

## **GOVERNMENT 456: CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN LATIN AMERICA**

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Office Hours: Monday 9:30-11, Thursday 10:30-12, or by appointment – Diamond 253

Course website: [web.colby.edu/GO456](http://web.colby.edu/GO456)

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### ***Course Description***

What is the role of civil society groups in advancing social reforms to redress long-standing inequalities and injustices in Latin America? Over the past 30 years, civil society organizations have become vehicles for poor and otherwise marginalized citizens to access the political system and to advance social change. How has the relationship between civil society groups and the state evolved? Why does collective action succeed in some instances, but not others? What strategies and tactics have civil society organizations adopted to push for policy reform or societal changes? When can civil society groups succeed in advancing social change in ways that can drive much-needed social change?

### ***Course Objectives***

1. Strengthen your critical thinking skills. You will learn how to not only identify the causal claims of the authors you read, but also to challenge their approaches and assumptions. You also will gain practice in developing causal claims to explain phenomena that you observe in politics. You will apply these critical thinking skills in analyzing readings during class discussion, critiquing a classmate's research during a peer review, and in writing your own research paper that engages in causal analysis.
2. Cultivate your research skills. You will learn to develop research hypotheses, collect quantitative and qualitative evidence, test these hypotheses with empirical evidence, and interpret and communicate your findings.
3. Improve your writing through the research paper and blog posts.
4. Advance your public speaking skills through an oral defense of your research.
5. Learn about the history, political dynamics, and experiences of civil society organizations and social movements in select Latin American countries.

### ***Assignments***

The grade breakdown for the course follows:

30%	Class engagement
45%	Research paper
10%	Oral defense of research paper
5%	Engagement during oral defenses
10%	Written peer review

Barring a documented emergency, **due dates are final**. You will be marked down 1/2 a letter grade for each day late, starting at the time when the assignment is due. **If you turn the assignment in 10 minutes late, that counts as a full day late.**

#### Class engagement

Your engagement is the heart of this seminar. Unless every one of you arrives to class 100% ready to wrestle with the material, the seminar simply will not work. Students should come to class each day prepared to discuss the course readings both from that day, *and* from previous classes. My job in this class is *not* to impart knowledge through lectures. Instead, my role is to stimulate curiosity and guide us through open questions about civil society in Latin America. Every class, you should arrive eager to think, talk, listen, and grapple with the material.

Every class period will require you to spend considerable non-reading time preparing for class, including time dedicated to writing blog posts (see below), and reading and commenting on the blog posts made by your classmates. On the course website, I have provided study questions to help you prepare for each class. You are responsible for these questions during class, and you should dedicate a portion of your reading time to writing up brief responses to the questions. As needed, I will occasionally cold call on students, to get the conversation moving along. **Please bring printed copies of all readings** to class, as well as your notes on the readings. You also should bring to class a couple of questions/issues you would like to discuss.

How much work do you need to put in outside of the class to make these kinds of contributions? On average, students are expected to put in approximately 10-12 hours of work per week for a four-credit class, as per U.S. Department of Education guidelines. Since you will be spending 2.5 hours in the classroom, this means you should be working about 7.5-9.5 hours per week for this course outside of the classroom. If you find that you are spending more than 12 hours per week on the class, please see me to discuss strategies to read more efficiently—a skill that requires considerable practice.

#### Blog posts

Using the course website ([web.colby.edu/GO456](http://web.colby.edu/GO456)), students will write four blog posts throughout the course of the semester. The seminar sessions for which you can write a blog post have been noted with stars (\*\*\*) in the class schedule. Each blog post should be approximately 350-500 words. You should write two of these blog posts by our fourth class session on October 2. Blog posts are **due by 4 pm the day before our meeting** and **absolutely may not be submitted late**. The purpose of these blog posts is to spark discussion during the seminar and unless we all have the opportunity to read the posts, they cannot serve that function. The blog posts will not be

graded, but I will note your level of effort in writing the posts in calculating your class engagement grade. (Needless to say, a failure to post the required five blog posts will have a negative impact on your class engagement grade.)

