

**SKIDMORE COLLEGE  
SCRIBNER SEMINAR**

**LATIN AMERICA: IMAGES AND REALITIES**

Aldo C. Vacs  
SSP 100 - 028  
Fall 2010  
Tu-Th 3:40 - 5:30pm  
TLC 207

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Office hours:  
*Tu-Th: 9:30-11:00 a.m.*  
*Wed: 9:30a.m.-12:30p.m.*

This seminar intends to introduce students to multiple perspectives on Latin America's political, social, economic and cultural processes and institutions from an interdisciplinary perspective. It examines how Latin America's images and realities have changed throughout time while discussing those political, social, economic and cultural aspects that have remained unchanged. One the main objectives of the course is to facilitate a critical examination of the images (stereotypical or otherwise) associated with Latin America and to contrast them with Latin American reality in its multiple dimensions from a comparative perspective. It is expected that throughout this seminar students would develop and use effectively the analytical skills required to critically examine Latin American issues and to assess the regional political, social, economic and cultural situations and problems from the empirical and normative perspectives. The course aims at providing the students with the information required to understand the diverse aspects of Latin America's development as well as the methodological and technical skills required to read texts carefully, collect data, analyze and interpret it, and communicate the results in an effective and elegant manner, orally and in writing. In terms of critical abilities the course intends to encourage students to cultivate their skills to critically examine regional issues and problems in a creative and independent manner becoming able to assess ideas, systems, processes and behaviors from an interdisciplinary viewpoint.

In addition, this is a course about knowing, particularly about ways to identify problems, formulate productive questions, and go about answering those questions. Students in this course will demonstrate the ability to:

1. distinguish among, and formulate, types of questions asked by different disciplines
2. read critically, and gather and interpret evidence
3. distinguish among the evidence and methodologies appropriate to different disciplines
4. consider and address complexities and ambiguities
5. make connections among ideas
6. recognize choices, examine assumptions and ask questions of themselves and of their own work
7. formulate conclusions based upon evidence
8. communicate ideas both orally and in writing and relate the results of the course to their educational goals

**Course Requirements**

- \* **Class attendance and informed participation are required.** Attendance is essential for those desiring to pass the course and will be taken by signing an attendance sheet. In order to be able to participate effectively in the discussions and other class activities you must read the assignments before the day they are scheduled for analysis in class. In addition, each student, either individually or as member of a small group -depending on the size of the class- will be responsible for leading the discussion in one of the class sessions scheduled for the second and third sections of the course. The student (or students) will meet with the instructor in advance to discuss the ways to research the topic and the contents of the presentation, and will be responsible for delivering with sufficient anticipation a list of reading and discussion questions to the rest of the class. Attendance, preparation for class discussions and student-led activities, and analytical quality of the interventions will be evaluated in order to calculate the course grade (**30% of the final grade**)
- \* **Three papers focused on the materials assigned for different sections.** These reaction papers will be focused on issues to be discussed in class and should present the students' critical reaction to the materials as informed by different disciplinary approaches and will be graded considering both the cogency of their contents and the quality of the writing (**10% of the final grade each**)
- \* **Term paper addressing some selected topics from a critical perspective.** This work should be focused on some relevant issues related to the process of political, cultural, social and/or economic development of Latin America and the product should be a well-rounded paper written from a critical and well informed perspective. The analysis and exposition should be clear and concise, show adequate knowledge of the issues, demonstrate logical consistency, use relevant evidence to advance specific arguments, and draw well-thought critical conclusions (**40% of the final grade**)

### Required Texts

Steven W. Bender, *Greasers and Gringos: Latinos, Law and the American Imagination.*

Peter Winn, *Americas: The Changing Face of Latin America.*

### Supplemental Bibliography

E. Bradford Burns, *Latin America. A Concise Interpretive History*  
ed., *Latin America: Conflict and Creation*

Michael B. Whiteford & Scott Whiteford, eds. *Crossing Currents: Continuity and Change in Latin America*

Ronald Chilcote and Joel Edelstein, eds., *The Struggle with Dependency and Beyond*

James D. Cockroft, *Neighbors in Turmoil: Latin America*

Russell H. Fitzgibbon and Julio A. Fernandez, *Latin America: Political Culture and*

### *Development*

Hansis, Randall, *The Latin Americans: Understanding Their Legacy*

Benjamin Keen, ed. *Latin American Civilization*.

Jan Knippers Black, ed., *Latin America. Its Problems and its Promise*

Jacques Lambert, *Latin America: Social Structures and Political Institutions*

James Malloy and Mitchell Seligson (eds.), *Authoritarians and Democrats. Regime Transition in Latin America*

Kurt von Mettenheim and James Malloy, (eds.), *Deepening Democracy in Latin America*

Rosenberg, Kincaid, and Logan, eds. *Americas: An Anthology*.

Thomas Skidmore and Peter Smith, *Modern Latin America*

Harry E. Vanden and Gary Prevost, eds. *Politics of Latin America: The Power Game*

Whiteford, Michael and Scott Whiteford, eds. *Crossing Currents: Continuity and Change in Latin America*.

