

# PO396-15 International Relations of the Americas

**22/23**

**Department**

Politics & International Studies

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 3

**Module leader**

Thomas Long

**Credit value**

15

**Module duration**

10 weeks

**Assessment**

100% coursework

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

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## Description

### Introductory description

An old refrain in Latin America, asks: “Why are there no coups in the United States?” The answer: “There is no U.S. embassy in Washington.” Behind the joke is a serious allegation and assumption: the region’s politics are not determined by local actors, but by the machinations of the United States. International Relations in the Americas are characterized by tremendous disparities of power. The United States dwarfs the combined nations of Latin America and the Caribbean in terms of economic might, military power, and global influence. Historically, this has led most observers to focus on the “hegemonic presumption” of the United States. How did the Northern colossus impose its will on its weaker Southern neighbours? Was U.S. power also the determining factor for Western Hemispheric relations? This module examines the history and current challenges of international politics in the Americas, trying to understand the motivations and actions of multiple actors within the hemisphere in addition to the salient role of the United States. This module will be of great interest to students who want to deepen their knowledge of Latin America, of the history of U.S. foreign policy, and for those with an interest in the broader application of IR theories on power disparities, regionalism, and more.

### Module aims

The principal aims of this module are to help students understand the international relations of the Western Hemisphere. The module will explore historical and contemporary international relations among the states of the Americas, using both general and sui generis IR theories and foreign policy analysis. The module will examine US-Latin American relations, regional organizations, intra-Latin American relations, and foreign policies of major Latin American states. Students will examine competing theoretical explanations for broad trends and specific state actions.

## Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

1. Introduction and context
2. IR theories in the Americas
3. Independence to early asymmetry
4. US rise and interventionism
5. Post-war to revolution
6. Reading week
7. Late Cold War
8. A post-hegemonic hemisphere?
9. Regional organizations
10. Transnationalization

## Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Explain and apply different approaches to the study of inter-American relations
- Describe critical junctures and their impact on the development of international relations in the Americas
- Assess key concepts used in Latin American scholarship, such as autonomy and dependency
- Have improved their research and writing skills

## Indicative reading list

Bitar, Sebastian E. *US Military Bases, Quasi-bases, and Domestic Politics in Latin America*. Springer, 2016.

Darnton, Christopher. "After Decentering: The Politics of Agency and Hegemony in Hemispheric Relations." *Latin American Research Review* 48.3 (2013): 231-239.

Dominguez, Jorge I., and Ana Covarrubias. *Routledge Handbook of Latin America in the World*. Routledge, 2015.

Friedman, Max Paul. "Retiring the Puppets, Bringing Latin America Back In: Recent Scholarship on

United States–Latin American Relations." *Diplomatic History* 27.5 (2003): 621-636.

Friedman, Max Paul, and Tom Long. "Soft Balancing in the Americas: Latin American Opposition to US Intervention, 1898–1936." *International Security* 40.1 (2015): 120-156

Gilbert, Joseph, and Daniela Spencer, eds. In *From the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.

Gallagher, Kevin P. *The China triangle: Latin America's China boom and the fate of the Washington consensus*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

Harmer, Tanya. "Two, Three, Many Revolutions? Cuba and the Prospects for Revolutionary Change in Latin America, 1967–1975." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 45.01 (2013): 61-89.

Harmer, Tanya. *Allende's Chile and the Inter-American Cold War* [in English]. Chapel Hill: University Of North Carolina Press, 2014.

Kacowicz, Arie M. "US–Latin American relations and the role of the United States in the world." In Efraim Inbar, Jonathan Rynhold, eds., *US Foreign Policy and Global Standing in the 21st Century: Realities and Perceptions*. London: Routledge, 2016, ch. 9.

Long, Tom. *Latin America Confronts the United States: Asymmetry and Influence*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Moulton, Aaron Coy. "Building their own Cold War in their own backyard: the transnational, international conflicts in the greater Caribbean basin, 1944–1954." *Cold War History* 15.2 (2015): 135-154.

Pastor, Robert A., and Tom Long. "The Cold War and Its Aftermath in the Americas: The Search for

a Synthetic Interpretation of US Policy." *Latin American Research Review* 45.3 (2010): 261-273.

Pastor, Robert A., *Exiting the Whirlpool: US Foreign Policy Toward Latin America and the Caribbean*. Westview Press, 2001.

Rabe, Stephen G. *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America*. New York:

Oxford University Press, 2012.

Riggirozzi, Pia and Diana Tussie, *The Rise of Post-Hegemonic Regionalism in Latin America*

Schultz, Lars. *Beneath the United States: A History of U.S. Policy Toward Latin America*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998.

Shirk, David, and Joel Wallman. "Understanding Mexico's Drug Violence." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (2015).

Smith, Peter H. *Talons of the eagle: Latin America, the United States, and the world*, 4th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Weeks, Gregory B. *US and Latin American relations*. Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, 2015

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

## **Subject specific skills**

TBC

## **Transferable skills**

TBC

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## **Study**

## Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Private study	132 hours (88%)
Total	150 hours

## Private study description

TBC

## Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

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## Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

### Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
3,000 word essay	100%		Yes (extension)

### Feedback on assessment

Comments will be provided for the essay on the PAIS assessment feedback forms, and students will have the opportunity to discuss this with the module director in Advice and Feedback hours.

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## Availability

### Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 4 of UECA-4 Undergraduate Economics 4 Year Variants
- Year 3 of UECA-LM1D Undergraduate Economics, Politics and International Studies
- UHIA-VM14 Undergraduate History and Politics (with Year Abroad and a term in Venice)
  - Year 3 of VM14 History and Politics (with Year Abroad and a term in Venice)
  - Year 4 of VM14 History and Politics (with Year Abroad and a term in Venice)

- Year 3 of UHIA-VM13 Undergraduate History and Politics (with a term in Venice)
- Year 4 of UPHA-V7MM Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics (with Intercalated year)
- Year 3 of UPOA-M162 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Quantitative Methods

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 3 of UPOA-M16D Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German (3 year degree)
- Year 3 of UPOA-M16H Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies (3 year degree)

This module is Option list C for:

- Year 3 of UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
- Year 4 of UHIA-VM12 Undergraduate History and Politics (with Year Abroad)