These blog posts will launch our discussion in class. The objective of these blog posts is to engage with the readings, and puzzle over their assumptions, causal models, and implications. The point is *not* to summarize what you have read. Think of these posts as opportunities to explore aspects of the readings that you find interesting or puzzling. Some questions you may consider:

- What flaws do you see in the authors' reasoning or research? Do they provide ample or convincing evidence for the argument they make?
- Are any of the authors in tension? Do you find one author's causal argument and use of evidence more convincing than another's? Consider authors that have been assigned in the same week, as well as the relationship between authors throughout the semester.
- How do we see one (or more) of the theoretical frameworks discussed in the course applied in an empirical study?
- Is the work relevant to a contemporary political event or personal observation?
- Can you think of additional research questions or cases that would be interesting extensions/applications of an author's argument?

Some tips in writing your blog posts:

- Make sure your blog post has a clear point. While blog posts are more informal than written papers, you should still have a thesis of sorts, which you should state explicitly.
- Your posts should compare and contrast authors, particularly as we advance throughout the semester. Good blog posts move beyond an analysis of just one reading, especially if it's a single journal article. (When I read an analysis of one journal article, I wonder if the student has completed the rest of the readings for discussion.)
- Edit your blog post before publishing to ensure that it is well-written and clear.

Each seminar participant is responsible for reading all blog posts prior to class. You should engage with these blog posts by posting comments; I expect you to comment on *at least* one of your classmate's posts prior to every class. **Comments should be posted by 9 am** the day of our class. Your engagement with the blog posts—commenting on others' posts, referring to questions and issues raised during class discussion, etc.—will be factored into your overall class engagement grade.

### Research paper

Each student will write a 20-25 page research paper, which is at the core of this course. Students may write a paper on a Latin American case or set of cases, or may write a paper that compares a Latin American case with a case from another region. Your research paper should address some aspect of civil society, social movements, or political participation outside of elections, and should draw on theories analyzed in the course. Your paper is a political science paper, and thus should be *causal* and not merely descriptive in nature. This means your paper should have some clear and answerable research questions it will address, will have testable hypotheses, and will draw on either quantitative or qualitative evidence (or both) to test these hypotheses.

Throughout the semester, we will discuss the core elements involved in political science papers, and we will develop the skills needed to undertake causal analyses of political phenomena. The paper will be written in a scaffolded fashion over the course of the semester, meaning we will work on the paper in pieces. You will receive frequent feedback from me and from your peers, enabling you to work through the difficulties of doing political science research. For a complete list of due dates, see the course schedule later in the syllabus, and the research paper guidelines handout.

To guide you through the process of writing a research paper, we will periodically reserve a portion of class to review and discuss to craft of doing political science research. Some of these sessions will be guided by me, while others will be guided by Laine Thielstrom, the Research and Instruction Librarian for Latin American Studies. These sessions will help you to better understand what political science is all about, and to develop the skills needed to undertake a research project. You will continue to draw on these skills in other courses, and after you leave Colby.

#### Oral Defense of Research Paper

During the last week of class, each student will face an oral defense of their research. This defense will include a brief presentation of the research question, methodology, casual argument, and empirical findings using powerpoint or another presentation software. The presentation will be followed by an extended question and answer period, led by your peers. You will be evaluated on the content and style of your presentation, as well as your skill in responding to questions from your peers.

#### Engagement during Oral Defenses

Students will take the lead in questioning their peers during the oral defenses. I will sit back and observe. The oral defenses are an opportunity for you to demonstrate your mastery of the political science research process. Therefore, 5% of your grade will be reserved to assess the insightfulness of the questions you ask and the quality of the feedback that you provide to your peers during these oral defenses.

#### Peer Review

Each student is responsible for reviewing the first draft of one of their peer's research papers. Your review will consist of approximately 5-6 pages (double-spaced) of written comments in a separate document. (If you would like to provide in-line comments, you are free to do so – but the assignment is to produce a standalone document.) Using the grading rubrics provided in class, you should critique the assumptions, use of evidence, and overall causal logic employed by your peer. The best peer review will not just identify the fatal flaw in someone's paper, but will also provide thoughtful suggestions about how to resolve this problem.

#### ***Grading***

If you put in time, effort, and a sense of curiosity, you will get a LOT out of this class, and your grade will reflect your hard work. As Colby students, I know that you are all smart. Your grade will reflect the work you put into the class. I have high standards, and I will give you the tools to help you learn core concepts and information, and to develop the skills needed to meet those

high standards. The class is not curved, and nothing would make me happier than to have all students earn As in this class.

