Law & Policy in the Americas Seminar  
LAW 6936 Section 0345  
Spring 2016  
Instructor: Timothy McLendon  
Mondays, 3 – 4:50 PM  
Holland Hall, Room 350  

SYLLABUS

Professor:  Timothy McLendon  
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Office Hours:  Mondays, 9.30-10.30am  
                   Wednesdays, 9.00-10.00am  
                   Thursdays, 4.00-5.00pm

Description:  
The Law & Policy in the Americas Seminar, LAW 6936/LAS 6938, is an interdisciplinary, course taught at the law school but offering credit to both law students and graduate students from the Center for Latin American Studies. The seminar evaluates the development of legal systems in the Americas and includes a comparative analysis. Topics include constitutional comparisons, trade and commercial development, alternative dispute resolution mechanism use and development, citizen security and human rights, property rights, and a review of regional judicial reform efforts focusing on efforts to improve access, efficiency and transparency in justice systems as a means to promote democratic consolidation and economic growth. Readings are theoretical and applied, and they focus on differing legal cultures, distinguishing features of the civil and common law systems, the informal economy and access to property rights. We will utilize current periodicals to follow regional political developments and trade agreement negotiations. Additional suggested readings are provided for each unit to provide perspective and background material, and to serve as a starting point for deeper research.

Meaningful individual participation during all of the class meetings is expected. Note: In order to inform the current events discussion at the beginning of each class, students must read a newspaper or weekly news magazine in preparation for the course. As the focus of the class is Latin America, students should read sources with good Latin America coverage: e.g., the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Miami Herald, Financial Times, The Economist, or some other such publication (all of which are available online, or via WestLaw or Lexis/Nexis). Foreign publications are acceptable given the scope of the class. It is important every student be prepared and class participation will be considered in grading.

The seminar will include an advanced written research paper and oral presentation to the class addressing some topic of law or policy relevant to the subject matter covered by the syllabus.
For the paper and presentation, each student will choose a subject area from the course syllabus to explore in more detail. Per UF regulation, these professors state that they have no financial interest in whether students purchase the course pack. Course materials will be available for purchase at Book iT, 1250 W. University Ave. (N.W. 13th St. & University Ave.-in the Holiday Inn Building, right next to Piesano’s), ph.# 352-371-9588. Students are also free to download the materials themselves. Additional materials are available on TWEN and a few items may be placed on reserve in the Law Library.

Grades:
Grades in the seminar will be based on: 1) the quality of the paper submitted (60%); 2) the oral presentation (30%); and 3) attendance and participation in class discussion (10%).

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The law school grading policy is available at: [http://www.law.ufl.edu/students/policies.shtml#9](http://www.law.ufl.edu/students/policies.shtml#9).

Class attendance & participation policy:
Attendance will be taken at each class meeting. Students are allowed 2 absences during the course of the semester. Students are responsible for ensuring that they are not recorded as absent if they come in late. A student who fails to meet the attendance requirement will be dropped from the course.

Student participation in class is encouraged, and will be considered in assigning a final grade. The degree of student participation will doubtless affect the quality and interest of class discussions. Students are expected to be prepared for each class.

Seminar Paper Deadlines:
1. Choice of Topic – Class 4, 1. February
2. Outline & initial Bibliography – Class 7, 22. February
3. Initial Draft – Class 10, 21. March
4. Completed Paper – Thursday, 21. April (last day of law school reading period)

Note:
Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the UF Disability Resource Center (tel: 352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) providing appropriate documentation. After registering, students will receive an accommodation letter to give to the instructor when requesting any accommodations. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.
**-Introduction-**

**Monday, January 4th: Class 1**


* Christopher Sabatini, *Rethinking Latin America: Foreign Policy is more than Development*, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, March/April 2012, at 8, available online at: http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137101/christopher-sabatini/rethinking-latin-america


* John Rapley, *The New Middle Ages*, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, May/June 2006, at 95. (Coursepack)


**SUGGESTED:**


* John Henry Merryman et al., *The Civil Law Tradition: Europe, Latin America, and East Asia* 351-99 (1994), Ch. 4: Law in Pre-Colonial Latin America & Development of the Law in Colonial Latin America (TWEN)


**Monday, January 11th: Class 2**


**Internationalism:**

* CHARTER OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES, available online at: [http://www.oas.org/juridico/English/charter.html](http://www.oas.org/juridico/English/charter.html) (Coursepack)

* Introduction – Basic Documents relating to the Inter-American legal order, available online at: [http://www.cidh.oas.org/Basicos/English/Basic1%20Intro.htm](http://www.cidh.oas.org/Basicos/English/Basic1%20Intro.htm) (Coursepack)

* Dexter S. Boniface, *The OAS Mixed Record,* in PROMOTING DEMOCRACY IN THE AMERICAS (Thomas Legler et al., eds., 2007). (Coursepack)


