

(PALAS 366) U.S.-Latin America Relations
Professor Dr. Claudio González Chiaramonte
Program in Argentinean and Latin American Studies
Universidad de Belgrano
Course Syllabus 2025-1

Course Information

Class sessions : Monday / Wednesday 11:30 - 13:00

Hours of Instruction: 60

Instruction in English

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Descripción del curso / Course Description

This survey course studies the historical interaction of different shapes of power in the construction of the current hegemony of the United States over Latin America. In addition to the traditional political and economic actors that shaped the core of the current inter-American relations, the course also focuses on less known non-state actors that have participated in the relations as well through multiple forms of cultural production. The construction of U.S. hegemony also involved various forms of cultural dynamics that shaped a power discourse on the continental relationship associated to the evolving historical context: state cultural diplomacy or film and media enterprises built references such as "sister nations," "backyard subordinates," or "strategic partners," among others, which were loaded with elements of identity—gender, ethnicity, tradition—that complemented traditional power politics. The course starts with the emergence of the independent nations of the continent—the 19th century and the early 20th century are the grounds to understand the process of current policy formation—yet the bulk of the study focuses on the period from the Cold War to the present.

Course Requirements

Following UB policies, students need a minimum of 75% of attendance to be in good standing for the final exam. This course will be taught remotely. The teaching dynamics will include an asynchronous weekly lecture made available online previously at UB Campus Virtual <https://campus.ub.edu.ar/login/index.php>. Also, there will be a synchronous weekly lecture every Monday at 11:30-13:00 BA time, focusing on open discussion of key concepts of the lecture as well as on the interpretation of specific case studies.

The course evaluation will seek various instances and formats to adapt to and profit from remote teaching, including forum participation, individual online presentations of text reviews, production of short records, brief reports on a specific case study, a midterm exam, and a final exam. The teaching process, through theoretical and practical activities, seeks to stimulate active and reflexive, individual and group participation through critical reading. Students are expected to do close readings of the required bibliography and documents in order to participate in class actively. Wikipedia is not an acceptable source for research. UB holds to the view that plagiarism constitutes intellectual theft and is a serious breach of acceptable conduct. Any student caught plagiarizing will immediately be given a "no credit" for all courses taken in the semester.

Grading Policy

Participation, presentations and report	20%
Midterm exam	40%
Final exam	40%

For a better understanding of the comparable table for grading: check the student handbook (page 9) in orientation kit packet.

Course Content:

Unit 1: The American Revolutions (1776-1824)

Nature and crisis of the European imperial systems in America. The American revolutions of independence and the emergence of national states. Initial contacts among the new Americans: travelers and intellectuals.

Unit 2: The formation of the national States and of the intercontinental diplomatic relations (1825-1898)

The context of the European Industrial Revolution: colonialism and imperialism. England in the Americas. The formation of the U.S. foreign policy: the Monroe Doctrine, the Manifest Destiny, the territorial expansion, and the projection on Central America. The Pan American Union as transcontinental projection. Engineers and doctors as new partners.

Unit 3: The transition of the U.S. to great power (1898-1945)

Financial capitalism and imperialism. The Theodore Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine and the Caribbean Policeman as exports of the domestic Reform. Intervention in the Mexican Revolution. Contradictions in the First World War: neutrality and engagement. The Pan American Conferences: conflicting continental projects. The new FDR policy: Good Neighbors. Contradictions in the Second World War: neutrality and engagement. Money doctors, universities, and the emergence of cinema as dynamic non-state actors.

Unit 4: The Cold War and the U.S. continental hegemony (1947-1990)

The transition of the U.S. to superpower: meaning and dynamics of the Cold War in Latin America. The National Security Doctrine and the Populist regimes. Interventions in Argentina, Bolivia, and Guatemala. *Trade not Aid, Trade and Aid*, and the 1958 Nixon failure. Limitations of the new regional U.S. policies: the Alliance for Progress for continental modernization vs. coups d'état and covert operations. Carter and the brief emergence of human rights: Nicaragua. Reagan's new Cold War: crisis of the external debt and multiple interventions. U.S. Cultural diplomacy and the setting of a hegemonic cultural discourse.

Unit 5: The post-Cold War transition (1991-)

Redefinition of the U.S. hegemony in Latin America. The Initiative for the Americas: global capitalism, free market, commercial integration, and recurrent economic crisis. U. S. intervention through the new intermestic agenda: natural resources, patents, speculative capital, migrations, narcotraffic, terrorism. Globalization and the fluidity of private capital: media, NGOs, and lawfare as new forms of intervention.

Academic Calendar

5 March / Week 1

Unit 1 Introduction: The American Revolutions (1776-1824)

Lecture session:

Langley, America and the Americas, Introduction-Chapter 1

10 March / Week 2

Unit 1 Introduction: The American Revolutions (1776-1824)

Lecture session:

Langley, America and the Americas, Chapter 2

Discussion session:

Langley, America and the Americas, Chapter 3

17 March / Week 3

Unit 2 The formation of the national States and of the intercontinental diplomatic relations (1825-1898)

Lecture session:

Langley, America and the Americas, Chapter 4

Lecture session:

Langley, America and the Americas, Chapter 5

24 March / Week 4

Unit 2 The formation of the national States and of the intercontinental diplomatic relations (1825-1898)

Lecture session:

Holiday

Discussion session:

Tulchin, Argentina and the United States, Chapter 2

31 March / Week 5

Unit 3 The transition of the U.S. to great power (1898-1945)