Grading Standards		Grading Scale	
<b>A</b>	Exceptional work. Demonstrates superb understanding of the course material <i>and</i> outstanding critical thinking and analytic rigor. Goes beyond simply answering the prompt to craft a creative and insightful analysis. Communicates information in a clear, concise, and mechanically correct manner. <i>An A grade will only be given if work is exceptional.</i>	A+	97-100
		A	94-96
<b>B</b>	Good work. Demonstrates a strong grasp of course material and good analytic rigor, but with some errors (e.g. faulty assumptions in logic or some incorrect descriptions of an author's argument). May have some problems with structure or mechanics but overall easy to understand the main gist. Solid work, but not the most original or insightful analysis.	A-	90-93
		B+	87-89
<b>C</b>	Mediocre work. Applies some course material and themes, but demonstrates considerable misunderstanding of material. Difficult to discern the student's argument and the logic supporting this argument. A number of serious problems with structure and mechanics.	B	84-86
		B-	80-83
<b>D</b>	Poor work. May attempt to apply some course materials and themes, but demonstrates very serious errors or misunderstanding of course material. The student doesn't appear to have any argument, and the assignment lacks structure entirely and has extensive problems with mechanics. Shows little effort.	C+	77-79
		C	74-76
<b>F</b>	Very poor work. Assignment is unrelated to course material and fails to address the prompt and guidelines. Reflects a lack of effort.	C-	70-73
		D+	67-69
		D	64-66
		D-	60-63
		F	<60

### ***Creating an Environment of Mutual Respect***

This class is a partnership between me as your professor, and you as students. Together, we will build a supportive, respectful, and productive environment to learn and to explore challenging questions about civil society and Latin America. Building this kind of environment requires mutual respect.

What do I expect from you, to create an environment of mutual respect? I expect students to arrive to class prepared to contribute, meaning that you have completed the readings and have written responses to the study questions. I also expect professional behavior in class. My benchmark is an important business or policy meeting. One arrives a few minutes early. One does not get up in the middle of a meeting and wander out for a bathroom break, a sip of water, or to text a friend. (Feel free to bring a beverage to class.) Repeated unprofessional behavior will be seen as a lack of engagement and will be reflected in your grade.

What can you expect from me? You can expect me to be tirelessly enthusiastic and to work hard for you, both in this semester and in future semesters when you need advising. I encourage all of you to stop by my office hours, even if you don't have a question and just would like to chat about the class, Latin America, or life after Colby. You can reach me best via email at [LRMayka@colby.edu](mailto:LRMayka@colby.edu). I will respond to you within 24 hours during the week, and within 48 hours on the weekend.

### ***Academic Misconduct***

Honesty, integrity, and personal responsibility are cornerstones of a Colby education and provide the foundation for scholarly inquiry, intellectual discourse, and an open and welcoming campus community. These values are articulated in the Colby Affirmation and are central to this course. You are expected to demonstrate academic honesty in all aspects of this course. If you are clear about course expectations, give credit to those whose work you rely on, and submit your best work, you are highly unlikely to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: violating clearly stated rules for taking an exam or completing homework; plagiarism (including material from sources without a citation and quotation marks around any borrowed words—even if you include a citation); claiming another’s work or a modification of another’s work as one’s own (including using a friend’s paper from a previous semester as “inspiration” for the paper you will write); buying or attempting to buy papers or projects for a course; fabricating information or citations; knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty (including letting a friend check out your work for inspiration); misrepresentations to faculty within the context of a course (including being dishonest about physical ailments, emergency travel, or technological difficulties); and submitting the same work, including an essay that you wrote, in more than one course without the permission of the instructors.

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense against the college. Sanctions for academic dishonesty are assigned by an academic review board and may include failure on the assignment, failure in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the College.

For more on recognizing and avoiding plagiarism, see the library guide:  
[libguides.colby.edu/avoidingplagiarism](http://libguides.colby.edu/avoidingplagiarism)

### ***Electronic Devices***

I strongly discourage you from using laptops in this class. Studies have shown that computer use during class impedes student learning—both for the student on the laptop, and for the other students that are distracted by their classmates’ screens. Studies have shown that students retain and process material better when taking notes by hand than they do when typing, since typing can easily slip into mindless transcription. Discussion also flows better when students engage with each other face-to-face, not behind screens.

