Politics of Mass Media in Latin America

University of Victoria
Political Science 381, Section A01
Fall 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professor</th>
<th>Dr. Michelle Bonner</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Session</td>
<td>Monday and Thursday 2:30-3:50 (COR B111)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>Monday 1-2pm and Thursday 4:00-5:00pm or by appointment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mbonner@uvic.ca">mbonner@uvic.ca</a> (please put Poli381 in subject line)</td>
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<td>Office</td>
<td>David Turpin Building, A338</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>250-853-3561</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

I acknowledge and respect the Lekwungen-speaking peoples on whose traditional territory the University stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

**Welcome to the course**

Media are a key political actor in democracy and democratization. But, how? What are the limitations? How can the limitations be overcome? Latin America is an interesting region to look at in order to answer these questions.

In the 1970s and 1980s, most countries in Latin America were under authoritarian rule. The media were tightly controlled, censored, and used for propaganda purposes. Some media stood up to these regimes and others supported them. Many journalists were imprisoned, tortured, disappeared or killed. Since the 1990s, most countries in Latin America are now electoral democracies. They hold regular and competitive elections but many other aspects of democracy remain weak. In some countries, journalists continue to be killed for pushing for further democratization. In other countries, media side with state actors to defend the status quo.

Lessons learned from Latin America can be useful for understanding the role of media in democratization in other new democracies. It also can help us to critically reflect on how media work as a political actor in more established democracies.

In this course we explore both the general relationship between media and democracy and some of the specific challenges faced in Latin America. This course builds on discussions of democracy and the media touched on in first and second year courses (particularly poli 103, 210 and 217). It also complements Poli 372 Latin American Politics. Theory is illustrated throughout the course with case examples from various countries in the region, especially Argentina and Chile. In your final paper, you have the opportunity to apply some of what you learn to a Latin American country of your choice.
About the Instructor

Latin American politics is my area of expertise and my passion. My current research is on the media in Latin America. Latin American politics is an area of study within the political science sub-field of comparative politics that, at the graduate level and beyond, often involves travelling and conducting many in-depth interviews with fascinating people. I have had the opportunity to spend significant periods of time in a number of Latin American countries to interview journalists, editors, TV producers, as well as those in charge of communications for social movement organizations, police, and government departments. I have also interviewed politicians, government administrators, political party members, ex-guerrillas, ex-political prisoners, and other academics. I have written four books and numerous articles that present some of what I have found through this work. My book *Policing Protest in Argentina and Chile*, won the Canadian Political Science Association’s 2015-2016 Comparative Politics Book Award and was translated into Spanish. If you would like to know more about me you can check out my website: [https://www.uvic.ca/socialsciences/politicalscience/people/directory/bonnermichelle.php](https://www.uvic.ca/socialsciences/politicalscience/people/directory/bonnermichelle.php)

Course Goals and Objectives

*To Prepare You for Upper Level and Graduate Courses.* By the end of this course you will understand and be able to analyze the relationship between the media and democracy as well as some of the particular challenges of this relationship in Latin America. The course builds on your knowledge of some of the components of politics addressed in Poli 210 (such as democracy, authoritarianism, media) by applying and analyzing them together and in the context of Latin America. This will provide you with regional and issue knowledge and context that will be useful for other 3rd year courses as well as 4th year courses and graduate level courses in comparative politics, media studies or Latin American Studies.

*To Develop and Share Your Country Specific Interest and Knowledge.* Comparative politics encourages you to get to know how an aspect of politics, in this case mass media, works in specific countries. In the lectures I will draw on examples from countries throughout Latin America and through these examples you will become most familiar with mass media in Argentina and Chile. However, it is impossible to adequately address mass media in every country in the region in one course. For this reason, you are given the opportunity to explore a Latin American country of your choice. You will develop your knowledge and analysis of the politics of mass media in that country through your course paper. You are encouraged to use what you learn to provide examples of how the material we are discussing in class relates or does not relate to your chosen country. Sharing your growing knowledge in class will contribute to all students learning more about the similarities and differences in the politics of mass media throughout the region. Through a map quiz on Sept. 10, the course will ensure that you have a basic familiarity of the geography of the region.

*To Develop Research and Analytical Skills.* Facts are often learned and then forgotten. Analytical skills, once learned, are rarely forgotten and can constantly be improved. Many employers seek students with undergraduate degrees in the social sciences because of the students’ strong writing, research and analytical skills. This course will help you to develop your analytical skills through an exam that tests not just for information but your ability to contextualize and analyze. Your term paper will give you the opportunity to build independent research skills and develop a
longer argument supported by analysis. The paper proposal, if you choose this option, aims to get you started writing early and have the opportunity to receive feedback so you can improve your writing on the final paper. If you have not taken comparative politics before, you will come away from this course with a good understanding of how to write a comparative politics paper.

