

**Political Science 261/261W
Latin American Politics
Wednesday 2:00 - 4:40
Harkness Hall 210**

Professor Gretchen Helmke
Office: 334 Harkness Hall
Office Hours: Thursday: 2-4, or by appointment
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This course focuses on the process of democratization and the emergence and consolidation of political institutions in contemporary Latin America. The first part of the class with dictatorship and introduces students to competing theories of democratization. The second half of the course concentrates on the performance and functioning of key democratic processes and institutions. The course draws on a broad range of theoretical and methodological perspectives to analyze the quality and stability of democracy throughout Latin America.

Organization and Course Requirements

For students registered to take the class without a writing credit, grades will be based on the following assignments:

Participation: 20%
Midterm Exam: 40 %
Final Exam: 40%

Participation: 20%
First Midterm Exam: 25%
Second Midterm Exam: 25%
Research Paper 30%

Participation

Participation makes up a significant part of your grade for this course. This class is a discussion seminar, not a lecture course. It is essential that students be prepared to discuss all of the readings each and every class. Many of the works that we will read are intellectually demanding; be sure to leave yourself enough time to do all of the readings carefully.

Student responsibilities include being prepared each week to discuss news from the *Latin American Weekly Reports* at the beginning of each class. In addition, each student will sign up to present at least one of the weekly readings

Carey, John. 2009. *Legislative Voting and Accountability*. Cambridge University Press

Articles

All articles are available on-line through the University of Rochester library course reserves.

Weekly Class Schedule:

Week 1, September 5: Course Introduction (short class)

Course Introduction and Presentation Assignments

Week 2, September 12: Latin American Political Development

Skidmore, Thomas and Peter Smith. 2005

- *Modern Latin America* (sixth edition) pages 42-68.

[Douglass North, Barry Weingast and William Summerhill](#)

Hilton Root, eds. *Governing for Prosperity*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Week 3, September 19: Democratic Breakdowns

1973. Impossible Game
1955- *Modernization and Bureaucratic Authoritarianism*. Berkeley: IIS
Publications.

Valenzuela, A

The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Chile. Johns Hopkins
University Press.

Ex *World Politics* 42:151-83.

Week 4, September 26: Development, Diffusion, 100-3(te)-2r /P MCID 27BDCfuL

Emulati
489.

Comparative Political Studies 39(4): 463-

Week 5, October 3: Games of Transition I

1986. *Transitions From Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions About Uncertain Democracies*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. (Chapters 1-7)

The Structural Foundations of a Pact

Forging

Week 11, November 14: Presidential Systems

Journal of Democracy 5(1):55-69.

Mainwaring, Scott. 1993.