Having said all of this: I will not ban laptop use, because students may have a variety of reasons for using them and I don’t want to take on a policing role in the class. If you do need to use a laptop, I urge you to turn off and *block* the internet, to avoid disrupting your classmates. You should use the apps Freedom and Self Control to block the internet. You may think that you can just minimize your internet browser, but in practice your attention will be divided if you take that approach. (I also highly recommend these internet-blocking apps when writing papers—they have been lifesavers for my own writing.) Cell phones should be silenced and put away during class.

***Required Texts***

- David A. Snow and Sarah A. Soule. 2010. *A Primer on Social Movements*. New York: Norton.
- Jordi Diéz. 2015. *The Politics of Gay Marriage in Latin America: Argentina, Chile, and Mexico*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Robert Jansen. 2017. *Revolutionizing Repertoires: The Rise of Populist Mobilization in Peru*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Erica Simmons. 2016. *Meaningful Resistance: Market Reforms and the Roots of Social Protest in Latin America*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Tianna Paschel. 2016. *Mobilizing Black Political Subjects: Movements and Ethnoracial Rights in Colombia and Brazil*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

All texts are available on reserve in the library. All other readings have been posted on the course website.

**Class 1—Tuesday, September 11: Grievances and the Challenge of Collective Action**

- David A. Snow and Sarah A. Soule. 2010. *A Primer on Social Movements*. New York: Norton. Chapter 1, Chapter 2 - pp. 23-50 only.
- Mancur Olson. 2015. “The Free-Rider Problem,” In *The Social Movements Reader: Cases and Concepts*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, eds. Jeff Goodwin and James M. Jasper. pp. 58-64.
- Paul Edwards. “How to Read a Book, v5.0.” University of Michigan School of Information.
- *Laine Thielstrom Visit: Identifying Different Types of Sources for Research*

**Class 2—Tuesday, September 18: Transitions from State-Led Development to Neoliberalism and Popular Mobilization\*\*\***

- David Collier. 1995. “Trajectory of a Concept: ‘Corporatism’ in the Study of Latin American Politics,” In *Latin America in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Peter Smith. Boulder: Westview Press. pp. 135-162.
- Ruth Berins Collier and David Collier. 1991. *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, the Labor Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. pp. 232-247, 407-420.
- Marcus Kurtz. 2004. “The Dilemmas of Democracy in the Open Economy: Lessons from Latin America.” *World Politics* 56(1): 262-302.
- Moisés Arce and Paul Bellinger. 2007. “Low-Intensity Democracy Revisited: The Effects of Economic Liberalization on Political Activity in Latin America.” *World Politics* 60(1): 97-121.
- Jillian Schwedler. 2013. “Puzzle.” *Qualitative & Multi-Method Research* Fall: 27-30.
- Watch video lecture:
  - “Research Puzzles”
- *Laine Thielstrom Visit: Finding Sources*

**Class 3—Tuesday, September 25: Models Interest Representation in the Neoliberal Era\*\*\***

- Ruth Berins Collier and Samuel Handlin, eds. 2009. *Reorganizing Popular Politics: Participation and the New Interest Regime in Latin America*. University Park: Penn State Press. pp. 3-8, 48-92; *Recommended*: pp. 8-29.
- Paul Kellstedt and Guy Whitten. 2013. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York: Cambridge University Press. pp. 51-62.
- Watch video lectures:
  - “Concepts and Conceptualization”
  - “Variables and Operationalization”
  - “Features of Good Hypotheses”
  - “Antecedent and Intervening Variables”

**Friday, September 28: Research Paper Proposal Due – 11:59 pm**

**Class 4—Tuesday, October 2: Political Opportunities, Resources, and Networks\*\*\***

- David A. Snow and Sarah A. Soule. 2010. *A Primer on Social Movements*. New York: Norton. Chapter 3: pp. 64-108, Chapter 5: 149-163 only.
- Mara Loveman. “High-Risk Collective Action: Defending Human Rights in Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina.” *American Journal of Sociology* 104(2): 477-525.
- Jordi Diéz. 2015. *The Politics of Gay Marriage in Latin America: Argentina, Chile, and Mexico*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Introduction, Chapter 4.  
*Recommended*: Chapters 1-3.
- Jeffrey Knopf. 2006. “Doing a Literature Review.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* January: 127-135.

