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PSCI 432.01: Inter American Relations

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INTER-AMERICAN RELATIONS

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University of Montana Political Science Department, course #432

Autumn 2012 Meets: Thursdays 3:10-5:30

Office hours: Tuesday 11:10 – 12:30 and Thursday 5:30 – 6:30 and by appointment

Required texts (available for purchase in UC Bookstore and elsewhere):

Mark Eric Williams. 2012. *Understanding U.S. – Latin American Relations: Theory and History*. Routledge.

William Robinson. 2008. *Latin America and Global Capitalism: A Critical Globalization Perspective*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Gilbert Joseph et. al., editors. 1998. *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations*. Duke University Press.

This class focuses on the relations between the United States and Latin America in a global context. By global context, I mean that this relationship does not happen in a vacuum but rather reflects and influences the global context in which it takes place. We will read and discuss three distinct theoretical/empirical approaches to the subject. When we have finished our collective readings, students will then write an essay that evaluates these three approaches.

Students are expected to attend all classes unless ill or in case of emergency. Make a serious effort to get to class on time. **If you are absent or late, send me an email explaining it. Do not explain it to me on the phone, in class, before class or after class.** Students are required to come to class having read all the material carefully.

Grades: Participation in and contributions to the class (50%) and Comparative Approaches Essay (50%).

Students are required to discuss their participation grade, with reference to the participation evaluation criteria found below, with me between September 27 and October 4 AND again between November 1 and November 8. This can be done in office hours or by appointment. It can also be done through email.

1. Introduction to the subject from a Realist Perspective (Williams)

August 30 Introduction to the class (no reading)

September 6 Williams, Forward, Preface and chapters 1 – 3

September 13 Williams, chapters 4 – 6

September 20 Williams, chapters 7 – 8

September 27 Williams, chapters 9 – 10

2. From the Marxist Left (Robinson)

October 4 Robinson, chapters 1 – 2

October 11 Robinson, chapter 3 and chapter 4 up to pg. 202

October 18 Robinson, pg. 202 to end of chapter 4 and chapter 5

October 25 Robinson, chapter 6

3. Cultural Historical Approach (selected chapters from Joseph et. al)

November 1 Section I: Theoretical Concerns, chapters by Joseph, Stern, and Salvatore

November 8 Section II: Empirical Studies, chapters by Poole, Topik, Schroeder, and Palmer

November 15 Section II: Empirical Studies, chapters by LeGrand and Klubock AND Section III: Final Reflections, chapters by Roseberry and Suescun Pozas

4. Writing Project

November 22 No class. Thanksgiving.

November 29 No class. Professor out of town. Exchange drafts with at least one other person in class and give peer review comments. This can be done during class in our classroom if you wish or by other means.

December 6 Discussion of essays. Students required to bring strong drafts to class.

December 11 Essays due by 4pm, either hard copies in my mailbox or emailed to me.

Monday December 3, 8:00am: Due date to give me strong drafts of your paper. I will read and comment on them and have them ready for you to pick up by the close of business on Wednesday December 5. This is optional. However, I will not provide written comments on drafts after this date.

Additional Readings that might be of interest:

Brian Loveman. 2010. *No Higher Law: American Foreign Policy and the Western Hemisphere Since 1776*. University of North Carolina Press.

Greg Grandin. 2007. *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, The United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism*. Holt and Company.

R. Evan Ellis. 2009. *China and Latin America: The Whats and Wherefores*. Lynne Rienner, 2009.

Gordon Mace, Jean-Philippe Thérien, and Paul Haslam, editors. 2007. *Governing the Americas: Assessing the Multilateral Institutions*. Lynne Rienner, 2007.

Russell Crandall. 2008. *Driven by Drugs: US Policy Toward Colombia*. 2nd edition. Lynne Rienner.

William Stanley. 2010. *Enabling Peace in Guatemala: The Story of MINUGUA*. Lynne Rienner.

Wayne Cornelius et al., editors. 2010. *Mexican Migration and US Economic Crisis: A Transnational Perspective*. Lynne Rienner. (Cornelius has co-edited at least five books since 2007 on Mexican migration to the United States all published by Lynne Rienner)

John Booth, Christine Wade, Thomas Walker. 2010. *Understanding Central America*. 5th edition. Westview.

William I. Robinson. 2003. *Transnational Conflicts: Central America, Social Change, and Globalization*. Verso.

Henry Raymond. 2005. *Troubled Neighbors: The Story of US Latin American Relations from FDR to the Present*. Westview. (Provides a positive view of FDR and holds him up as an example of what might be possible today.)

