

# SA.810 (LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM)

## SA.810.700. Understanding Modern Latin American Politics. 4 Credits.

Covers the basic interpretive frameworks that have been employed to analyze political change in Latin America, from the original debates between modernization and dependency theory through the rise of authoritarian regimes to the more recent studies on democratic transitions, neoliberal politics and economics and the consolidation of democratic regimes. Required introductory course for all LASP students. [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

## SA.810.705. Public Opinion as a Driver for Policymakers: Analytical Tools and Illustrative Case Studies. 4 Credits.

A key driver in any democracy, public opinion determines who will govern and which policies will be likely to succeed. Contrary to general beliefs that public opinion is highly ephemeral, both practice and scientific evidence show that public opinion is a stable, measurable, and ultimately predictable phenomenon. To explore the issue both conceptually and in practice, the course will first offer a review and discussion of relevant literature on the subject and then analyze concrete case studies exploring the uses and misuses of public opinion and polling by political and policy stakeholders. Likely case studies will include primarily Latin American examples, such as the 2002 Lula election, but also extra-regional cases, such as the 2008 Obama election and the Arab Spring, among others. The final objective is to develop a critical eye when analyzing public policy and political problems. [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

## SA.810.715. Emerging Market Challenges of the 21st Century: The Case of Brazil. 2 Credits.

The course will focus on relevant policy issues – economic and political – during the PT governments (2003-present) with class discussion focusing on options and opportunities that were overlooked or ignored by the four PT governments (Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff). [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**Prerequisite(s):** Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.810.716[C];SA.810.700[C]

## SA.810.717. Competing in World Markets: Latin America's Legacy & the Emergence of New Industrial Policies. 4 Credits.

Why is Latin America lagging behind other developing regions? This course attempts to respond to this question by examining the political economy of Latin America's insertion into the world economy from the 1950s until today. Emphasizes the nature of public policy, its swings over time and its impact on economic performance. Contrasts Latin America's policies and performance with better-performing economies in Europe, Oceania and Asia—with China only the latest of several waves of developing countries that have leapfrogged Latin America in the growth charts over recent decades. Addresses the lack of strategic industrial policy fostering trade and innovation, one of the glaring differences between Latin America and these countries. In this context, gives special attention to public-private alliances to compete internationally as a key missing page in Latin America's development agenda. Background or prior coursework in Microeconomics and Macroeconomics is recommended. [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

## SA.810.718. The Southern Cone Countries of Latin America: Political Economy of Extremes. 2 Credits.

This two-credit class analyzes the political economy of Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and Paraguay, and inter-state issues (in particular Brazil, the United States, and most recently China as big players in this region of Latin America. A core description and analysis of these countries' political and economic histories and their relations with each other as well as with the big influential countries noted above, gives way to a focus on key general policy topics common to the Southern Cone: 1) Financial and economic instability and strikingly different ways of coping with globalization (i.e. Chile and to some extent Uruguay closer to pro-globalization and orthodox management of monetary and fiscal policies versus Argentina and Paraguay, where for different reasons nationalist, anti-globalization forces have been or remain dominant); 2) Regional integration during the Cold War (analysis of Operación Cóndor) and since its end (i.e. MERCOSUR and now UNASUR); and Energy, Resources and Environment issues (i.e. from dominance of big-scale copper mining in Chile to agrofoods' exports, particularly soybeans in Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay) to the great potential for clean energy (grow hydro-electricity and other renewables, and the paradoxical continuation of dependence on oil and natural gas in all these countries). [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**Prerequisite(s):** Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.810.909[C]

## SA.810.719. Mexico: Leading or Lagging as a Global Emerging Economy. 2 Credits.

This two-credit class introduces students to the changing political economy of Mexico. The course covers recent Mexican history to the current presidency, paying particular attention to the political economy of the long-lived PRI authoritarian regime, the successive financial/economic crises that weakened it starting in the early 1980s, and the long and protracted, although relatively successful “dual transition” that Mexico underwent: from authoritarian to democratic rule and from a relatively closed to an integrated economy in global markets, but especially with the United States. There are also specific sessions devoted to: 1) NAFTA and 'why Mexico does not seem to be able to grow at high rates – like other big emerging markets; 2) Mexican (and Central American) migration to the United States and its effects in both countries; and 3) drug-trafficking and the so-called 'war on drugs' since the mid-2000s, and its many economic, political and security impacts to date. Enrollment limit: 25 [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**Prerequisite(s):** Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.810.903[C]