**Class 5—Tuesday, October 9: Frames\*\*\***

- John Noakes and Hank Johnston. 2005. “Frames of Protest: A Road Map to a Perspective.” In *Frames of Protest: Social Movements and the Framing Perspective*, eds. Hank Johnston and John Noakes. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. pp. 1-29.
- Rita Noonan. 1995. “Women against the State: Political Opportunities and Collective Action Frames in Chile’s Transition to Democracy.” *Sociological Forum* 10(1): 81-111.
- Jordi Diéz. 2015. *The Politics of Gay Marriage in Latin America: Argentina, Chile, and Mexico*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 5, 6, Conclusion;  
*Recommended*: Chapters 1-3 (if you didn’t get to it last week).
- Watch video lectures:
  - “Cases”
  - “Types of Small-N Research”
- John Gerring. 2008. “Case Selection for Case-Study Analysis: Qualitative and Quantitative Techniques.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, eds. Janet Box-Steffensmeier, Henry Brady, and David Collier. New York: Oxford University Press. pp. 647-650, 655-656, 668-677.

**Class 6—Tuesday, October 23: Grievances and Culture\*\*\***

- Erica Simmons. 2016. *Meaningful Resistance: Market Reforms and the Roots of Social Protest in Latin America*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1-3.
- Either read:
  - Erica Simmons. 2016. “Corn, Markets, and Mobilizing in Mexico.” *Comparative Politics* 48(3): 413-431.
  - OR: Simmons’ book, Chapter 4-5

**Friday, October 26: Theoretical Framework due – 11:59 pm**

**Class 7—Tuesday, October 30: Repertoires, Strategies, and Tactics\*\*\***

- David A. Snow and Sarah A. Soule. 2010. *A Primer on Social Movements*. New York: Norton. Chapter 5 (pp. 163-192 only).
- Robert Jansen. 2017. *Revolutionizing Repertoires: The Rise of Populist Mobilization in Peru*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Preface (pp. ix-xii only), Introduction (pp. 1-16 only), Chapters 1 (read pp. 27-35, skim pp. 35-48, read pp.48-57), Chapter 2 (read pp. 58-59, the rest is recommended), Chapter 3 (read pp. 79-81, the rest is recommended), Chapters 4-5, skim Chapter 6.
- *Laine Thielstrom Visit: Grey Literature*

**Class 8—Tuesday, November 6: Mobilizing Ideas\*\*\***

- Tianna Paschel. 2016. *Mobilizing Black Political Subjects: Movements and Ethno-racial Rights in Colombia and Brazil*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1, 4, 5,7; *Recommended*: Chapters 2-3 (especially recommended if you have not taken courses addressing race in Latin America), 6.

**Friday, November 9: Theoretical Framework Rewrite Due – 11:59 pm**

**Class 9—Tuesday, November 13: Working with(in) the State to Advance Social Change\*\*\***

- Janice Gallagher. 2017. “The Last Mile Problem: Activists, Advocates, and the Struggle for Justice in Domestic Courts.” *Comparative Political Studies* 50(12): 1666-1698.
- Rebecca Abers and Margaret Keck. 2009. “Mobilizing the State: The Erratic Partner in Brazil’s Participatory Water Policy.” *Politics & Society* 37(2): 389-314.
- Calla Hummel. 2017. “Disobedient Markets: Street Vendors, Enforcement, and State Interventions in Collective Action.” *Comparative Political Studies* 50(11): 1524-1555.

**Class 10—Tuesday, November 20: NO CLASS—Work on your papers!**

**Monday, November 26: First Draft Due – 11:59 pm**

**Class 11—Tuesday, November 27: Course Wrap Up\*\*\***

**Friday, December 1: Peer Review Due – 11:59 pm**

**Class 12—Tuesday, December 4: Oral Defenses of Research Paper**

**Wednesday, December 5: Oral Defenses of Research Paper, followed by class dinner**

**Sunday, December 16: Final paper due – 11:59 pm**