Jorge Domínguez and Rafael Fernández de Castro. 2009. *The United States and Mexico: Between Partnership and Conflict*. 2nd edition. Routledge.

Abraham Lowenthal, Theodore Piccone, and Laurence Whitehead, editors. 2009. *The Obama Administration and the Americas: Agenda for Change*. Brookings Institution.

Robert Holden and Eric Zolov, editors. 2000. *Latin America and the United States: A Documentary History*. Oxford.

Comparative Approaches Essay

Begin your essay with an introductory section that outlines the way in which you have approached the assignment. You are required to make an argument in your paper. Begin by informing the reader of your conclusions and how you have supported your claims in the paper. Then, move on to the following:

FIRST, summarize Williams' approach. State his major claims. Then summarize, briefly, the way in which he substantiates his claims. From your perspective, what are the strengths and weaknesses of this approach?

SECOND, do the same for Robinson.

THIRD, do the same for the cultural approach.

The summaries should address theory, methodology, and empirical findings. Each summary should not be more than a couple of pages long.

FOURTH, take one of the three positions listed below and defend it:

- a. I find one or two of the approaches to be more useful and/or persuasive.
- b. I find none of the frameworks to be particularly useful or persuasive.
- c. I find that each approach makes important, if different, contributions to our knowledge of US-Latin American relations.

If you do not like this framework, you have the option of presenting me with an alternative design. I, however, must approve any paper that veers from the above, in advance.

Writing the Essay:

There is no absolute minimum length requirement for this essay. It seems unlikely, however, that it would be possible to write an essay of quality in less than seven or eight pages. The paper should not go much over 12 pages. I will stop reading at the end of page 15 unless there is a compelling reason not to do so. All essays must be typed, double-space, one inch margins, 12 font size. Insert page numbers and staple your paper together. Don't bother with fancy covers.

Remember to make an argument. For example, a paper that does a good job of analyzing how the empirical findings support - or fail to persuasively support - the theoretical claims laid out in the early chapters of both books is a stronger paper than one that relies more on description (i.e., first the author did this, then she did that, and she concluded with the following arguments). Be careful not to make unsubstantiated assertions. All claims need to be supported, through some combination of reasoning and evidence. This is as true for laudatory comments as it is for critical ones.

Your essay will be graded both in terms of the quality of the ideas presented and in terms of how well the essay is written. Be sure to edit your essay carefully for both style and content. Do not hand in first drafts! Students are welcome to discuss ideas or paper writing strategies with me during office hours or by appointment. I encourage you to read each other's drafts, helping with both style and content. You are encouraged to cite outside readings. If you do so, provide bibliographic references.

Participation Evaluation:

A range. This student is energetic and engaged. This student is highly motivated to make significant contributions to class. This student is consistently well prepared, having read at a minimum the assigned reading, if not beyond. This student's ideas and questions are substantive and generate class discussion. This student may certainly ask clarifying questions but also asks analytical questions and makes analytical comments. Importantly, this student listens and responds to the contributions of other students.

B range. This student participates consistently in discussion. This student comes to class prepared and contributes regularly by sharing thoughts and questions that show insight and a familiarity with the material. This student asks helpful clarifying questions and from time to time asks analytical questions or makes analytical comments. This student shows interest in other students' contributions.

C range. This student meets the basic requirements of class participation. This student is usually prepared and participates occasionally but not on a regular basis. This student's contributions are almost always clarifying rather than analytical and rarely if ever generate class discussion.

D range. This student should not have taken this class. This student rarely if ever meets the basic requirements of class participation. This student misses class often or comes in late, and shows up for class inadequately prepared. The student rarely participates in class discussion or participates in such a way that does not contribute to the quality of the conversation.

Paper Evaluation:

A range. This paper is outstanding in form and content.

The thesis is original and insightful.

The thesis is well defined and the causal relationships clearly articulated.

The evidence illustrates and illuminates the thesis.

Strong bibliography and use of citations and quotes.

The concluding comments and questions are thought provoking and generate ideas for future pursuit.

B range.

The thesis is interesting but not original or notably important and insightful.

The thesis is well defined and the causal relationships are addressed coherently.

The evidence illustrates the thesis but does not illuminate it in a nuanced fashion.

The analysis is simple with less appreciation for nuance than an A paper.

The paper is reasonably well written and proofread.

C range.

The thesis is not all that interesting.

The thesis lacks clarity.

Key terms in the thesis are not defined well and causal relationships are address but not well explained.

There are problems in linking the evidence to the thesis.

The paper may be poorly written or having spelling or grammatical errors. It is clear that the student did not adequately proofread the paper or have help from others in doing so. Weak bibliography and use of readings to support the narrative.

D range.

Poorly written on most if not all fronts.