

Northwestern University
Department of Political Science
Political Science 343:
“The United States and Latin America”
Winter Quarter 2000

Time: Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:00-12:20

Place: Annenberg G21

Professor: Edward Gibson

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-4

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Teaching Assistants: Tulia Falleti and Margitta Maetzke

This course will examine the interactions between U.S. foreign policy and Latin American politics. The evolving importance of Latin America in U.S. geo-strategic objectives in the 19th and 20th centuries will be analyzed. The course will also look systematically at how the projection of U.S. power shapes the domestic politics of selected Latin American countries.

Course Requirements:

Formal course requirements include timely reading of assignments and regular attendance at lectures and discussion sections. They will also include a mid-term examination, a pop quiz given during the second half of the term, and a final take-home essay examination of twelve pages.

The reading load will *average* 100-120 pages per week.

All students are expected to attend class regularly, and to come to class having done the readings. Attending class is important, because lectures will generally not review reading assignments, but will provide additional material and theoretical perspectives that will be important for your exam responses. Timely reading of the assignments is also important for understanding the lectures. I will assume you have done the readings, and will not re-state the background and basic information in them.

The approximate grade distributions for the course will be: mid-term, 40%, final exam, 50%, pop quiz and participation in discussion sections and class, 10%.

The mid-term will be held during the class period of **February 7.**

The final essay exam will be due on **Monday, March 13 at 12:00 p.m.** The questions for the final will be posted on our NU Courseinfo web page on March 1, the last day of class.

No exceptions will be made for these exam dates and deadlines, except for documented cases of illness or family crisis. Students seeking an exception must request it from the instructor prior to the exam or paper deadline.

Course books and readings:

The following books are available for purchase from Norris Bookstore:

Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle: Dynamics of U.S.-Latin American Relations*, Oxford University Press, 2000.

Walter La Feber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America*, Norton, 1993.

All other assigned readings will be available electronically, and will be downloadable from a "Courseinfo" web site created specifically for this course. The web site is accessible to all students registered for the course. It will contain information on the course which will be updated regularly, the course syllabus, announcements, and assigned readings. From time to time I will assign additional relevant readings from the press and other sources that come up during the quarter. These will be made available for downloading on the web page. Another feature on the "external links" site that you might find useful is a list of links to newspapers, periodicals, and reference sources related to Latin America.

Be sure to bookmark this site in your browser and check it on a regular basis. If you are unfamiliar with these types of electronic sites, you should familiarize yourself with them as soon as possible.

The direct URL address is: <https://courses.nwu.edu/courses/397029319/>

You can also navigate to the site through the main courseinfo site: <http://courses.nwu.edu/> Then click on the College of Arts and Sciences link, then on Political Science, then on the 343 link to our course.

Schedule of Classes and Readings:

January 5: Introduction to the Course

Readings:

Peter Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*: Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2.

January 10: Overview: The Monroe Doctrine and its Corollaries: 1824-1990s

Readings:

Peter Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*: Introduction, Chapters 2 and 3.

January 12, 17 (no class, MLK day) and 19: The Rise of an Imperial Power

Topics:

The Mexican American War of 1847-48

The Spanish American War

The Panama Canal

Central America under the Hovering Giant

World War II and Latin America

Readings:

Peter Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*: Chapter 4.

Walter La Feber, *Inevitable Revolutions*: Introduction and Chap. 2 (pp. 5-85)

January 24, 26, 31, February 2: The U.S. and Latin America in the Cold War

The Cold War and U.S. policies toward Latin America

Central America in the Cold War

Carter and Reagan: contrasting visions, converging policies

Readings:

Peter Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*: Chapters 5 through 8.

Walter La Feber, *Inevitable Revolutions*: pp. 108-127; 162-173; 208-213; 225-242; 255-261; 267-270; 289-312; 325-353; 362-368.

February 7: **MID TERM EXAM**

The U.S. and Latin America after the Cold War:

February 9 and 14: Cuba and the United States: The Closest of Enemies

Edward Gibson, "Fidel Castro: Defender of the Status Quo," *Tampa Tribune*, March 10, 1996.
(Courseinfo Web Page)

Wayne Smith, "Cuba's Long Reform," in *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 1996 (Courseinfo Web Page).

Susan Kaufman Purcell, "The Cuban Illusion," *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 1996 (Courseinfo Web Page).

David Rieff, "Cuba Refrozen," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August, 1996 (Courseinfo Web Page).

Robert Stone, "The High Cost of a Good Drink," in *The New Yorker*, January 26, 1998
(Courseinfo Web Page).

Carl Nagin, "Backfire," in *The New Yorker*, January 26, 1998 (Courseinfo Web Page).

February 16: Latin America and the U.S. in Search of New Frameworks:

U.S. and Latin American Responses to the End of the Cold War

Readings:

Peter Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*: pp. 219-279.

February 21: Visit by Michael Shifter, Inter-American Dialogue, Washington, D.C.: Talk on U.S. Policy
Towards Colombia

Readings:

Readings on U.S.-Colombian relations to be assigned

February 23, 28, March 1: Topics in Contemporary U.S. Latin American Relations

Topics:

U.S.-Mexican Relations after the Cold War

Economic Integration in the Americas

Puerto Rico

Readings:

Peter Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*: Chapter 11.

Paul Krugman, "The Uncomfortable Truth about NAFTA," *Foreign Affairs*,
November/December 1993 (Courseinfo Web Page).

William A. Orme, Jr., "NAFTA: Myths versus Facts," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December
1993 (Courseinfo Web Page).

Bradford de Long, et al., "The Case for Mexico's Rescue," *Foreign Affairs*, May/June,
1996 (Courseinfo Web Page).

Jorge Castañeda, "Mexico's Circle of Misery," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August, 1996 (Courseinfo
Web Page).

Readings on U.S. relations with Mercosur (South American Common Market) to be assigned.

Rubén Berríos Martínez, "Puerto Rico's Decolonization," *Foreign Affairs*,
November/December 1997 (Courseinfo Web Page).