

Politics of Water in Latin America

Political Science 320.002, Fall 2020

MW 4:30-5:45, Zoom

Instruction

Class instructor: Dr. Jami Nelson Nuñez, Assistant Professor

Office hours on Zoom: 1:00-3:30 Wednesdays, and other times by appointment

Availability on Microsoft Teams chat function: During office hours (see above) as well as Wednesdays when team meetings are scheduled.

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Course Elements

Course Description

This course examines the politics of water in Latin America. Water is a resource fundamental to human health, energy, industry, food production and ecosystems. As such, the ownership, use and management of water-related services and water resources is explicitly political. Many of the central social, political and economic issues in Latin America are tied to water. How can farmers continue to access sufficient quantities of water to secure their livelihoods in areas impacted by climate change? How and when do cities adequately address sewage and sanitation as opposed to dumping untreated waste into rivers, lakes and oceans? When should industries, such as tourism and large-scale agribusiness have priority of water use given their contribution to economic growth? How can countries reach 100% coverage of potable drinking water access and improved sanitation? Why are some contexts better prepared for water-related natural disasters (such as droughts and flooding) than others?

This course draws on different aspects of water governance and policy to examine core concepts in political science including state-building and government capacity; privatization and market reforms; government accountability and responsiveness; clientelism and distributive politics; and state-society relationships and collective action. Through the lens of water, students will learn about major shifts in the role of the state over time, influence from international actors, and the effects of democratic deficits on well-being and development. The course will center around water services, e.g. drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, but we will also examine water resources more generally, particularly around development paradigms and the implications of climate change. The course will culminate in final projects of case studies around particular themes. Students will submit research papers and collaborate as a team to develop online learning modules for the class.

Course Objectives

The general Department of Political Science “Student Learning Objectives” are posted on the department website at: <https://polisci.unm.edu/undergraduate/student-learning-objectives.html>. Specific SLOs for this course are as follows:

1. Identify the implications of access (and lack of access) to quality water services for economic, human and state development
2. Understand the major developments in political economy of Latin America since WWI and their relevance to water access and the quality of water services
3. Be able to evaluate policy approaches to identify factors that positively and negatively impact the equity and quality of water services and the management of water resources

Course Structure

Given the pandemic, I've moved this course entirely to an online space. However, this is a "remote, scheduled" course so it will proxy a regular in-person class in that we will progress together each week, with new material that will be made available as we go and we will "meet" over Zoom. Given how exhausting Zoom can and will be, I have reduced our number of class meetings by 30% and instead, moved a substantial amount of work online and scheduled time for you to be able to meet in groups to plan final projects and/or study and work together. The result will be a course that leans toward a regular course with weekly meetings but that blends elements of online learning.

You should plan to have readings and pre-meeting online tasks done before weekly Monday meetings. There will occasionally be post-meeting online work as well.

This class is being offered in tandem with the International Studies Institute's Fall Lecture Series. We will welcome five speakers on various Wednesdays to the class. These online sessions will be webinars that will also welcome participants/viewers from across the campus.

Course Technology and Communication

In this class, we will be using email, Zoom, Learn and Microsoft Teams to connect and engage material. I will communicate regularly with class participants by email and through announcements on Learn. I will also be available via the chat function on Microsoft Teams during office hours or during class times when we are not meeting as a class.

Because I use the LoboWeb system to email class participants, all messages from me will go to the email address you have associated with your UNM student registration. If that is not an account you use regularly, you should set it to forward to the account that you DO use. I cannot customize my email list. I will post course information, announcements, and supplementary materials on the course website in Learn.

Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Course Texts

If you need accommodations regarding reading formats, please communicate this as soon as possible so I can make readings easily available to you.

There are no required textbooks. Course readings are available on Learn or through public sites.

We will be reading chapters from some books. **These will be available on Learn** but for those of you who would like to purchase the books, they are:

Abers, R., & Keck, M. E. (2013). *Practical Authority: Agency and Institutional Change in Brazilian Water Politics*. OUP USA.

Bakker, K. (2010). *Privatizing Water: Governance Failure and the World’s Urban Water Crisis*. Cornell University Press.

Boelens, R., Perreault, T., & Vos, J. (2018). *Water Justice*. Cambridge University Press.

Conca, K., & Weinthal, E. (2018). *The Oxford Handbook of Water Politics and Policy*. Oxford University Press.

Herrera, V. (2017). *Water and Politics: Clientelism and Reform in Urban Mexico*. University of Michigan Press.

Post, A. E. (2014). *Foreign and Domestic Investment in Argentina: The Politics of Privatized Infrastructure*. Cambridge University Press.

Romano, S. T. (2019). *Transforming Rural Water Governance: The Road from Resource Management to Political Activism in Nicaragua*. University of Arizona Press.

