

<p style="text-align: center;">THE U.S. AND LATIN AMERICA: POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS</p>
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Political Science 146A
Peter H. Smith

Winter 2012

Wednesday 5:00-7:50 p.m.

This course offers an analytical survey of U.S. relations with Latin America. Historical perspective extends from the 1820s to the present, with special attention to the shape and implications of the post-9/11 international environment. Coverage will focus on processes of economic integration (including NAFTA), illegal drug trafficking, undocumented migration, environmental protection, and the challenges of “homeland security.”

Course requirements include:

1. regular attendance at class sessions;
2. assigned readings:
 - Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle: Latin America, the United States, and the World*, 3rd edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008),
 - Jorge I. Domínguez and Rafael Fernández de Castro, *Contemporary U.S.-Latin American Relations* (New York: Routledge, 2010), hereinafter DFC, and
 - Selected materials in a course reader, hereinafter CR.

Papers and Examinations

1. Students are required to submit 10-to-12 page analytical papers by **Wednesday, March 7** (this will count for one-half the course grade).
2. A three-hour closed-book final exam (one-half the course grade).
3. A “mock” midterm exam will be distributed on **Wednesday, February 15**. It is intended for reference only.

COURSE SCHEDULE

PERSPECTIVES AND THEMES

Jan 11: Course Structure and Conceptual Approaches/Contemporary Issues in the Americas

Video: “Missing”

Reading:

Smith, *Talons*, Introduction

HISTORICAL TRENDS

Jan 18: Imperialism in the Americas

Reading:

Smith, *Talons*, chs. 1-3

CR #1: Documents on Imperialism

Jan 25: Cold War in the Americas

Reading:

Smith, *Talons*, chs. 4-6

CR #2: Documents on the Cold War

Feb 01: After the Cold War: From Geopolitics to Geoeconomics

Reading:

Smith, *Talons*, chs. 7-9

CR #3: Robert A. Blecker and Gerardo Esquivel, “NAFTA, Trade, and Development”

THE CONTEMPORARY SCENE: 9/11-PRESENT

Feb 08: **The War on Terror and Global Realities**

Reading:

Smith, *Talons*, ch. 10

DFC, *Contemporary*, chs. 1 (international system) and 3 (Cuba)

CR #4: Smith, "Global Scenarios and U.S.-Mexican Relations"

Feb 15: Neglect and Opportunity for Latin America

Reading:

Smith, *Talons*, ch. 11

DFC, *Contemporary*, chs. 6-8 (Argentina, Brazil, Chile)

Feb 22: The Political Economy of Drug Trafficking

Video: "Meet the Players: The Tijuana Drug Cartel"

Reading:

DFC, *Contemporary*, ch. 9 (Colombia)

CR #5: Luis Astorga and David Shirk, "Drug Trafficking Organizations and Counter-Drug Strategies in the U.S.-Mexican Context"

Feb 29: Migration and Latino Communities

Video: "The Latin American and Caribbean Presence in the U.S."

Reading:

DFC, *Contemporary*, chs. 2, 4, 5 (Mexico, Central America, Caribbean)

CR #6: Jorge Castañeda, *Ex Mex: From Migrants to Immigrants*, excerpts

Mar 07: Barack Obama and the Politics of Hope (?) **PAPERS DUE**

Reading:

Smith, *Talons*, ch. 12

CR # 7: Abraham F. Lowenthal, "Obama and the Americas: Promise, Disappointment, Opportunity"

Mar 14: Conclusions and Review

Reading:

Smith, *Talons*, Conclusion