

Hello everyone,

I hope you had a great weekend.

We are almost done with the term, so in this e-mail I am including information about the final exam, as well as the review questions and some pointers for this week's readings.

FINAL EXAM:

Date: Monday, June 23, 2014 at 12:00 pm (noon)

Location: Buch A-103

The exam will last for 2 hours and 45 minutes (until 2:45 pm).

The final exam is worth 40% of your mark. This will be distributed in the following way:

Short question-and-answer section: 10%

3 essay questions: 10% each (30% in total)

In the attached file, you will find 10 practice essay questions. 5 of these questions will be in the final exam, and you will have to choose three to write your essays on.

The short question-and-answer section is to assess whether you attended the lectures and did the readings. I will not ask extremely specific details (no specific dates, for instance), but I will ask about some fundamental facts that you should know if you were present in the lectures and did the assignments.

If you have any questions about the exam, ask them at the beginning of the lecture on Tuesday or Thursday. I will devote some time to making sure that everyone knows well what the expectations are.

POINTERS FOR READINGS:

This week we will take a step back and look into the contemporary politics of Latin America from a more general perspective. On Tuesday we will talk about the quality of democracy in the region. For this purpose, we will analyze in depth some of the concepts that I have mentioned in class, but that will make much more sense now that we are familiar with some of the cases. Read very carefully O'Donnell's piece on delegative democracies and Levitsky and Way's article on competitive authoritarianism.

As you read, try to reflect on how these notions challenge our perceived views of liberal democracy. What are the trade-offs of these "hybrid" forms of government?

What explains their emergence? Are they a transitional stage in the evolution from authoritarian to democratic regimes or, conversely, are they a stable state of affairs?

I have also assigned the chapters on Chile and Argentina for this session. If you are pressed with time, skim over the Argentinean case but read carefully about Chile. I am very interested in bringing into our discussion the pros and cons of the Chilean path to democratic consolidation.

Finally, on Thursday we will move on to talk about the contemporary political economy of the region. Grugel and Riggirozzi's article offers a very effective overview of the ways in which the new Left wing regimes have challenged the neoliberal economic model of the 1990s, while at the same time working within the market. The chapter on commodity booms in the Domínguez and Shifter volume offers an additional factor to consider: to what extent have these regimes profited from favourable international economic conditions?

The main goal for this last session is to reflect on the extent to which Latin American countries have been able to restructure their economies in order to prevent some of the difficulties that they have faced in the past. In doing so, we will also look for explanations about the persistence of certain characteristics in the economic structure of these countries. Before class on Thursday, try to write down a list of features that you think characterize the trajectory of economic development of these countries.

See you all on Tuesday!

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