## SA.810.720. Security in the Andean Region. 2 Credits.

[Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**SA.810.721. Waging the Cold War in Latin America: US Regional Security Policy from WWII to the End of the Soviet Union. 2 Credits.**

In less than five years from the WWII “Good Neighbor” Alliance, U.S. security policy converted Latin America into the principal battlefield of the U.S. Cold War against the Soviet Union. This half semester seminar course will get students debating how Latin America, at first considered a region of little threat to U.S. security interests, becomes the object of the full gamut of U.S. security instruments: covert operations, military intervention, support for military coups, economic sanctions, and diplomatic isolation waged in the name of saving Latin America from communism and preventing a second Cuba. Students will debate using readings and original source materials the U.S. interventions in Guatemala, the Bay of Pigs, Chile, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Nicaragua as well as Kennedy’s Alliance for Progress. Students will draw lessons on the current legacy of the Cold War in the region and the application of Cold War instruments and approaches to the present U.S. drug war. [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**SA.810.722. Drugs, Walls and Aging Guerillas: Seminar on Current U.S.-Latin American Relations. 2 Credits.**

This two-credit course examines current U.S. foreign policy towards Latin America allowing students to go beyond “sound bites” and trace how U.S. policy towards the region shifted and diversified after the end of the Cold War and turned more inward after 9-11. The course begins at the fall of the Berlin Wall, examining distinct policy directions to reframe relations towards free trade, economic cooperation and democracy, while seemingly overwhelmed by domestic pressures reshaping drug and immigration policies in security terms, today simplified by one presidential candidate as fixable by building a “wall”. Students will discuss the role played by changes within Latin America itself, its political maturation (e.g. aging guerillas), as well as growing violence and crime. Despite perceived negative security trends, students will examine how the United States is achieving an opening towards Cuba and support for peace negotiations in Colombia. [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**SA.810.723. The Role of the Private Sector in Development: Social and Environmental Impact. 2 Credits.**

What would development be without the private sector? Companies produce consumer goods, provide vital infrastructure, (clean) energy, enable access to finance, and, most importantly, offer employment. This course aims to broaden students’ perspective on development and take a critical look at the social and environmental contribution of large private sector companies in Latin America and the Caribbean (or Latin American companies investing globally). Private sector participation in the extractive industries, agribusiness, manufacturing, and (renewable) infrastructure can do both harm and good. Companies invest in social impact for business reasons, because of international labor, social and environmental risks and related standards (safeguards), or because they see the need to invest sustainably in the communities where they operate. In this six-week, two-credit course, students will learn to critically analyze the risks and opportunities of private sector engagement in development, both through class lectures and from private sector guest speakers. Different methodologies used in corporate reporting and impact measurement will also be covered. As the main course output, students will choose a project case of an existing large corporate investment in Latin America and the Caribbean (or LAC global investment) and assess in a group assignment its social and/or environmental footprint reaching beyond Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**SA.810.724. Security, Conflict, and Migration in Latin America. 4 Credits.**

This course provides an introduction to the study and analysis of both the history and the evolution of the security policy sphere. This policy sphere is defined in a broad sense—from nation states, to guerrillas and insurgencies, to organized crime, gangs, traffickers, that is, all enemies of the state. The main lens of analysis is the study of the multiple strategies that the US has implemented to confront the evolving conflict and security challenges in Latin America: some debatably successful like Plan Colombia, and others less so, such as the interventions in Nicaragua. The lack of economic opportunity, rampant corruption, weak rule of law and fragile government institutions continue to riddle Latin America and serve as migration factors. Newer initiatives such as the Merida Initiative, the Central American Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) and the Alliance for Prosperity are also analyzed to learn from the past and the present to address shortfalls and potential solutions in a region beleaguered by insecurity and violence, in spite of the absence of international wars. [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**Prerequisite(s):** Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.810.720[C]

**SA.810.725. Mexico: Leading or Lagging as a Global Emerging Economy. 4 Credits.**

This four-credit class introduces students to the changing political economy of Mexico. The course covers recent Mexican history to the current presidency, paying particular attention to the political economy of the long-lived PRI authoritarian regime, the successive financial/economic crises that weakened it starting in the early 1980s, and the long and protracted, although relatively successful “dual transition” that Mexico underwent: from authoritarian to democratic rule and from a relatively closed to an integrated economy in global markets, but especially with the United States. There are also specific sessions devoted to: 1) NAFTA and ‘why Mexico does not seem to be able to grow at high rates – like other big emerging markets; 2) Mexican (and Central American) migration to the United States and its effects in both countries; and 3) drug-trafficking and the so-called ‘war on drugs’ since the mid-2000s, and its many economic, political and security impacts to date. [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**Prerequisite(s):** Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.810.719[C]

