

Introduction to Latin American Politics
CPO 3303
Spring 2026

Professor Anderson
Tuesday Period 8-9 (3:55 PM – 4:00 PM)
Thursday Period 6 (4:05 PM – 4:55 PM)
Office Hours: Wednesday 4-6
Anderson 0101

Anderson 318

This is an introductory course in Latin American Politics. It combines two approaches to studying the region: country specific and thematic. We will study two key cases of the region: Argentina and Venezuela. Venezuela is a case of failed democracy. Argentina is a democratic success. We will begin the course with these countries. In the second half of the semester, we will focus on two themes: resources for democratization and subnational politics.

Requirements

You will have one midterm exam and a final assignment. Each of the two requirements is worth 40% of your grade. Class attendance, including arriving on time, and participation will count for 10% of your grade.

University of Florida link to academic policies

<https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies>

Books

On Venezuela one book, plus 6 chapters across 2 other books

1. Elfenbein, Rachel, *Engendering Revolution: Women, Unpaid Labor, and Maternalism in Bolivarian Venezuela*, University of Texas Press, 2019
2. Smilde, David, Veronica Zubillaga and Rebecca Hanson, editors, *The Paradox of Violence: Revolution, Crime and Policing During Chavismo*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2022, Read Introduction and Chaps 5-7.
3. Rachel Vanderhill, *Promoting Authoritarianism Abroad*, Boulder, Lynn Rienner, 2013, Chaps 1 and 3 only.

On Argentina, approximately 6 chapters across 2 books

4. Anderson, Leslie, *Social Capital in Developing Democracies*, Cambridge, 2010, Chapters 1-3
5. Anderson, Leslie, *Democratization by Institutions*, Michigan, 2016, Chapters 1-3.

On Resources for Democratization, approximately 4 chapters

6. Putnam, Robert, *Making Democracy Work*, Princeton, 1993, chapters to be assigned
7. *The Federalist Papers*: specifically, Madison on institutions and federalism, chapters to be assigned

On Subnational Democratization 1 book plus about 1 ½ chapters from a second book

8. Gibson, Edward, *Boundary Control*, Cambridge, 2012

9. Carlos Gervasoni, *Hybrid Regimes within Democracies*, Cambridge, 2018. Introduction, pp 57-66, which is Section 2.3, pp 192-205 and the 1 page conclusion to Chap 2

Class date	Reading
January 13	first class: pass out syllabus
January 15	Venezuela Elfenbein
January 20-22	Smilde et al
January 27-29	Vanderhill Chapters 1 and 3
February 3-5	Argentina Anderson, 2010, Chapters 1-3
February 10-12	Anderson, 2016, Chapters 1-3
February 17	Midterm exam
February 19	Resources for Democratization Putnam
February 24-26	The Federalist Papers: Madison on Institutions, Hamilton on the presidency
March 3-5	Keynote address: Argentine Political Science Association
March 10-12	Discussion: Democracy in Argentina: what safeguards does it have Democracy in Venezuela: why did it die? Can it be brought back? If so, how?
March 17-19	Spring Break
March 24-26	Subnational Democratization Gibson, first half of book
March 31-April 2	Gibson, second half
April 7-9	Gervasoni
April 14-16	Gervasoni
April 21	Final Think Paper

Additional information

Absences and Make-up assignments: Requirements for absences and make-up exams, assignments and other work in this course are consistent with university policies which can be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/undergrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Absences over 3 will count 0.5 points off of your final grade (on a 100 point scale) without at appropriate scholastic, medical or other approved excuse.

Make up assignments will not be allowed without at appropriate scholastic, medical or other approved excuse.

Accommodation: Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565 or www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to their instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

If you should need counseling or wellness information the University Counseling and Wellness Center can be found at <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Class demeanor: Tardiness: please do not be tardy. If you are tardy come in quietly and do not disturb discussion or films. More than 3 tardy days will impact your participation grade negatively. Cell phones: Students may have their cell phones out in class if they feel it is important for their safety; however, please do not read, use or play with your cell phone during class. Respect: All participants (students, faculty and/or any guest speakers) in this class are asked and expected to be respectful to one another during discussions and other class exercises, remembering that your student body (and the American polity) includes intelligent people of vastly ranging political, religious, social and other opinions and subject positions. Discourse in this class is expected to cover a wide range of opinions and subject positions in a way that is civil at all times. We will practice how to do this in class. Sometimes it is hard work. Your cooperation in this effort will be greatly appreciated.

Academic Honesty: The university's honesty policy regarding cheating plagiarism etc: If a student is found to be cheating on a written assignment the student will receive a zero (0) for that assignment. UF students are bound by the Honor Pledge which states "We the members of the University of Florida community pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted by students for credit at the University of Florida the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The honor code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, students are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personal. If you have any questions or concerns please consult with the faculty instructor for this class.

Attendance and make-up policy: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Your papers should be double spaced, 12-point font, and should be direct, concise and substantive. They should follow the Chicago Manual of Style which is available online at <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>

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Grading Policy and Points:

97-100 A+

94-96 A

90-93 A-

87-89 B+

84-86 B

80-85 B-

77-79 C+

74-76 C

70-73 C-

67-69 D+

64-66 D

60-63 D-

below 60 point: Failure and no credit

More information on grades and grading policies is here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>