Michael B. Whiteford & Scott Whiteford, eds. *Crossing Currents: Continuity and Change in Latin America*

Howard Wiarda and H. Kline, eds., *Latin American Politics and Development*

Eric Wolf and Edward C. Hansen. *The Human Condition in Latin America*.

Gary W. Wynia, *The Politics of Latin American Development*

### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

Required readings are starred (\*). Additional readings will be delivered with sufficient anticipation.

Texts between brackets [ ] are additional, non required, materials that may be helpful for consultation and in writing papers.

#### **September 7 - 14**

##### **1. A Land and its People: Latin American Images and Reality.**

\* Winn: Chapter 1 (A View from the South)

\* Bender: Preface and Chapters 1, 2 and 3

#### **September 16 - 23**

##### **2. The Development of Underdevelopment: Hopes and Disappointments**

\* Winn: Chapters 2 (Legacies of Empire); 3 (The Perils of Progress); and 4 (A Second Independence?)

\* Bender: Chapter 5

[Stuart B. Schwartz, *Early Latin America*]

R. A. Humpreys and John Lynch. *The Origins of Latin American Revolutions*

Howard Wiarda, ed. *Politics and Social Change in Latin America*

Roberto Cortes Conde. *The First Stages of Modernization in Latin America*

Celso Furtado. *Economic Development of Latin America*]

**September 28 - 30**

**3. Is there a Latin American Civilization?: Unity and Diversity in the Americas**

- \* Winn: Chapter 6 (Continent on the Move)
- \* Bender: Chapters 7 and 8
- \* Burns: Chapter 5 (*Latin Americans Define Themselves*)

[Russell H. Fitzgibbon and Julio A. Fernandez, *Latin America: Political Culture and Development*

Benjamin Keen, ed. *Latin American Civilization*.

Jan Knippers Black, ed., *Latin America. Its Problems and its Promise*

Eric Wolf and Edward C. Hansen. *The Human Condition in Latin America*

Roderic Ai Camp, *Politics in Mexico*

Charles Cumberland, *Mexican Revolution: Genesis under Madero and Mexican Revolution: The Constitutionalist Years*

Nora Hamilton, *The Limits of State Autonomy*

Alan Riding. *Distant Neighbors*]

**October 5 - 12**

**4. Contemporary Latin America: Political-Economic Dilemmas**

- \* Winn: Chapter 5 (Capital Sins)

[Fernando H. Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependency and Development in Latin America*

D. Collier and R. Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*

S. Mainwaring, G. O'Donnell, and S. Valenzuela, *The New Democracies in Latin America*

J. Malloy and M. Seligson, eds. *Authoritarians and Democrats*

Richard Salvucci, ed. *Latin America and the World Economy*

W. Smith, C. Acuña, and E. Gamarra, eds., *Latin American Political Economy in the Age of Neoliberal Reform*

E. Bradford Burns. *A History of Brazil*

Peter Flynn. *Brazil: A Political Analysis*

Nancy Schepper-Hughes. *Death Without Weeping*

Alfred Stepan, ed., *Democratizing Brazil*]

**October 14 - 21**

**5. Ethnicity and Class in Latin America: Formal Equality, Concrete Discrimination.**

- \* Winn: Chapters 7 (Children of the Sun); and 8 (A Question of Color)
- \* Bender: Chapter 8

[Peter Calvert, *Guatemala: A Nation in Turmoil*  
Sidney W. Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations*.  
Roger Moody, ed. *The Indigenous Voice*.  
Frank Tannembaun, *Slave and Citizen*  
Jacques Lambert, *Latin America: Social Structures and Political Institutions*]

**October 26 - November 2**

**6. The Gender Divide: Subordination, Resistance and Integration**

- \* Winn: Chapter 9 (In Women's Hands)
- \* *Whiteford & Whiteford: Part V (Gender)*

[Bourque & Warren, *Women of the Andes*.  
P. Drake and I. Kaksic, eds. *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile*  
Gross & Bingham, *Women in Latin America*.  
Jane S. Jacquette, ed., *The Women's Movement in Latin America*.  
Nash & Safa, *Women and Change in Latin America*  
Paul Sigmund. *The Overthrow of Allende and the Politics of Chile*  
Arturo Valenzuela. *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Chile*  
A. Valenzuela and P. Constable, *A Nation of Enemies*]

**November 4 - 11**

**7. The Religious Transformation: From Homogeneity to Heterogeneity**

- \* Winn: Chapter 10 (The Power and the Glory)
- \* *Whiteford & Whiteford: Part VII (Religion)*

[Phillip Berryman. *Liberation Theology*  
Cleary and Stewart-Gambino. *Power, Politics and Pentecostals in Latin America*  
Anthony Gill. *Rendering unto Caesar*  
David Martin. *Tongues of Fire*  
Joseph Murphy. *Santeria*  
Jim Wafer. *The Taste of Blood*]

**November 16 - 23**

**8. A Permanent Upheaval?: Revolution, Violence and Democracy**

- \* Winn: Chapters 12 (Endangered States); and 13 (Making Revolution)
- \* Bender: Chapter 4