**SA.810.727. Financial Crises and Policy Dilemmas in Emerging Markets and Latin America. 4 Credits.**

This course addresses policy issues in emerging markets with a particular focus on financial crises and their implications. Over the last several years, we have witnessed a number of episodes of financial distress often leading to macroeconomic chaos, particularly in emerging markets. Financial fragility and market distress can come in many forms: Currency crises, banking crises, debt crises, or a mix of two or more of these crises. The purpose of this course is to provide students with frameworks and tools for analyzing the causes and consequences of financial fragilities and crises, as well as the policy responses they entail. To this end, the course will mix economic theory, country experiences, and actual policy responses to provide an in-depth understanding of the boom-bust cycles characteristic of emerging market economies. The course will also address the 2008 financial crisis, drawing on aspects that make this particular episode stand out from previous instances of turmoil. Emerging market policy responses to the 2008 crisis, as well as the effects on these countries of unconventional policy stimulus adopted by developed economies will also be discussed. Please note that this course was previously denoted by course number SA.400.774. The course content and syllabus remain the same. [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**Prerequisite(s):** Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.400.774[C]

**SA.810.728. Institutional Crises in Emerging Markets: The Cases of Argentina and Venezuela. 4 Credits.**

Argentina is emerging from a chaotic and self-destructive experiment in populism that deeply divided South America's second-largest economy and left a legacy of chronic budget deficits and sky-high inflation. The country's new, pro-market government is attempting a radical economic and political metamorphosis, as it reengages with the international community and seeks foreign investment. In the past two years, Argentina has returned to economic growth, slowed inflation and begun to reduce the poverty rate. But the experiment's prospects remain uncertain. Just as Argentina sheds its protectionist policies, the international community, including the United States, is moving in the opposite direction. Meanwhile, Argentina's top trading partner, Brazil, is mired in a political crisis and economic malaise. At home, the Peronist opposition warns that the government in Buenos Aires is recklessly borrowing, in a repeat of failed neoliberal strategies that historically exacerbated income inequality and provoked debt crises. Through lectures and high-profile visiting speakers, this course evaluates Argentina's dramatic political and economic history, with a special emphasis on the 2001 economic meltdown that produced 12 years of populist government and the backlash that led to the country's ongoing transformation. [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**SA.810.730. American Hegemony in Decline: US Foreign Policy Towards Latin America. 4 Credits.**

Examines U.S. relations with Latin America from the end of World War II to the present, with emphasis on current post-Cold War relations. Analyzes the evolution of U.S. security interests from the interventionist period of the Cold War to the broader range of U.S. security and economic interests in the post-Cold War era. [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**SA.810.731. The Rise of Economic Nationalism and its Policy Implications. 4 Credits.**

The course will introduce students to the concepts of macroeconomic populism and economic nationalism, discuss their historical origins, as well as the current literature. Following an in-depth overview of these concepts, the course will examine how macroeconomic populism led to financial crises in several Latin American countries and other emerging markets, from the 1970s to the present day. Country cases include Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Nicaragua, Turkey, and Hungary. Readings and discussions will then explore malign and benign forms of economic nationalism, with a special focus on economic nationalism as a development model in South Korea, Taiwan, Argentina, and Brazil. The course will present students with a methodology to measure the global resurgence of economic nationalism/populism, and how this has affected the political and economic policy discourse in the U.S., the U.K., Italy, Mexico, and China. By the end of the semester, students will be versed in the current trends driving the rise of economic nationalism/populism around the globe. [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**SA.810.732. Borders and Migration in the Americas. 4 Credits.**

This course examines the sources of conflict and insecurity for migrants and their receiving countries in the Americas, and surveys a variety of policy and programmatic responses that states and non-state actors have taken to increase peace and security. Migration can lead to political resistance and social conflict in both sending and receiving countries, and flows of illicit goods, drugs, and transnational criminal activity across borders remain a vexing challenge. Through a policy memo, public engagement project, and research paper, students analyze the complexities of integration, security, and coexistence in border spaces, tracing the connections among migration policy, transnational organized crime, and regional integration. [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**SA.810.761. Energy in the Americas: Conflict, Cooperation & Future Prospects. 4 Credits.**