Simmons, E. S. (2016). *Meaningful Resistance: Market Reforms and the Roots of Social Protest in Latin America*. Cambridge University Press.

Course Requirements

Requirement	Due date	Percentage of Final Grade
Semester-long elements		
Participation/attendance points	Throughout semester	25%
Reading points	Throughout semester	15%
Final Projects		
Team teaching project	Due October 28	15%
Case study module	Due October 28	25%
Case study write up	Due December 1	20%

Policy on keeping up with coursework

In this difficult context of the pandemic and less-than-ideal (to say it lightly) arrangements for class, it could be easy to fall behind. I strongly suggest that all students be in contact with me or the class TA with any concerns about keeping up with course work. **This is advice relevant for this and other courses: it is always better to reach out sooner than later!** Course work should be completed on time and submissions may lose one letter grade for every day of lateness. Students who fail to attend more than five classes can be dropped from the course if they have not been in communication about the absences.

Participation and Attendance

We will "meet" on Zoom for this class every Monday (except for Labor Day, which we will move class to Wednesday that week). Every other Wednesday, we will have group meetings or guest speakers. The

grade for participation includes attendance (for Monday classes and guest speakers) as well as participation, which can include posing questions in Zoom (either verbal or in the chat window), volunteering to be the chat monitor for the week and some miscellaneous assignments in Learn. There will be one participation point on Learn per week.

Some weeks, when there is a lot of lecture material that doesn't fit into one Zoom perio, I will post recordings of an additional asynchronous lecture on Zoom plus a participation point.

Should you have medical complications or other extenuating circumstances, you will need to email me with a full explanation. Without documentation, the attendance grade will be at my discretion. Make-up participation will be available to students who are have legitimate reasons to miss class.

Zoom meetings will be recorded but will be posted upon request. If you want to watch it, email me and I will make it available.

Reading Points

We will have a writing point for each reading posted in Learn each week. You must accumulate 15 reading points to get a full grade.

Final Project

In Part Two of the semester, we will have student-led instruction. Students will work in a team to develop material to introduce other students to the week's theme. Each student on the team will also present a case study module, which they will further develop as a final paper. In the syllabus, you will find different research questions to think about answering as a group or with case studies and **more information about the final project will be posted in Learn** the second week of class. The team components and individual case study modules are due by October 28. Final papers will be due at the end of the semester.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Introducing the Politics of Water

Reading	"Water and Poverty" by Crow and Swallow, Chapter 2 in <i>The Oxford Handbook of Water Politics and Policy</i> , pages 23-43. "Introduction: The multiple Challenges and Layers of Water Justice Struggles" by Boelens, Vos and Perreault in <i>Water Justice</i> , pages 1-24.
Monday, August 17	Class meeting
Wednesday, August 19	Office hours/online work

Week 2: Water and State-Building

Reading	Soifer, H., & vom Hau, M. (2008). Unpacking the Strength of the State: The Utility of State Infrastructural Power. <i>Studies in Comparative International Development</i> , 43(3-4), 219-230. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12116-008-9030-z
Monday, August 24	Class meeting
Wednesday, August 26	Team meeting

Week 3: Modernization and State-Led Development

Reading	"Large-Scale Dam Development and Counter Movements: Water Justice struggles around Guatemala's Chixoy Dam" Barbara Rose Johnston in <i>Water Justice</i> by Boelens, Perreault and Vos, pp. 169-182. Prah Ruger. 2005. "The Changing Role of the World Bank in Global Health" Bakker, K. 2010. <i>Privatizing Water: Governance Failure and the World's Urban Water Crisis</i> , Chapter 2, 53-77
Monday, August 31	Class meeting
Wednesday, Sept 2	Team meeting

Week 4: Market Reforms, the Washington Consensus and Water Privatization – Part 1

Reading	<p>Simmons. 2016. “El agua es nuestra, carajo! The Origins of the Bolivian Water Wars.” In <i>Meaningful Resistance</i>, pages 71-109.</p> <p>Spronk, S. (2007). Roots of Resistance to Urban Water Privatization in Bolivia: The “New Working Class,” the Crisis of Neoliberalism, and Public Services I. <i>International Labor and Working-Class History</i>, 71(1), 8–28. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0147547907000312</p>
Monday, Sept 7	NO CLASS
Wednesday, Sept 9	Class meeting

Week 5: Market Reforms, the Washington Consensus and Water Privatization – Part 2

Reading	<p>Budds and McGranahan. 2003. “Are the debates on water privatization missing the point?”</p> <p>Bakker, Karen. “Chapter 3: Watering the Thirsty Poor: The Water Privatization Debate.” in <i>Privatizing water: governance failure and the world's urban water crisis</i>. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010.</p> <p>Post, A. E. (2014). <i>Foreign and Domestic Investment in Argentina: The Politics of Privatized Infrastructure</i>. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1</p>
Monday, Sept 14	Class meeting
Wednesday, Sept 16	Team meetings

