Recent presidential elections in Ecuador represent the last of a long series of electoral triumphs of the left in Latin America since Hugo Chávez’s rise to power in 1998. While the neoliberal era seemed to have condemned the Latin American left to irrelevance, the emergence of a variety of leftist governments in the region has led scholars and observers to increasingly discuss and examine what Castaneda (2006) defined as “Latin America’s Left Turn.” This course is devoted to the analysis of the nature and causes of the current “left turn” in Latin America, and to its implications for democracy and democratic consolidation. In particular, what explains the concomitant emergence of a variety of leftist governments in the region? What are their main characteristics? What are their similarities and differences? What are the opportunities and challenges that the Latin American “left turn” poses to democracy? The course will also examine the features and trajectories of populism and contemporary social movements in Latin America and will consider the attempt of some leftist governments to deepen democracy in the region through the establishment of participatory mechanisms.
Readings

• One book is required:

• The other readings include book chapters and journal articles. These readings can be accessed through e-reserves or through the online journals available at the UF library’s website.

Grade Components

• Participation (5%): You are required to complete the readings before class. Your participation grade will be based on your participation in class discussions. Attendance will be taken regularly and will heavily influence your participation grade.

• Two Exams (30% each): the exam will include short answer and essay questions based on the course readings and the topics examined in class.

• Group Presentations (5%): at the beginning of the semester, small groups of students will be created. Each group will be responsible for gathering material on the political evolution and current features of the left in a specific country of choice. You will select the country from a list I will provide. Students will present their results in the last three meetings of the semester. Further instructions will be provided in class.

• Research Paper (30%): you are required to write a research paper of approximately 2,000 words (1” margins, Times New Roman, size 12 font, double spaced). The research paper is due on June 20 in class and should be related to the course. Late papers will not be accepted. Additional instructions will be provided in class.
Policy on Make-up Exams

Make-up exams will be administered only in the presence of university approved excuses or for medical reasons. In the first case, you will need to present written documentation before the exam date and to contact me at least one week before the exam date. Make-up exams will be administered for medical reasons only in the presence of a proper doctor’s note.

Grading Scale

A: 90 or above; A-: 89-87; B+: 86-84; B: 83-80; B-: 79-77; C+: 76-74; C: 73-70; C-: 69-67; D+: 66-64; D: 63-60; D-: 59-57; E: 56 or below

Attendance

Attendance will be taken regularly and will heavily influence your participation grade. Should you miss more than three classes without a University approved excuse, 0.5 points will be subtracted from your participation grade for each additional missed class.

Academic Honesty

Students are required to comply with the university’s Student Honor Code (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/). When you commit plagiarism you violate the Student Honor Code. It is important that you fully understand what plagiarism is in order to avoid it. For a better understanding of what plagiarism is, please visit:

http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/msl/subjects/Physics/StudentPlagiarism.html
Course Outline:

Part 1: The “Left Turn”

Module 1 - Defining and Explaining the “Left Turn”
May 13
- Course Presentation

May 14

May 15
- Levitsky and Roberts (LR), Introduction.

May 16
- LR, Ch. 1.

Module 2 - The Latin American Left, Populism, and Models of Economic Development

May 17

May 20
- LR, Ch. 4.
May 21

- LR, Ch. 3
- LR, CH.2

Module 3 – Social Movements, Citizenship Rights, and Participatory Democracy

May 22

- LR, Ch. 8

May 23

- LR, Ch. 7.

Module 4 – Review and Exam

May 24

- Exam Review

May 27

- Holiday: No Class

May 28

- Exam#1

Part 2: The “Radical” Left in Latin America

Module 5 – The Bolivarian Venezuela

May 29
- LR, Ch. 9.

May 30


May 31

- FILM: *The Hugo Chávez Show* (directed by Ofra Bikel)

Module 6 – Evo Morales’s Bolivia

June 3


June 4

- LR, Ch. 10.

June 5

- FILM: *Cocalero* (directed by Alejandro Landes)

Module 7: Rafael Correa’s Ecuador

June 6

- LR, Ch. 11

**June 7**

**Part 3: The Moderate Left in Latin America**

**Module 8: Brazil**

**June 10**
- LR, Ch. 13.

**June 11**
- FILM: *Lula’s Brazil* (Directed by Gonzalo Arijón)

**June 12**
- Exam Review

**Module 9: Chile**

**June 13**
- Exam#2

**June 14**
- LR, Ch. 14

**June 17**

Module 10: Assessing the “Left Turn”
June 18
- LR, Conclusion

Module 11: Group Presentations

June 19
- Group presentations (I)

June 20
- Group presentations (II)
- PAPER DUE IN CLASS

June 21
- Group presentations (III)