For those of you with strong writing skills, I encourage you to aim beyond the course and write a paper that could be submitted for publication in an undergraduate academic journal such as: Undercurrent (https://www.undercurrentjournal.ca/) Or, On Politics (https://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/onpolitics/index)

To Develop Participation, Presentation and Group Work Skills. Many jobs as well as 4th year seminars and graduate courses require presentation, communication, and group work skills. This course gives you the opportunity to engage with the course material through classroom discussions and in-class group work. There will be informal opportunities for practicing presentation skills. I encourage you to participate in group and classroom discussions not only to develop your participation skills but also to assist you in processing the material you are learning.

Requirements and Evaluation

Map Quiz: This gives you an opportunity to reflect on the size and location of the various countries in the region. You will be given a blank version of a map of Latin America (with borders) at the beginning of class on Sept. 10 and you will be required to identify 5 randomly chosen countries. A pdf of this map with country names included is available on the course CourseSpaces site. Value: 5%

Paper proposal: This is a mini-version of your final essay that will give you an opportunity to receive feedback from me before you write the final paper. It should include: 1) a title page with a title and the research question; 2) one single-spaced page (paragraph format) explaining the proposed essay. The page should include an introductory paragraph with the thesis statement and an explanation of how the thesis statement will be defended; 3) a bibliography with at least 8 academic sources including at least one book. I will provide more information in class during the first week of classes. An accompanying hand-out is available on the course CourseSpaces site. 

Due: Oct. 29 (I will accept proposals with a late penalty only until Oct. 31) Value: 15%

OR

Mid-Term Exam: Some students like to have the opportunity to review concepts before the final exam and receive feedback from me on exam writing. For those students, I provide the alternative option of writing a mid-term exam. The exam will be held Oct. 22 and will cover the first section of course (up to date of mid-term). Value: 15%
Final Paper (8-10 pages): This essay will allow you to showcase the country knowledge you have gained as well as your writing and analytical skills. Essays should be in 12 point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with 1.25 inch (normal) margins. Essays should include a title page, page numbers and bibliography, with graded paper proposals (if this option was chosen) and essay checklist attached. I will provide more details in class during the first week of class and when I return the paper proposal. Accompanying hand-outs are available on the CourseSpaces site.

Due: Nov. 22 (I will accept final papers with a late penalty only until Nov. 26) Value: 35%

Take-Home Exam: The take home exam will give you an opportunity to review all the key issues and concepts discussed in the course and analyze how they relate to each other. Answers will require you to use both your analytical and writing skills. The exam covers the entire course, including both course readings and lectures. I will hold a review for the final exam on Nov. 29 and the exam will be given out at the end of class.

Due: Dec. 6 by 3:00pm. Value: 35%

Participation: Participation in class provides you an opportunity to practice and improve your verbal communications skills. Participation in class will be evaluated based on the quality of your participation in class activities and attendance. Quality participation is constructive, shows you have done the course reading, and is respectful of other students in the class. Attendance will be taken randomly.

Value: 10%

Grading and Late Penalties

I do not want you to miss important class time in order to finish an assignment. Moreover, arriving to class late with a rushed assignment can disrupt the learning of other students. Please come to class the day the written assignment is due and arrive on time. Submit the assignments to me at the beginning of class the day they are due. If yours is not ready, you can complete it after class, though all assignments not received at the beginning of class will have a late penalty imposed (the same as if submitted the next day).

In many jobs, deadlines can be very important with high penalties if they are not met. If you have trouble with time management skills please see the resources listed at the end of the syllabus for assistance. University is a great opportunity to work on developing these skills before entering the workforce. The late penalty for written assignments in this class is -4% per day late (weekends count as one day, e.g. if due on Friday and handed in on Monday -8% will be deducted), unless there is evidence (e.g., a doctor’s note) of significant medical or personal reasons preventing submission on time. You should not delay consulting me regarding late or missed assignments. I accept only hard copies.

To achieve the goals outlined in this syllabus, you must complete all assignments for this course. According to university policy, failure to complete one or more of the assignments will result in a grade of ‘N’ (incomplete) for the course. An ‘N’ is equivalent to a fail for your GPA and will be assigned a numeric percentage grade of 49% or lower.
Required Texts

There is no required textbook for this course. All readings are available through library reserves in electronic form. You can access them on-line through course reserves and My Page. Please see a librarian or me if you have any trouble accessing the readings.

Recommended Text

This text is an excellent guide for essay writing and exam taking. It is highly recommended for this course and any other course you take in the social sciences. It is available for purchase at the university bookstore.