Week 6: NGOs, Civil Society and Social Movements

Reading	<p>Excerpt of Herrera, <i>Slow Harms and Citizen Action: Environmental Degradation & Policy Change in Latin American Cities</i>.</p> <p>Dupuits, E., Baud, M., Boelens, R., de Castro, F., & Hogenboom, B. (2020). Scaling up but losing out? Water commons’ dilemmas between transnational movements and grassroots struggles in Latin America. <i>Ecological Economics</i>, 172, 106625. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2020.106625</p> <p>Banks et al. 2015. “NGOs, States and Donors Revisited: Still too close for Comfort?”</p>
Monday, Sept 21	Class meeting
Wednesday, Sept 23	Class meeting: Guest Speaker: Dr. Veronica Herrera https://luskin.ucla.edu/person/veronica-herrera

Week 7: Decentralization and Rural Water Governance

Reading	Perreault, Thomas. "State restructuring and the scale politics of rural water governance in Bolivia." <i>Environment and Planning A</i> 37, no. 2 (2005): 263-284. Romano, S. T. (2019). <i>Transforming Rural Water Governance: The Road from Resource Management to Political Activism in Nicaragua</i> . University of Arizona Press., Chapter 1
Monday, Sept 28	Class meeting
Wednesday, Sept 30	Team meeting

Week 8: Clientelism and Distributive Politics

Reading	Herrera, V. (2017). <i>Water and Politics: Clientelism and Reform in Urban Mexico</i> . University of Michigan Press. <i>Selected Chapters</i> .
Monday, Oct 5	Class meeting
Wednesday, Oct 7	NO CLASS/No office hours

Week 9: Building Bureaucratic Capacity & Implementing Reforms

Reading	Abers, R., & Keck, M. E. (2013). <i>Practical Authority: Agency and Institutional Change in Brazilian Water Politics</i> . Oxford University Press. <i>Selected Chapters</i> .
Monday, Oct 12	Class meeting
Wednesday, Oct 14	Class meeting: Guest Speaker Dr. Rebecca Abers https://unb.academia.edu/RebeccaAbers

Week 10: Government Accountability and Responsiveness

Reading	Fox, J. A. (2015). Social Accountability: What Does the Evidence Really Say? <i>World Development</i> , 72, 346–361. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.03.011 Rodríguez Herrera, B., Salazar Ramírez, R., & González Moyo, M. (2018). <i>First Meeting of Auxiliary Watershed Organizations: Good Practices, Limitations, Lessons, and Prospects. Rapporteur's Report</i> (Learning Exchange Report No. 4). Accountability Research Center. https://accountabilityresearch.org/publications/?wpv-wpcf-topic=Water&wpv_aux_current_post_id=1108&wpv_view_count=12-TCPID1108
Monday, Oct 19	Class meeting
Wednesday, Oct 21	Team meeting

Week 11: Regulation and Informality

Reading	Pacheco-Vega, R. 2019. "(Re)theorizing the Politics of Bottled Water: Insecurity in the Context of Weak Regulatory Regimes." <i>Water</i> . Wutich, A., Beresford, M., & CWearvajal, C. (2016). Can Informal Water Vendors Deliver on the Promise of A Human Right to Water? Results from Cochabamba, Bolivia. <i>World Development</i> , 79, 14–24. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.10.043
Monday, Oct 26	Class meeting
Wednesday, Oct 28	Class meeting: Guest Speaker Dr. Raul Pacheco-Vega http://www.raulpacheco.org/

Part 2: Student Projects

Week 12: Gender and Water

How are gender inequities reproduced through water policies? How are gender inequities reproduced through water and sanitation projects (planning, implementation, maintenance, etc.)? How can the inclusion of women in decision-making processes change the quality of services or address outcomes for women and girls? Under what conditions can the inclusion of women in decision-making processes improve service provision?

Reading	TBD by student team
Monday, Nov 2	Class meeting
Wednesday, Nov 4	Team meeting

Week 13: Implications for Health

How does variation in water governance shape health inequities? How are failures in water, sanitation and environmental services related to health outcomes?

Reading	Spronk reading + TBD by student team
Monday, Nov 9	Class meeting
Wednesday, Nov 11	Class meeting: Guest Speaker Dr. Susan Spronk https://uniweb.uottawa.ca/members/757

Week 14: Water Contamination

How is water contamination a governance failure? What explains the uneven geographies of water contamination? What factors explain why some areas are better at avoiding water contamination than others? How do institutional arrangements explain contamination disasters or the response to disasters?

