with a B+; if that same student missed six sessions, he/she will get a B; etcetera. It is therefore advisable to use your allowed absences only if absolutely

necessary. No exceptions will be made with respect to this attendance policy. Requests for doing so will not be entertained.

Each student will be required to give a presentation on one of the readings for the course. This presentation will be graded. Details about the presentation will be provided in class.

The mid-term exam will be held during Week 9, i.e., on 19 March at 11:50am IST. There will be no class that day. The exam will focus on the required readings and the content of the weekly lectures of weeks 1-5. There is only one opportunity to make the exam, and failure to do so will result in an F grade. Only under truly exceptional circumstances that must be thoroughly supported by convincing documentary evidence will a make-up exam be organised. There will be no option to have a second attempt at the exam.

As you will see in the schedule below, questions have been provided for each week. While reading the assigned materials, students should prepare answers to these questions, and they may be asked to present their answers in class. The lectures, too, will help in formulating answers. Students can expect to be presented with similar questions in the exam.

For their **final essays**, students may choose one of several essay questions (to be announced), each of which relates to one of the topics of weeks 6, 7, and 10-13. Essays will be due on **Tuesday 7 May at 11:59pm IST**. Late submissions will result in a “F” for your essay. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

Weekly schedule:

Week 1 (22 January): Colonialism and Independence

Readings:

- Skidmore and Smith (2005), *Modern Latin America* (6th edition), Ch. 1, ‘The Colonial Foundations, 1492-1880s’, pp. 13-41.
- Reid (2007), *Forgotten Continent: The Battle for Latin America’s Soul*, Ch. 3, ‘The Seed of Democracy in the Land of the Caudillo’, pp. 52-69.

Questions: What are the main historical differences between the Latin American colonial and independence experience and that of the British colonies in North America? How has this difference affected developments in Latin America and the United States after independence?

Week 2 (29 January): Latin America & the US: From Monroe to Roosevelt... to Roosevelt (1823-1945)

Readings:

- Mark T. Gilderhus (2006), ‘The Monroe doctrine: meanings and implications’, *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 36(1), pp. 5-16.
- Tulchin, *Latin America in International Politics*, Chapter 4, pp. 49-79.

Recommended readings:

- Schoultz, *Beneath the United States*, Ch. 7 and 8 (pp. 107-124; 125-151).
- Michael R. Hall, 'The Good Neighbor Policy and the Americas', in William D. Pederson (ed.), *A Companion to Franklin D. Roosevelt* (Chichester: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.), pp. 542-554.

Questions: What were the main motivations behind and features of the Monroe Doctrine? Why did the US decide to get involved in the Cuban independence struggle that led to the Spanish-American War? How did the Roosevelt Corollary expand the Monroe Doctrine? What was the central feature of the Good Neighbor Policy, and how did it divert from the Monroe Doctrine and the Roosevelt Corollary?

Week 3 (5 February): The Cold War: Dictators and Revolutionaries

Readings:

- Schoultz, *Beneath the United States*, Ch. 17 and 18, pp. 332-366.
- James R. Kurth (1986), 'The United States, Latin America, and the World: The Changing International Context of U.S.-Latin American Relations', in Kevin J. Middlebrook and Carlos Rico (eds.), *The United States and Latin America in the 1980s: Contending Perspectives on a Decade of Crisis* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1986), pp. 61-74.
- Jorge I. Domínguez (1999), 'U.S.-Latin American Relations during the Cold War and its Aftermath', in Victor Bulmer-Thomas and James Dunkerley (eds.), *The United States and Latin America: The New Agenda* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies; Cambridge: David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies), pp. 33-49.

Questions: What principal changes occurred in Latin America's international position as a consequence of the Cold War? Did the nature of US foreign policy interests in the region change appreciably during this period? What explains US overt or covert intervention in Latin America during the Cold War? What US-held beliefs about Latin America(ns) inspired US responses? What large developments impacted Latin American societies during the 1960s?

Week 4 (12 February): The 'Lost Decade' and the Washington Consensus

Readings:

- Riordan Roett (1992), 'The Debt Crisis and Economic Development in Latin America', in Jonathan Hartlyn, Lars Schoultz, and Augusto Varas (eds.), *The United States and Latin America in the 1990s: Beyond the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), pp. 131-149.
- Tulchin, *Latin America in International Politics*, Ch. 6, pp. 107-129.

Questions: What were the main causes and consequences of the Latin American debt crisis of the 1980s? What long-term effects (if any) did the crisis have on Latin American foreign policies and the international politics of the region? Why and how did the character of US-Latin American relations change with the end of the Cold War?

