

Categories	
Subject	Introduction to Latin American Politics
Day・Period	Wed.5Period
Credit(s)	2Credits
Instructor	ZAVARCE VELASQUEZ CARLOS DAVID,MASAAKI YOKOTA
Practical business	
Course Type	Seminar
Session	Once per week
Preferable Participants	3rd-year and 4th-year undergraduate students, and graduate students.
Eligible Participants	3rd-year and 4th-year undergraduate students, and graduate students.
Course Numbering	JB63075
Language	English
Course of Media Class	No
Main Subjects	No
Styles of class(Face-to-face classes/Online classes etc.)	In-person / face-to-face class
How to contact and Google Classroom Code	E-mail: zavarce@tohoku.ac.jp Google Classroom code: ghwe5mau
Class Start Date, etc.	October 7th, 2026
Class subject	Introduction to Latin American Politics
Object and summary of class	This course is designed to introduce students to the political history and current dynamics unfolding across LAC, providing an understanding of the diverse elements that shape and influence the political systems of LAC countries and their development models. Throughout the course, students will study the different political approaches LAC governments implement to promote national and regional development and challenge or insert themselves into the international system.
Goal of study	1. To study, understand, and compare the different approaches of Latin American and Caribbean nations in relation to domestic and foreign policy. 2. To develop a critical appreciation of recent trends in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as their historical roots. 3. To analyze specific case studies to achieve a deeper understanding of the subject matter. 4. To strengthen academic presentation skills through the preparation of individual and group presentations. Students should come away from the course with an understanding of the diversity of political and economic systems in the Latin American and Caribbean region, an awareness of the pressing political and economic challenges of these countries to achieve sustainable development, and an appreciation of the questions and concepts that shape the work of professionals in politics and international relations.
Contents and progress schedule of the class	Session 1: Welcome and Introduction Session 2: Contextualizing Latin America in Global Affairs Session 3: Historical background of the 19th and 20th centuries: From the Independence Movements to the Washington Consensus Session 4: Current Political Institutions in LAC (21st Century) Session 5: Ideas and Interests of LAC Countries Session 6: National organizations and policy-making processes in LAC Countries Session 7: Regional and international organizations in the LAC region Session 8: LAC – U.S. relations Session 9: LAC – Europe relations Session 10: LAC – Asia relations (Japan, China, and South Korea) Session 11: LAC – Other power blocs' relations (Africa, ASEAN, Middle East, Oceania) Session 12: Current Challenges Session 13: Students' Presentations 1 Session 14: Students' Presentations 2 Session 15: Students' Presentations 3
Record and evaluation method	Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before class and are encouraged to bring questions, comments, and concerns for discussion. The class will provide an overview of and complement, but not necessarily replicate or summarize, the assigned readings. 1. Debate of ideas: Weekly readings will be assigned to deepen the content covered during lectures, and students will be required to participate in discussions (10%).

	2. Two surprise quizzes: The quizzes will be in a short-answer format and will assess how closely students have followed the required readings (10% each / 20% total). 3. Two short presentations: Students will make short presentations about the topic of the day (a 10-minute presentation, 10% each / 20% total). 4. Final presentations: Students will make group presentations explaining specific case studies assigned by the instructor (30%). 5. Attendance (20%).
Textbook and references	Suggested readings: - Garcia-Rodriguez, Antonia, and Greenberg, Daniel (Eds.). (2020). Latin America in the World: An Introduction. Routledge. (Chapter 1). - Munck, Gerardo, and Luna, Juan. (2022). Latin American Politics and Society: A Comparative and Historical Analysis. Cambridge University Press. (Chapter 1) - Vanden, Harry and Prevost, Harry. (2020). Politics of Latin America: The Power Game. Oxford University Press. (Chapter 3). - Kline, Harvey, and Wade, Christine. (2023). Latin American Politics and Development. Routledge. (Chapters 3 and 4). - Onuki, Janina; Mouron, Fernando; and Urdinez, Francisco (2016). "Latin American Perceptions of Regional Identity and Leadership in Comparative Perspective." Contexto Internacional, 38(1), 433–465. - Guedes-Neto, João. (2020). "Mapping the Center of Government in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Typology." Revista de Administração Pública, 55(5). - Van Klaveren, Alberto. (2017). "Regionalism in Latin America: Navigating the Fog." World Trade Institute. - Herz, Mônica; de Almeida, André Luiz Reis; and Marcondes, Danilo. (2024). "The United States–China Dispute and Latin American Security." In Carlos Fortin, Jorge Heine, and Carlos Ominami (Eds.), Latin American Foreign Policies in the New World Order: The Active Non-Alignment Option Anthem Press. - Gardini, Gian Luca (Ed.). (2021). External Powers in Latin America: Geopolitics between Neo-extractivism and South-South Cooperation. Routledge. (Chapter 2: The European Union in Latin America: A "neighbor" of values). - Garcia, Gabriel. (2020). A Review of China's and Japan's International Engagement in South America: The Cases of Brazil, Chile and Venezuela. IDE Discussion Paper No. 785. Institute of Developing Economies (IDE-JETRO). - Gardini, Gian Luca (Ed.). (2021). External Powers in Latin America: Geopolitics between Neo-extractivism and South-South Cooperation. Routledge. (Chapters 14 and 16). - Stuenkel, Oliver. (2023). "Latin America in the Post-Western World." In Carlos Fortin, Jorge Heine, and Carlos Ominami (Eds.), Latin American Foreign Policies in the New World Order: The Active Non-Alignment Option. Anthem Press.
self study	Approximately 2–4 hours per week.
In addition	The course consists of four parts: reading academic materials, taking quizzes, giving presentations, and engaging in ongoing participation.
Last Update	3/4/2026

One-credit courses require 45 hours of study. In lecture and exercise-based classes, one credit consists of 15-30 hours of class time and 30-15 hours of preparation and review outside of class. In laboratory, practical skill classes, one credit consists of 30-45 hours of class time and 15-0 hours of preparation and review outside of class.