Analyzes the political economy of energy conflict and cooperation in the Americas by function and in terms of major players. The functional component covers the politics of oil, natural gas issues, biofuels, energy infrastructure, energy organization and regulation, private and public sector participation, geopolitics and other energy topics. The major players component includes the politics of energy in Canada, Mexico, the United States, the Andean countries, Brazil, the Southern Cone and Venezuela, and also offers a global perspective on the impact of the world's major energy producers and consumers (i.e. China, India, the Middle East countries and Russia) on the Americas. (This is a cross-listed course offered by the Latin American Studies Program that also can fulfill a requirement for the Energy, Resources & Environment Program). [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**SA.810.776. Latin America & the World: Changing Global Dynamics. 4 Credits.**

As economic protectionism, nationalism and rising authoritarianism roil domestic and international politics, this seminar will explore how the changing global landscape is creating challenges and opportunities for Latin America. Topics will include the region's efforts to seize trade opportunities in the Pacific, including Chile's unsung role in resurrecting the Trans-Pacific Partnership following the U.S. withdrawal, and the widening ambitions of the Pacific Alliance; Mercosur's bet on a free trade agreement with the European Union; the opportunities and risks of Chinese investment, as the United States aggressively discourages the region from over-dependence on Beijing; the role of Russia, including in arms sales and energy investment; and the region's position as a natural resources juggernaut, from unconventional oil and gas in Argentina to the lithium triangle (Argentina, Bolivia and Chile) that accounts for more than half of the world's supply of the key ingredient in batteries for mobile phones and electric cars. For many of these topics, we will invite high-profile speakers to lead the discussion. [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**SA.810.796. Economic Survey of Latin America: Global Players or Market Strayers. 4 Credits.**

This course examines the economics of Latin America in contemporary comparative perspective. Starting with an overview of long term trends in growth and structural transformation, the course moves on to consider the theoretical approaches which economists have adopted to understand development processes in the region. The introductory phase of the course completed, the next three lectures survey the key macroeconomic themes of fiscal policy, monetary policy and the external balance. The difficulties countries in the region have faced in maintaining macroeconomic stability is an important theme of the course and is referred back to again and again in subsequent sessions. An equally important topic, that of poverty and inequality, forms the basis for the next section of the course. The remainder of the course deals with the challenge Latin America now faces as it struggles to compete in the global economy. Teaching on the course comprises a combination of formal lectures and student presentations/group discussions. Each student (in conjunction with one or two colleagues) will be expected to prepare and present one 20 minute presentation at some point during the course. The presentations will be followed by group discussions led by the course lecturer. Broad indications of themes for the talks are provided in this outline. More precise details of the talk topics – along with guidance on sources and formats – will be given in week one of the course.

**SA.810.799. Urban Economics in Emerging Markets: Sustainability, Health & Infrastructure. 4 Credits.**

Focuses on the urban trends in Latin America and other emerging markets, reviews the factors that explain urban form and discusses public policies that aim at dealing with urban growth while promoting livable and sustainable cities. Reviews the macro and micro foundations of urban economics and urban markets. Looks at the functioning of local governments, the role of city development strategies, municipal finance, access to credit and capital markets, corruption, violence prevention and urban poverty. Prerequisites: Microeconomics or Accelerated Microeconomics and Macroeconomics or Accelerated Macroeconomics. [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**Prerequisite(s):** SA.300.701[C] OR SA.300.706[C] OR SA.999.701[C]; SA.999.700 OR SA.300.700 OR SA.999.699

**SA.810.903. Mexico, Central America & the Caribbean: New Challenges Amidst Growing Insecurity. 4 Credits.**

Introduces students to the changing political economy of Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. The course is divided into three parts: Mexico (eight sessions), Central America (three sessions) and the Caribbean basin (two sessions). Devotes particular attention to political and economic institutions, political culture, social and political conflict, market liberalization in the region's countries and a case study of Cuba. Limited to 35 students. [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)

**SA.810.907. Latin America's Political Economy: Pathways to Development. 4 Credits.**

This course is divided into two parts. The first part introduces students to the basic material underlying the historical evolution of Latin America's economy and its economic and political determinants. The focus of the second part shifts from historical to topical inquiry, analyzing the key policy areas, frameworks and choices underlying the current political economy of the region's countries (fiscal and industrial policies, monetary and financial policies and policies on trade, migration, poverty and inequality, energy and environment). [Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios](http://bit.ly/1bebp5s)