Lecture session:

Langley, America and the Americas, Chapter 6

Discussion session:

Holiday

7 April / Week 6

Unit 3 The transition of the U.S. to great power (1898-1945)

Lecture session:

Tulchin, Argentina and the United States, Chapter 4 – 5

Discussion session:

Presentation 1

14 April / Week 7

Unit 3 The Cold War and the U.S. continental hegemony (1947-1990)

Lecture session:

Leslie Bethell, "From the Second World War to the Cold War: 1944-1954," in Lowenthal (ed.), Exporting Democracy

Discussion session:

Langley, America and the Americas, Chapter 7

Review exercise

21 April / Week 8

Unit 3 The Cold War and the U.S. continental hegemony (1947-1990)

Lecture session:

Midterm exam

Discussion session:

Tulchin, Argentina and the United States, Chapter 7

28 April / Week 9

Unit 4 The Cold War and the U.S. continental hegemony (1947-1990)

Lecture session:

Langley, America and the Americas, Chapter 8

Discussion session:

Langley, America and the Americas, Chapter 9

5 May / Week 10

Unit 4 The Cold War and the U.S. continental hegemony (1947-1990)

Lecture session:

Langley, America and the Americas, Chapter 10

Discussion session:

Craig Arceneaux, "Neoliberal Reform in Argentina Brazil & Chile;" "Regional Security in Central America," in Craig Arceneaux, Transforming Latin America

12 May / Week 11

Unit 4 The Cold War and the U.S. continental hegemony (1947-1990)

Lecture session:

Craig Arceneaux, "Environmental Degradation, Drug Trafficking, and Immigration," in Craig Arceneaux, Transforming Latin America

Discussion session:

Presentation 2

19 May / Week 12

Unit 4 The Cold War and the U.S. continental hegemony (1947-1990)

Lecture session:

Walt Vanderbush, "The Bush Administration Record in Latin America," New Political Science 31:3 (2009) 337-359

Discussion session:

Lecture session:

Dello Buono & J. B. Lara, "Neoliberalism and Resistance in LA,"

 José Bell Lara & Delia López, "The harvest of Neoliberalism in LA,"

 Hugo Cores, "Former Guerrillas in Power: Uruguay,"

in Richard Dello Buono & José Bell Lara, Imperialism, Neoliberalism, and Social Struggles in Latin America

26 May / Week 13

Unit 5 The post-Cold War transition (1991-)

Lecture session:

Oliver Stone, "South of the Border" (film)

Discussion session:

Comments on Oliver Stone, "South of the Border" (film)

2 June / Week 14

Unit 5 The post-Cold War transition (1991-)

Lecture session:

Raúl Moncarz, "The Obama Administration and Latin America," Global Economic Journal 10:1 (2010) 2-14

Marco Gandásegui, Jr., "Obama, the Crisis, and Latin America," Latin American Perspectives 38:7 (2011) 109-121

Discussion session:

Abraham Lowenthal "Renewing Cooperation in the Americas,"
Bert Hoffman, "Returning Guantánamo Bay to Cuba,"
Michael Shifter, "Seven Steps to Improve U.S-Colombia Relations,"
Rodrigo Pardo, "Human Rights and Free Trade in Colombia,"
in Abraham Lowenthal, Ted Piccone, & Daniel Vaughan-Whitehead (eds.), The
Obama Administration and the Americas
Luis Suárez Salazar, "The Current Crisis of U.S. Domination over the Americas,"
Critical Sociology 38:2 (2014) 179-193
Alessandro Guida, "Donald Trump and Latin America," Interdisciplinary Critical
Studies 4:1 (2018) 185-227

9 June / Week 15

Lecture session:

Review exercise

Discussion session:

Final exam

Bibliography

Lester D. Langley, America and the Americas: The United States in the Western Hemisphere (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1989)

Michael H. Hunt, Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy (New Haven: Yale UP, 1987)

Joseph S. Tulchin, Argentina and the United States: A Conflicted Relationship (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1990)

Craig Arceneaux, Transforming Latin America. Pittsburgh: Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 2005)

Abraham Lowenthal, Ted Piccone, & Daniel Vaughan-Whitehead (eds.), The Obama Administration and the Americas. (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2009)

Richard Dello Buono & José Bell Lara, Imperialism, Neoliberalism, and Social Struggles in Latin America. (New York: Haymarket Books, 2009)

Thomas Leonard, The Panama Canal & the United States (Claremont: Regina, 2001)

Abraham F. Lowenthal (ed.), Exporting Democracy: The United States and Latin America; Themes and Issues (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1991)

Stephen G. Rabe, Eisenhower and Latin America (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988)

Frank Ninkovich & Liping Bu, The Cultural Turn (Chicago: Imprint Pub, 2001)

Abraham F. Lowenthal, Partners in Conflict: The United States and Latin America in the 1990s (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1990)

Tulio Halperín Donghi, Contemporary History of Latin America (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987)

Fernando Enrique Cardoso y Enzo Faletto, Dependency and Development in Latin America (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979)

Demetrio Boesner, Relaciones Internacionales de América Latina (Caracas: N. Sociedad, 1987)

Eduardo Galeano, Las venas abiertas de América Latina (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 1973)

Steven Mintz & Randy Roberts, Hollywood's America: United States History through its Films (New York: Brandywine Press, 1993)

Stephen Whitfield, The Culture of the Cold War (Baltimore: The John's Hopkins University, 1991)