I see this course as the theoretical core for anyone with a serious interest in Latin American politics. In it, we will focus on democratic political institutions and their effects on political stability, party development, policy choice, and economic performance. We will scrutinize a number of the arguments that have been prominent in the literature, for example: that parliamentarism is more stable than presidentialism; that stable party systems increase the likelihood of stable democracy; that electoral rules determine the kind of party system that develops; that presidential decree powers enable presidents to run roughshod over legislatures; and that federalism contributes to governance problems. We will be interested both in making the logic underlying these arguments clear and also in assessing the evidence that supports them.

The course will allow ample opportunities for comparing, analyzing, and criticizing what has become the dominant theoretical perspective in Latin American Politics: institutionalism. In the process of doing this, students should be able to begin synthesizing their own intellectual approaches and identifying areas for future research. To encourage comparing, analyzing, criticizing, and synthesizing, grades in the class will be based on three short analytic papers. Students wishing to begin research papers during this class are encouraged to do so and may complete them by taking a 596 the following quarter.

This class is a discussion seminar. The reading must be done before the seminar meets so that discussion can be lively and informed.

In organizing the syllabus, I have assumed that students are familiar with the basic arguments in:
Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*
Morris Fiorina, *Congress, Keystone of the Washington Establishment*
David Mayhew, *The Electoral Connection*
If you are not familiar with these ideas, you should prepare for the class by reading the articles and enough of the books to get a sense of the main arguments.


A Xeroxed Reader, available at Westwood Copies, on Gayley near Weyburn (parking in the back)
Several papers presented at this year’s APSA meetings, available at http://apsaprocceedings.cup.org. To find the paper you want, click Search on the left side of the screen. Then type the author’s name in the space provided, and click Begin Search.


These books contain studies of party development and presidential-legislative relationships in most Latin American countries. I suggest you use them as background information for countries you are unfamiliar with. Don’t bother to read the editors’ introductions and conclusions.

Schedule of Reading Assignments

Week 1, September 27: Background Information

Week 2, October 4: Democratization: Institutional Continuity and Innovation
Reading: Przeworski and Limongi, “Modernization: Theories and Facts”
Geddes, “What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years?”
Geddes, “A Comparative Perspective on the Leninist Legacy in Eastern Europe”
Coppedge, “Latin American Parties: Political Darwinism in the Lost Decade,” all in xeroxed reader

Week 3, October 11: Fundamentals of the Institutionalist Approach
Reading: Geddes, Politician’s Dilemma, pp. 1-44, 83-130, and 182-96
Cox and McCubbins, “The Institutional Determinants of Policy”
Carey, “Institutional Design and Party Systems”

Week 4, October 18: The Effects of Electoral Rules on Parties and Party Systems
Reading: Cox, Making Votes Count, chap. 3 (not in the reader; will be made available)
Cox, “Centripetal and Centrifugal Incentives in Electoral Systems”
Morgenstern et al., “The Electoral Disconnection? A Comparative Look at Reelection Rates”
Magar et al., “On the Absence of Centripetal Incentives in Double-Member Districts: The Case of Chile”
Morgenstern, “Organized Factions and Disorganized Parties: Electoral Incentives in Uruguay”
Cox and Shugart, “In the Absence of Vote Pooling: Nomination and Vote Allocation Errors in Colombia”
Kornblith and Levine, “Venezuela: The Life and Times of the Party System,” all in xeroxed reader

Week 5, October 25: What Kind of Parties?
Reading: Carey and Shugart, “Incentives to Cultivate a Personal Vote”
Ames, Institutions and Politics in Brazil, chap. 2
Samuels, “Incentives to Cultivate a Party Vote in Candidate-Centric Electoral Systems” in xeroxed reader
Crisp and Schwindt-Bayer, “Discipline under Duress: Short-Term ‘Irrationality’ for Long-Term Gain,” APSA Proceedings

Week 6, November 1: Presidentialism and Stability
Reading: Jones, Electoral Laws and the Survival of Presidential Democracy
Cheibub, “Minority Governments, Deadlock Situations, and the Survival of Presidential Democracies,” in xeroxed reader

Week 7, November 8: Presidential-Legislative Relations: Agenda Setting, Decree Powers, Vetoes
Reading: Alemán and Tsebelis, “Agenda Control in Latin American Presidential Democracies”
Shugart, “The Inverse Relationship between Party Strength and Executive Strength: A Theory of Politicians’ Constitutional Choices”
Londregan, “Ideology and Valence”

Week 8, November 15: I will be out of town Friday 11/15. This class will be rescheduled for a time when everyone can meet.
Presidential-Legislative Relations in Practice
Reading: Baldez and Carey, “Budget Procedure and Fiscal Restraint in Posttransition Chile”
Jones, “Political Institutions and Public Policy in Argentina”
Ames, The Deadlock of Democracy in Brazil, pp. 158-223, both in xeroxed reader
Pereira and Mueller, “Strategic Behavior in a Coalition-Based Presidential System,” APSA Proceedings

Week 9, November 22: The Effects of Federalism
Reading: Samuels, Ambition, Federalism, and Legislative Politics in Brazil, pp. 1-75
Carey and Reinhardt, “Coalition Brokers or Breakers? Brazilian Governors and Legislative Voting,” both in xeroxed reader
Cheibub, Figueiredo, and Limongi, “Presidential Agenda Power and Decision-Making in Presidential Regimes: Governors and Political Parties in the Brazilian Congress” APSA Proceedings
Desposato, “Legislators, Executives and Patronage Distribution,” APSA Proceedings
Penfold-Becerra, “Federalism and Institutional Change in Venezuela,” APSA Proceedings

November 29 is a holiday.

Week 10, December 6: Policy Consequences
Readings: Wibbels, “Federalism and the Politics of Macroeconomic Policy and Performance”
Hershberg, “Why Argentina Crashed – and Is Still Crashing,” all in xeroxed reader
Navia and Velasco, “The Politics of Second Generation Reforms in Latin America,” APSA Proceedings