**SUGGESTED:**

**Basic Documents Relevant to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights:**


* AMERICAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, available online at: [http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/treaties/b-32.html](http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/treaties/b-32.html) (Coursepack)

* Statute of the Inter-American Court on Human Rights, available online at: [http://www.corteidh.or.cr/estatuto.cfm](http://www.corteidh.or.cr/estatuto.cfm) (Coursepack)

* Statute of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, available online at: [http://www.cidh.oas.org/Basicos/English/Basic17.Statute%20of%20the%20Commission.htm](http://www.cidh.oas.org/Basicos/English/Basic17.Statute%20of%20the%20Commission.htm) (Coursepack)
* Brigitte Weiffen et al., *Overlapping regional security institutions in South America: The case of OAS and UNASUR*, 16 INT’L AREA STUD. REV. 370 (Dec. 2013), available online at: http://ias.sagepub.com/content/16/4/370

* Daniela Segovia, *Latin America and the Caribbean: Between the OAS and the CELAC*, 95 EUR. REV. LATIN AM. & CARIBBEAN STUD. 97 (2013), available online at: http://www.academia.edu/6002331/Latin_American_and_the_Caribbean_between_the_OAS_and_CELAC

**Monday, January 18th: Martin Luther King Holiday – No Class**

**-Political-**

**Monday, January 25th: Class 3**


**SUGGESTED:**

  - Ch. 1: An Introduction to Latin America in the 21st Century
  - Ch. 2: Early History
  - Ch. 3: Democracy, Dictators and Tío Sam: A Historical Overview from Independence to the Present Day


* Jorge Castaneda, *Latin America’s Left Turn*, FOREIGN AFFAIRS (May/June 2006). (TWEN)


-Latin American Economics-

**Monday, February 1st: Class 4**


**SUGGESTED:**


* Oscar Arias, *Culture Matters: The Real Obstacles to Latin American Development*, FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Jan./Feb. 2011) (TWEN)


-Judicial & Legal-

**Monday, February 8th: Class 5**


SUGGESTED:


-Human Rights-

**Monday, February 15th: Class 6**


* Inter-American Commission on Human Rights Resolution No. 12/85, Case No. 7615 (Brazil) - provides an overview of the decision concerning the Yanomami Indians of Brazil, available online at: http://www.cidh.org/annualrep/84.85eng/brazil7615.htm (Coursepack)


**SUGGESTED:**


* OAS, Note 000125 from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, announcing its decision to denounced the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights in accordance with Article 78 of the Convention (delivered Sept. 12, 2012), available online at: http://www.oas.org/dil/Nota_Rep%C3%BAblica_Bolivariana_Venezuela_to_SG.English.pdf


* Regional reports of Human Rights Watch, available online at: http://www.hrw.org/doc/?t=americas_pub

**Monday, February 22nd: Class 7**

**US Law relevant to Human Rights in the Americas:**

* Alien Tort Claims Act (ATCA), 28 U.S.C. § 1350. (Coursepack)


* Filartiga v. Pena-Irala, 630 F.2d 876 (2d Cir. 1980). (Coursepack)

* Kiobel v. Royal Dutch Petroleum Co., 133 S.Ct. 1659 (2013). (Coursepack)


* Cardona v. Chiquita Brands Int’l, Inc., 760 F.3d 1185 (11th Cir. 2014). (Coursepack)

**SUGGESTED:**

* Cabello v. Fernandez-Larios, 402 F.3d 1148 (11th Cir. 2005).


* Ford ex rel. Estate of Ford v. Garcia, 289 F.3d 1283 (11th Cir. 2002).

* Flores v. Southern Peru Copper Corp., 414 F.3d 233 (2d Cir. 2003).


Monday, February 29th: Spring Break – No Class

-Property Rights-

Monday, March 7th: Class 8

* HERNANDO DE SOTO, THE OTHER PATH: THE INVISIBLE REVOLUTION IN THE THIRD WORLD 3-57 (June Abbott, trans., 1989), Chapters 1 & 2. (Coursepack)


SUGGESTED:


* THE COMPLIANCE GAP: BSA GLOBAL SOFTWARE SURVEY (June 2014) (TWEN)

-Trade and Commercial Development-

**Monday, March 14th: Class 9**


NAFTA – trucking cases


**SUGGESTED:**


* Brazil finds a role for Mercosur*, LATIN AM. BRAZIL & SOUTHERN CONE REP., Aug. 2009. (TWEN)

* Jorge G. Castañeda, *NAFTA’s Mixed Record: The View From Mexico*, FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Jan./Feb. 2014). (TWEN)


* Organization of American States Foreign Trade Information System, available online at: http://www.sice.oas.org/

-U.S. Policy in the Region-

**Monday, March 21st: Class 10**


**SUGGESTED:**


**Monday, March 28th: Class 11**

Film in class.

**Monday, April 4th: Class 12**

**Monday, April 11th: Class 13**

**Monday, April 18th: Class 14**

Student Presentations in class