Keeping in Touch

e-mails to me (for quick individual questions or setting up appointments) Like you, I receive a lot of e-mails every day but it is very important to me not to miss e-mail questions from participants in this course. Please put Poli 381 in the subject heading so I know this is a priority e-mail. Please also take a moment before e-mailing me to ask yourself 3 questions: 1) is the answer to the question on the syllabus?; 2) can the question wait until next class so others in the class can benefit from the answer? (It is unlikely you are the only one with the question); 3) can the question wait until my office hours? (Office hours are a great opportunity for me to get to know you one-on-one and have an extended conversation about your work). If your answer is ‘no’ to all these questions then please e-mail me.

CourseSpaces This course has a CourseSpaces site. You can find it at: http://coursespaces.uvic.ca/course/index.php or through MyPage. On the site you will find a copy of the course syllabus and weekly outlines to help you study. You also will find hand-outs explaining the details on all the class assignments. To access the site, you will need a Netlink ID, if you don’t have one already.

Please come and see me I enjoy getting to know you one-on-one and helping you in a more individualized manner with your assignments. Do not be shy about using my office hours.

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Part I: Introductory Session

Week 1 (Sept. 6)

By the end of the week you should be able to:

• Be clear regarding the goals of the course and the steps that will be taken to achieve these goals.
• Question some of the stereotypes of Canadian media coverage of Latin America.
• Understand how to write a comparative politics paper for this course.

Recommended: Read Northey and McKibbin. chapters 1 & 2.
I. THE POLITICAL ROLE OF MEDIA

Week 2 (Sept. 10 & 13): Media and Democracy

Map quiz Sept. 10th.

By the end of the week you should be able to:
• Appreciate why and how democratization is important in Latin America.
• Analyze the ways in which media contribute to democracy.
• Analyze some of the limitations to media playing these roles in democracy.
• Analyze what this means for the role of media in democratization in Latin America.


McNair, Brian. 2003. Ch. 2 “Politics, democracy and the media”. In *An introduction to political communication*. Taylor and Francis. Pp. 16-28


Week 3 (Sept. 17 & 20): Media Systems

By the end of the week you should be able to:
• Identify the differences between media systems.
• Analyze the historical development of media systems in Latin America.
• Analyze some of the challenges and possibilities of Latin American media systems.


Week 4 (Sept. 24 & 27): Media and Public Opinion

By the end of the week you should be able to:
• Analyze the impact of the mass media on public opinion.
• Identify and distinguish what is meant by agenda setting, framing, and priming.
• Know how to find media frames and how they are created.
• Understand the potential implications for democratization in Latin America.


Bonner, Michelle D. 2014. Ch. 9 “Media and Protest Policing in Chile” Protest Policing in Argentina and Chile. Boulder: Lynne Rienner. p.157-180

II. MEDIA AND REGIME TYPES

Week 5 (Oct. 1 & Oct. 4): Media and Authoritarian Regimes in Latin America

By the end of the week you should be able to:
- Identify what is meant by propaganda.
- Analyze different methods used by authoritarian regimes to censor the media.
- Analyze the possibilities and limitations of alternative media under authoritarian regimes.


THANKSGIVING. NO CLASS OCT. 8

Week 6: (Oct. 11 & 15): Media and Democratization in Latin America

By the end of the week you should be able to:
- Analyze the role of media in democratization in Latin America.
- Analyze the legacies of authoritarianism on media in Latin America.
- Analyze the obstacles and possibilities for change.


Video: “After the Black Book” (2005, 55min.) a documentary about muckraking Chilean reporter Alejandra Matus, who was threatened with arrest and forced into exile for revealing the incompetence of the Chilean Supreme Court.
Week 7 (Oct. 18 & 22):

Oct. 18: Review session for the mid-term exam

Oct. 22: Mid-term exam for those choosing this option

III. POLITICAL ACTORS AND THE MEDIA/MEDIA AS POLITICAL ACTORS

Week 8 (Oct. 25 & 29): The State and Mass Media: Policymaking, Legitimacy, and Democratic Accountability

Paper proposal due Oct. 29 for those who have chosen this option

By the end of the week you should be able to:

- Understand how the state uses the media to maintain its legitimacy, gains support for policies, and resist accountability.
- Analyze the possibilities and limitations to state control of the media through communication strategies.
- Analyze the specific challenges and possibilities in Latin America for democratization.


Week 9 (Nov. 1 & 5): Media and the Market: Democracy and Neoliberalism

By the end of the week you should be able to:

- How a market-based media system works.
- Analyze the consistencies and inconsistencies of market-based media systems with democracy.
- Analyze how neoliberalism has affected the role of media in democratization in Latin America.


Week 10 (Nov. 8 & 19): Journalists at Work: Practices that shape the news

READING BREAK, November 12-14 NO CLASS, Nov. 15.
No class November 15. Please work on final paper. Professor available for consultation.

By the end of the week you should be able to:
• Understand how journalists produce news.
• Analyze the constraints and possibilities for journalists contributing to democracy.
• Analyze the implications for democratization in Latin America.