Week 5 (19 February): The ‘Pink Tide’ and ‘Post-Hegemonic’ Regionalism in Latin America

Readings:

- Steven Levitsky and Kenneth M. Roberts (2011), ‘Introduction: Latin America’s “Left Turn”: A Framework for Analysis’, in Levitsky and Roberts (eds.), *The Resurgence of the Latin American Left* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), pp. 1-27.
- Pia Riggirozzi and Diana Tussie (2012), ‘The Rise of Post-Hegemonic Regionalism in Latin America’, in Riggirozzi and Tussie (eds.), *The Rise of Post-Hegemonic Regionalism: The Case of Latin America* (London: Springer), pp. 1-14.
- Andrés Malamud and Gian Luca Gardini (2012), ‘Has regionalism peaked? The Latin American quagmire and its lessons’, *The International Spectator*, 47(1), pp. 116-133.

Recommended reading:

- Tulchin, *Latin America in International Politics*, Ch. 7, pp. 137-154.

Questions: What were the underlying causes of the ‘Pink Tide’ of leftist and left-leaning governments coming to power in Latin America in the 2000s? How did ‘post-hegemonic’ regionalism in Latin America differ from so-called ‘new’ regionalism? What explains Latin American regionalism’s failure to come to full fruition?

Week 6 (26 February): China and Latin America

Readings:

- Carol Wise and Victoria Chonn Ching (2017), ‘Conceptualizing China–Latin America relations in the twenty-first century: the boom, the bust, and the aftermath’, *Pacific Review*, pp. 1-20, DOI: 10.1080/09512748.2017.1408675.
- Ted Piccone (2016), ‘The Geopolitics of China’s Rise in Latin America’, *Goeconomics and Global Issues Paper 2*, Brookings Institution, pp. 1-24.

Recommended reading:

- Rhys Jenkins (2019), *How China is Reshaping the Global Economy: Development Impacts in Africa and Latin America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), Chapters 10 and 11, pp. 254-317.

Questions: How has China’s engagement with Latin America affected geopolitics in the Americas? What, if any, have been its effects on US hegemony in Latin America? How do China-LAC relations affect international relations outside of the Latin American region? How do Latin American states benefit from China’s engagement, and, contrarily, what may be the risks of their engagement with China?

Week 7 (4 March): Brazil and Mexico

Readings:

- Andrés Malamud (2011), 'A Leader Without Followers? The Growing Divergence Between the Regional and Global Performance of Brazilian Foreign Policy', *Latin American Politics and Society*, 53(3), pp. 1-24.
- Guilherme Casarões (2020), 'Leaving the Club without Slamming the Door: Brazil's Return to Middle Power Status', in Paolo Esteves, Maria Gabrielsen Jumbert and Benjamin de Carvalho (eds.), *Status and the Rise of Brazil: Global Ambitions, Humanitarian Engagement and Global Challenges*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), pp. 89-110.
- Jorge I. Domínguez and Rafael Fernández de Castro (2016), 'U.S.-Mexican Relations: Coping with Domestic and International Crises', in Domínguez and Fernández de Castro (eds.), *Contemporary U.S.-Latin American Relations: Cooperation or Conflict in the 21st Century*, Second edition (New York: Routledge), pp. 30-56.
- Fabricio H. Chagas-Bastos and Marcela Franzoni (2019), 'Frustrated Emergence? Brazil and Mexico's Coming of Age', *Rising Powers Quarterly*, 3(4), pp. 33-59.

Recommended readings:

- Ana Covarrubias (2011), 'Mexico's Foreign Policy under the *Partido Acción Nacional*: Promoting Democracy, Human Rights, and Interests', in Gian Luca Gardini and Peter Lambert (eds.), *Latin American Foreign Policies: Between Ideology and Pragmatism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), pp. 213-229.

Questions: What are the main features of Brazil's foreign policy? What factors and dynamics make it difficult for Brazil to become a regional leader in Latin America? What recent changes can be identified in Brazil's foreign policy in terms of how the state presents itself on the global stage? What are the most important issues in, and factors affecting, Mexico's foreign policy? What are the most important issues in contemporary US-Mexican relations? How have US-Mexican relations changed in the last two decades? What can the concept of 'international insertion' tell us about the rise of Brazil and Mexico in international politics?

Week 8 (11 March): Mid-term break

Week 9 (18 March): Latin American Perspectives on International Relations

19 MARCH: MID-TERM EXAM

Readings for 21 March:

- Arlene B. Tickner (2003), 'Hearing Latin American Voices in International Relations Studies', *International Studies Perspectives*, 4(4), pp. 325-350.
- Raúl Bernal-Meza (2016), 'Contemporary Latin American Thinking on International Relations: Theoretical, Conceptual, and Methodological Contributions', *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional*, 59(1), pp. 1-32, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/0034-7329201600105>

Recommended reading:

- Lucy Taylor (2012), 'Decolonizing International Relations: Perspectives from Latin America', *International Studies Review*, 14(3), pp. 386–400.
- Tom Long (2018), 'Latin America and the liberal international order: an agenda for research', *International Affairs*, 94(6), pp. 1371-1390.