Reading	TBD by student team
Monday, Nov 16	Class meeting
Wednesday, Nov 18	Team meeting

Week 15: Asymmetrical Water Conflicts

Because water is a valuable and fundamental resource for human livelihoods and a wide range of economic sectors, conflicts around water are common. They are particularly salient in Latin America between less powerful actors (rural or marginalized communities and small farms) and more powerful actors (such as agribusiness, industry and tourism). What explains variation in the ability for weaker actors to access and enforce water rights or to protect the integrity of water sources?

Reading	TBD by student team
Monday, Nov 23	Class meeting
Wednesday, Nov 25	Team meeting

Week 16: Climate Change

From increased variability of rainfall to droughts, climate change can affect water and sanitation service provision in myriad ways. In what ways are different actors (central governments, local governments, NGOs, international organization, etc.) failing to respond appropriately to threats posed by climate change and why? What explains why some areas facing serious climate change threats are coping better than others? What role do networks and the information that flows through them play in resilience to the impact of climate change on water? For whom does climate change represent a political opportunity? How do inequalities shape the response to climate change?

Reading	Cooperman reading + TBD by student team
Monday, Nov 30	Class meeting
Wednesday, Dec 2	Class meeting: Guest Speaker Dr. Alicia Cooperman https://www.aliciacooperman.com/

Policies

Disabilities

Qualified students with disabilities needing appropriate academic adjustments should contact me as soon as possible to ensure your needs are met in a timely manner. Handouts are available in alternative accessible formats upon request. If you need more information on the Americans with Disability Act, please contact the Office of Equal Opportunity at 277-5251. Accessibility Services (Mesa Vista Hall 2021, 277-3506) also provides academic support to students who have disabilities.

Classroom Behavior & Zoom Policies/Etiquette

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities.

The University of New Mexico Student Code of Conduct applies to online behavior as well as in-person or classroom behavior. You are expected to be professional and respectful when attending class on Zoom. The following are class policies for our meetings with Zoom. Please read carefully, these policies are

effective immediately and apply for the remainder of the semester. All students are expected to adhere to the policies. Class meetings on Zoom (including video, audio, and chat text) may be recorded. Violations are subject to the UNM State Student Code of Conduct and will be adjudicated accordingly.

General: Sign in with your full first name and last name as listed on the class roster. Do not use a nickname or other pseudonym when you log in. It makes it impossible to know who is in attendance. Using your full name quickly sorts students into their groups when needed. Users who do not provide their full names will NOT be admitted to class.

Exceptions: Since enrolling in class, some students have changed their names to better reflect their gender identity. If you currently use a different name than what is listed on the official roster, please send a private email so this can be noted on the roster and you can use your current name on Zoom.

If you do not have access to a computer or smartphone with internet access, call into class using a landline phone. This is not optimal; please try to locate an internet-enabled device to use for class. **Be in contact with me if you are having difficulty with access.**

Stay focused. Please stay engaged in class activities. Close any apps on your device that are not relevant and turn off notifications.

Video: Turn on your video when possible. It is helpful to be able to see each other, just as in an in-person class. I will ask everyone to do this and you should let me know if you have reasons for turning off your camera. ***Keep it clean. Don't share anything you wouldn't put up on the projector in class!***

Audio: Mute your microphone when you are not talking. This helps eliminate background noise.

Be in a quiet place when possible. Find a quiet, distraction-free spot to log in. Turn off any music, videos, etc. in the background.

No disrespect or hate speech. Just like in our in-person class, respectful behavior is expected. Consider Zoom a professional environment, and act like you're at a job interview, even when you're typing in the chat.

Academic Honesty Policy

In accordance with the UNM policy, academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will result in a failure of the assignment or of the entire course, and will be reported to the proper university authorities. Academic dishonesty is a major violation of the UNM student code of conduct, and can result in serious sanctions up to and including expulsion from programs or UNM.

Any work that you present as your own, whether a paper, exam, or quiz, must be entirely your own intellectual work. Any written material taken from another source must be properly cited; ignorance of academic conventions with respect to citation of sources is not a suitable defense for plagiarism in this course. Any substantial information, interpretation, or argument that is not common knowledge should be cited, in sufficient detail that a reader would be able to find the same source. In your papers, you should use the citation format recommended by the American Political Science Association (see a summary style sheet here: <http://www.csuchico.edu/lref/pols/APSA.pdf>). Graders will impose point penalties for each citation error.

It is particularly important to exercise care in citing Internet sources, attributing the title, author (individual or institutional), the URL, the date of publication of the source (if you can determine this), and

the date on which you viewed the source. The date on which you viewed the site is crucial because some URLs are unstable and may change or disappear. If the document is paginated, you should report the specific pages you are citing. Many web (html) documents lack pagination, in which case you may omit the page, or cite the paragraph(s) if they are numbered.