Week 11 (Nov. 22 & 26): Media From the Grassroots

Final Paper Due at the beginning of Class Nov. 22 (graded paper proposal and essay checklist attached)

By the end of the week you should be able to:
• Understand the relationship between civil society and the media.
• Analyze possibilities and limitations for NGOs changing the news.
• Analyze the possibilities and limitations of Latin American NGOs using new and international media.


Course Conclusion Nov. 29

By the end of the class you should be able to:
• Connect together the issues and themes discussed in the course.
• Understand what to expect and how to prepare for writing the take home exam.

Take home exam will be distributed at the end of class.

December 3 NO CLASS please work on your take-home exam.
Your relationship to colleagues in the course

The relationship to your colleagues in this course should be collegial, non-competitive, and supportive. In this sense, the course is like any other professional environment. Since there will be a variety of levels of student experience in this course, please be prepared to be patient with colleagues who know more, or less, than you do. Our collective goal should be that all students who participate fully in the course regardless of level of experience with Political Science, Latin American Studies or Media Studies will have come away with a solid understanding of some of the key issues concerning mass media in Latin American by the end of the term.

Technology in the Classroom

Studies have shown that students, and those sitting near them in class, do better in courses when they use old fashioned pen and paper to take notes. In part, this is due to the distractions of texting, email, facebook etc. and flipping between screens. It is also because taking notes by hand is slower and so forces you to synthesize (and thereby retain) what is being discussed. I encourage you to use pen and paper and give yourself a restful break from your digital screen.

Resources to Assist You

The Centre for Academic Communication. The Centre for Academic Communication is used by everyone -- undergraduate students, graduate students and professors. It is not remedial. You can visit them up to a couple of times a week to get assistance with current or past assignments. They can make a huge difference in your confidence and skill with writing. I have seen students receive their first ‘A’s’ as a result of visiting the Centre for Academic Communication. http://www.uvic.ca/learningandteaching/home/home/centre/index.php

Time Management. Time management is a key skill that makes a huge difference in how well you do at university. It is also a skill that is very valuable in any job you might have after university. If you know you have trouble organizing your time to finish, for example, 3 papers due the same day, then contact study solutions through the library. They offer excellent courses and provide one-on-one assistance: http://www.uvic.ca/library/locations/home/learning/study.php

Personal Challenges. You may also want to contact a counselor if delays in your coursework completion are due to personal challenges you face over the semester: http://coun.uvic.ca

Accommodations. Students who require additional assistance (personal, technological, exam taking, attendance, assignment requirements and more) are encouraged to book an appointment with the Centre for Accessible Learning to consider registration. Additionally, students who do require accommodations are advised to speak to the course director early in the term. For general inquiries: inforcsd@uvic.ca . For information regarding registration, documentation, learning disability assessments, contact information and more, see: https://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/

Equity Policy. “The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing, and protecting a positive, supportive and safe learning and working environment for all its members” –“Senate Resolution, January 13, 1999).
Course Experience Survey (CES)
I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. When it is time for you to complete the survey, you will receive an email inviting you to do so. You will need to use your UVic netlink ID to access the survey, which can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is intellectual honesty and responsibility for academic work that you submit individually or as a member of a group. It involves commitment to the values of honesty, trust and responsibility. It is expected that students will respect these ethical values in all activities related to learning, teaching, research and service. Therefore, plagiarism and other acts against academic integrity are serious academic offences.

The responsibility of the institution - Instructors and academic units have the responsibility to ensure that standards of academic honesty are met. By doing so, the institution recognizes students for their hard work and assures them that other students do not have an unfair advantage through cheating on essays, exams, and projects.

The responsibility of the student - Plagiarism sometimes occurs due to a misunderstanding regarding the rules of academic integrity, but it is the responsibility of the student to know them. If you are unsure about the standards for citations or for referencing your sources, ask your instructor. Depending on the severity of the case, penalties include a warning, a failing grade, a record on the student’s transcript, or a suspension. It is your responsibility to understand the University’s policy on academic integrity, which can be found in the undergraduate calendar.
### PERCENTAGE GRADING SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passing Grades</th>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90 – 100</td>
<td>Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>85 – 89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>80 – 84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>77 – 79</td>
<td>Very good, good and solid performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>73 – 76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>70 – 72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>65 – 69</td>
<td>Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory. These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60 – 64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50 – 59</td>
<td>Marginal Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Failing Grades</th>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 – 49</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 – 49</td>
<td>Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.</td>
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1. The percentage grading scale applies to all Faculties at the University of Victoria.
2. The percentage grades should be associated with a letter grading schema.
3. A percentage grade for an N grade should be assigned in the following manner:
   - **N GRADE**: If a student has not completed the exam, or has not completed the course requirements, but has submitted course requirements that total more than 49% of the total grade for a course, an instructor will assign a percentage grade of 49%.