Questions: Which are the main Latin American contributions to the study of international relations and what exactly do they entail? Which notions of 'autonomy' have been formulated in the region? In what ways can the Latin American experience contribute to the decolonization of International Relations?

Week 10 (25 March): Security, Drugs and Crime – Case study: Colombia

Readings:

- Peter Andreas and Angelica Duran Martinez (2015), 'The International Politics of Drugs and illicit Trade in the Americas', in Domínguez and Covarrubias (eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Latin America in the World* (New York: Routledge), pp. 376-390.
- Markus-Michael Müller (2020), 'Enter 9/11: Latin America and the Global War on Terror', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, online first: doi:10.1017/S0022216X20000565, pp. 1-29.
- Robert Muggah (2019), 'Fighting Organized Crime in Latin America: Between Mano Dura and Citizen Security', in Michael Shifter and Bruno Binetti (eds.), *Unfulfilled Promises: Latin America Today* (Washington: Inter-American Dialogue), pp. 27-52.

Recommended:

- Watch this documentary on Plan Colombia and the failure of the War on Drugs: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8EE8scPbxAI&ab_channel=tortugasrojas

Questions: What are potential sources of interstate conflict in Latin America? How does the trade in illegal narcotics in Latin America affect the relations between the region's states and with states outside of the region? What is the role of the United States in the drug issue in Latin America? What domestic effects does the drug trade have, and how does it affect other issue areas of international politics in Latin America? How did 9/11 affect security policy in Latin America? What are the two main policy approaches toward combatting organized crime in Latin America?

Week 11 (1 April): Migration

Readings:

- Douglas S. Massey, Jorge Durand, and Karen A. Pren (2014), 'Explaining Undocumented Migration to the U.S.', *International Migration Review*, 48(4), pp. 1028-1061.
- Allert Brown-Gort (2016), 'U.S. Immigration Policy: Politicization and Impasse', in Domínguez and Fernández de Castro (eds.), *Contemporary U.S.-Latin American Relations: Cooperation or Conflict in the 21st Century*, Second edition (New York: Routledge), pp. 277-293.

- Lisa McLean (2020), 'A question that has no end: the politics of life and death in the search for disappeared migrants in Mexico', *Citizenship Studies*, pp. 1-16: DOI: 10.1080/13621025.2020.1769027.

Recommended reading:

- Luisa Feline Freier (2018), 'Understanding the Venezuelan Displacement Crisis', *E-International Relations*, June 28, <https://www.e-ir.info/2018/06/28/understanding-the-venezuelan-displacement-crises/>

Questions: How are migration and foreign policy linked in Latin America? What explains Mexican and Central American undocumented migration to the United States, and what are the main differences between the two? How do domestic US politics affect US migration policy, and what are its consequences for US relations with migrant-sending states?

We will be watching a documentary this week that shines a light on the many different stages of the migration process that undocumented migrants that travel from South America to the United States must go through.

Week 12 (8 April): Cuba

Readings:

- Carlos Oliva Campos and Gary Prevost (2017), 'Cuba's Relations with Latin America', *Social Research*, 84(2), pp. 487-506.
- Nigel D. White (2019), 'Ending the US Embargo of Cuba: International Law in Dispute', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 51(1), pp. 163-186.
- William Leogrande (2021), 'Frustration Boils Over: The Politics of July 11', https://www.american.edu/centers/latin-american-latino-studies/upload/leogrande_politics-of-11j.pdf

Questions: What are the main obstacles to normalized US-Cuban relations? What role do US domestic politics play? And how does the Cuba issue affect larger inter-American relations?

Week 13 (15 April): International conflict resolution and democracy: The case of Venezuela

Readings:

- Thomas Legler (2020), 'A story within a story: Venezuela's crisis, regional actors, and Western hemispheric order upheaval', *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 109, pp. 135-156.
- David Smilde and Geoff Ramsey (2020), 'International peace-making in Venezuela's intractable conflict', *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 109, pp. 157-179.
- Leiv Marsteintredet (2020), 'With the cards stacked against you: Challenges to a negotiated transition to democracy in Venezuela', *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 109, pp. 87-106.

Questions: Why have inter-American and Latin American ‘democracy-protection mechanisms’ failed to protect Venezuelan democracy during the 2010s? What may prevent (or enable) successful international conflict resolution in the Venezuelan crisis? What actors influence such success? How likely is it that the crisis gets solved through a negotiated transition or a ‘pacted democracy’?

Week 14 (22 April): Present and future: A New Pink Tide or threats to democracy? / Conclusion of the course

Readings:

- Ben M. McKay and Gonzalo Colque (2021), ‘Populism and Its Authoritarian Tendencies: The Politics of Division in Bolivia’, *Latin American Perspectives*, Online First.
- Manuel Meléndez-Sánchez (2021), ‘Latin America Erupts: Millennial Authoritarianism in El Salvador’, *Journal of Democracy*, 32(3), pp. 19-32.

Questions: TBA