[John Booth, *The End and the Beginning: The Nicaraguan Revolution*  
Phillip Brenner et al., eds., *The Cuba Reader*  
Jorge Dominguez. *Cuba: Order and Revolution*  
James Dunkerley, *Power in the Isthmus*  
Susan Eckstein, *Back from the Future*  
Susan Eckstein, ed. *Power and Popular Protest*  
Malloy & Seligson, eds. *Authoritarians and Democrats: Regime  
Transition in Latin America*  
Schulz and Graham, eds. *Revolution and Counterrevolution in Central  
America and the Caribbean*  
Smith, Acuña, & Gamarra, eds. *Democracy, Markets, and Structural  
Reform in Latin America*  
Timothy Wickham-Crowley. *Guerrillas & Revolution in Latin America.*  
Von Mettenheim & Malloy, eds. *Deepening Democracy in Latin America*]

**NOVEMBER 24 - 28 THANKSGIVING VACATION**

**November 30 - December 2**

**9. Where the Real Turns Magical: Artistic Expression in the Americas**

- \* Winn: Chapter 11 (The Magical and the Real)
- \* Burns: Chapter 5 (*Liberating the Spirit of the Artist*)

[Leslie Bethell, ed., *A Cultural History of Latin America*  
Stephen Hart, *A Companion to Spanish-American Literature*  
Cesar Fernandez Moreno, ed., *Latin America in its Literature*  
Valdez and Kadir, eds, *Literary Cultures of Latin America*  
Rafael Ocasio, *Literature of Latin America*  
Jacqueline Barnitz, *Twentieth Century Art of Latin America*  
Beezly and Curcio-Nagy eds., *Latin American Popular Culture*  
Parkinson Zamora and Faris, eds. *Magical Realism: Theory,  
History, Community*]

**December 7 - 9**

## 10. Sports and Identity: Soccer/Football in Peace and War

- \* *Eduardo Galeano, Soccer in Sun and Shadow (excerpts)*
- \* *Janet Lever, Soccer Madness (excerpts)*
- \* *Arbena and LaFrance, eds., Sport in Latin America and the Caribbean (Catholic Church and the origins of soccer in Costa Rica in the early 1900s / Chester Urbina Gaitan -- Case of soccer in early twentieth-century Lima / Steve J. Stein - Soccer madness : futebol in Brazil / Joseph A. Page -- Soccer conspiracies : Maradona, the CIA, and popular critique )*

**Department of Government**  
**Skidmore College**  
**Policy on Civility and Comportment in the Classroom**

The classroom experience is the heart of liberal education, and as such is the most important aspect of your Skidmore College education. Presumably, if you did not agree you would not be attending Skidmore. The faculty of the Government Department takes this understanding as the basis of our educational efforts. It is in an attempt to honor the centrality of the classroom experience that we offer this department policy on civility and comportment.

As is stated in the Student Handbook, your presence at Skidmore College is contingent upon your acceptance of, and full adherence to, the Skidmore College Honor Code. This honor code is distinct from the oath you take when writing a paper or taking an exam – it is in fact much more all-encompassing, and much more demanding.

The Code includes the following statement: *“I hereby accept membership in the Skidmore College community and, with full realization of the responsibilities inherent in membership, do agree to adhere to honesty and integrity in all relationships, to be considerate of the rights of others, and to abide by the College regulations.”* Elsewhere, the Code also calls all Skidmore students to *“conform to high standards of fair play, integrity, and honor.”*

What does it mean to do act honestly, with integrity, and according to high standards of fair play, particularly in the classroom ? In our view, it includes, minimally, the following:

1. No student shall lessen the learning experience of others in the classroom by arriving late to class.
2. No student shall lessen the learning experience of others in the classroom by leaving the classroom while class is in session, except for true medical emergencies.
3. Cell phones must be turned off during class.
4. No student shall disrupt the learning experience of others in the classroom by talking to a neighbor, writing notes to other students, reviewing one’s mail, reading the newspaper, completing homework for other classes, or playing with the laptop computer, while class is in session.
5. No student shall disrespect other Skidmore students, professors or the housekeeping staff by putting feet on the desks or other furniture in the classroom, or by leaving trash, food, or recyclables in the room at the end of the class session.

While we will hold all students to these minimal expectations, we also have some suggestions for those who seek to go beyond the bare minimum of civil classroom comportment to become the type of mature, responsible, active learners who are an asset to any classroom and society at large. These include the following.

6. Every student should take copious and meaningful notes both on assigned readings and

during classroom sessions. Note taking is an important skill—if you do not already possess it, you should acquire it.

7. Every student should take some time to review the notes that he or she has taken on the day's assigned reading before each class meeting. You will be amazed how much more invested and engaged in the class you will feel if you go into the classroom well-prepared.

8. Disruptions in class can be a significant impediment to learning, and no member of the Skidmore community—including faculty and students—should tolerate them. Thus every student should take responsibility for holding his or her peers and classmates to both high academic standards and high standards of civility. If people around you are chatting, passing notes or otherwise detracting from the overall quality of YOUR classroom experience, don't let them get away with it.

9. Individual faculty members in the Government Department will determine the level of sanctions for disruptive behavior.