

GOVT 3293/LATA 3290/DSOC 3290: Comparative Politics of Latin America
Discussion Section Guidelines

Dates and Times: Wednesday, 12:20 – 1:10 PM, Rockefeller 105; Friday 2:30 – 3:20 White 110

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Office Hours: Sign up via <https://calendly.com/at787/office-hours> or by appointment

Office Hours Location: White Hall B12

PLEASE READ THE SECTION GUIDELINES COMPLETELY AND CAREFULLY

Objective: In our time together, we will review topics and concepts covered in lecture, and will discuss the assigned readings in detail. As you read, I recommend taking notes of ideas, concepts, and questions that you would like to discuss. Your interests and questions will shape our discussions in section. I encourage you to ask clarifying questions; they are great places to begin and continue our conversations.

Section is an opportunity to interact with me as your teaching assistant, but it is primarily dedicated time to discuss with and learn from your fellow students. Thus, it is essential that all members of our section (including myself) not only prioritize preparation, but also practice generosity, respect, and participation toward each other and to the topics/issues as presented and assigned by Professor Roberts.

Attendance: Consistent and punctual attendance is necessary for you to successfully grasp the course material. I trust you to come to section, if I find my trust and judgement is misplaced, I will begin to take attendance. Please contact me in advance if you cannot attend for an acceptable reason (for example, illness, family emergency, etc.).

Participation: Engaging with the material will help make this course more interesting and relevant for you and your classmates. I expect that everyone will contribute to the discussion. We need to be attentive to class dynamics and ensure that discussion engages everyone and allows them to feel comfortable speaking. I understand that students have varying comfort levels in terms of speaking up. If you are uncomfortable participating in class, I encourage you to reach out to me during office hours or via email to discuss other possibilities for participating. This relies on your own initiative to begin the conversation. I may introduce alternative modes of engagement, including—but not limited to—submitting reviews/summaries of the readings, if I feel it to be helpful in ensuring everyone's participation.

Preparation: Effective participation requires that you come to section prepared. ***For the Wednesday section: because our meetings take place before Thursdays lectures, we will review the material from the previous Thursday of every week and then the Tuesday of that week, in addition to any additional material assigned by Professor Roberts or me, provided sufficiently ahead of time. This ensures that we do not fall behind schedule.*** You should also have thoughtful reactions to allow active participation. Moreover, while it is acceptable to bring in outside information to our meetings, it must be pertinent and applicable to the material/topics being discussed. Please note that, due to time constraints, it is no guarantee that all of the important topics and questions of the course will be covered in section. It is therefore your responsibility to stay on top of them, too, and reach out when you have any questions.

Electronics: The success of this discussion rests largely on active and engaged participation and therefore ***will not allow laptops, phones, or tablets to be used in our meetings.*** Please come to section with your lecture notes, the readings, a pencil/pen and paper! If you need accommodations, please let me know.

Respectful Behavior: Status, Privilege, and Positionality: Come to section prepared to engage thoughtfully, listen attentively, and behave considerately. Everyone, regardless of his/her/their identities or status, is entitled to an education free of harassment or discrimination, and because we come with diverse experiences and perspectives, it is important that we provide the space to engage with each other in a respectful manner. Please ask questions in section when something is unclear.

This conditionality is particularly important in a class like this which draws attention to issues with which a number of your colleagues, at any given time, may have direct experience. Share with us what you know; listen when it's something you don't. I do not pretend to know or speak with authority on the lived experiences of those with different backgrounds as me.

Course Content Note: During this semester, we will be discussing data and theories that may be disturbing and/or painful on a personal level for some more than others. If specific material is emotionally challenging or paralyzing for you, leading to a retraction from classwork, I am happy to discuss any concerns you may have in office hours before or after the subject comes up in order to help you navigate the material better.

Email Policy: I will regularly relay important class and section information via email, so **I will expect that you will have read them *completely* and understood them.** Please reach out to me with any questions or concerns. **Longer discussions and all conversations about grades must take place in person.** I will strive to respond to emails within 24 hours during regular hours of the work week, and I will expect the same from you. However, do not wait until the last minute, if your question is time-sensitive. Please do email me to set up an appointment, if you cannot make office hours. However, to ensure I'm adequately prepared, **I will not schedule a meeting within 24 hours of a request.**

Academic Integrity: Students are expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity (<http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/aic.cfm>), which prohibits academic dishonesty in all forms, including plagiarism, cheating, and related activity. Plagiarism is a serious offense which can result in your dismissal from the university. Plagiarism is the misrepresentation of another's words, ideas, and arguments as your own. If you have any questions about how and when to cite, please contact me. It is better to cite a source than not to cite at all. The Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity may be found in full here: <http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/aic.cfm>. In addition, I strongly encourage you to visit the Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines, which is a great resource on campus for learning good citation and writing practices (website: <http://knight.as.cornell.edu>).

Statement of Nondiscrimination: We will act in accordance with Government Department's statement: "In fractious times, we reaffirm core principles. The Government Department at Cornell studies and teaches about intolerance, but will not practice it. We write about xenophobia and bigotry, but will not pretend they only exist elsewhere. We research racism, homophobia, and misogyny, but will not permit them to pass unchallenged. Our role as academics has never been inconsistent with our duty as citizens, and we pledge to honor the rich diversity of our students, staff, and faculty. Those who come to us—as students, co-workers, and colleagues—must be free to learn and live without fear, and we urge the administration to declare—promptly and forcefully—that Cornell is a sanctuary campus." And, we will act in accordance with the Cornell University Equal Education and Employment Opportunity Statement, which can be found full here: <https://hr.cornell.edu/our-culturediversity/diversity-inclusion/equal-opportunity-and-affirmative-action/equal-education>. Upholding these statements is a joint effort, which we will strive to do together during this course. Doing so entails cultivating practices of speaking, listening, and engaging with each other across our differences, diversity of viewpoints, and disagreements. If at any time you feel you are uncomfortable with something one of your classmates have said or I have said, I encourage you to be in touch with me so that we can have a conversation about it. Sexual harassment in any form is an act of discrimination and will not be tolerated. ***I take these rights very seriously.***

Students with disabilities may contact Disability Services, 420 CCC, 254-4545. Cornell University, the Department of Government, and I, personally, are committed to assisting those persons with disabilities or require additional accommodations.

Final Note: To demonstrate that you have read the section guidelines, please email me your favorite meme and I ***might*** respond in kind.