

Cuba: The Politics of Extremism

As of 8.30.19

Amherst College
Political Science 248, spring 2015
Tue and Thu 2:30-4:30 pm
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Office Hours: Tue 4:30-5:30pm
and by appointment



Description of the Course

The study of Cuba's politics presents opportunities to address issues of universal concern to social scientists and humanists in general, not just Latin Americanists. When is it rational to be radical? Why have Cuban politics forced so many individuals to adopt extreme positions? What are the causes of radical revolutions? Is pre-revolutionary Cuba a case of too little development, uneven development or maybe too rapid development? What is the role of leaders: do they make history, are they the product of history, or are they the makers of unintended history? Was the 1959 revolution inevitable? Was it necessary? How are new (radical) states constructed? What are the roles of foreign actors, existing political institutions, ethnicity, nationalism, religion and sexuality in this process? How does a small nation manage to become influential in world affairs, even altering the behavior of superpowers? What

are the conditions that account for the survival of authoritarianism? To what extent is the revolution capable of self-reform? What are the most effective mechanisms to effect regime change? These are some of the questions that this course will address.

Purpose of the Course

As with almost everything in politics, there are more than just two sides to the issue of Cuba. One aim of the course is to expose you to as many different views and approaches as possible.

Although I care deeply about the study of Cuba, this course is more about an approach to thinking and learning than it is about Cuba—even though you will surely learn a lot about Cuba. The course emphasizes the politics of Cuba—domestic and international. But we will also look at other aspects: the economy, society, culture, demographics, etc. In addition, the course will cover a diversity of approaches to the study of Cuba. Again, the course will expose you to the way that political scientists think about Cuba and its politics, but it will also introduce the works of historians, sociologists, fiction writers, propagandists, film makers, economists, and policy analysts. In this sense, the course will be interdisciplinary, both in its focus as well as its approaches.

Learning Objectives

- Learn and compare social science theories about political regimes, revolutions, transitions, and external influences on regime transitions.
- Learn to use evidence to support, modify, or challenge theory.

Lectures

Some lectures, especially in the first half of the course, will be run as debates: one lecture will look at a set of political events from a particular point of view; the subsequent lecture will look at the same set of political events from an alternative point of view. The point is to expose you to alternative views. Some lectures will parallel the controversies that you will be reading about; others will present yet another viewpoint not found in the readings. I will always let you know before every lecture whether I am using a debate format or not.

Student Responsibilities

Readings: If you are not prepared to read approximately 150 pages per week, you should not take this class. You are required to complete reading assignments prior to class meetings.

For the most part, readings can be classified into two categories. The first consists of theoretical and/or interpretative readings. You are expected to identify and apply the argument contained in these readings. The other category consists of “primary sources” such as private correspondence, government documents, public speeches by politicians, and data charts, as well as memoirs about the events under study.

Most of the readings are contained in the College’s e-reserves (see moodle.amherst.edu).

Reproducing readings in pdf form for students may involve copyright fees; these would be billed to your college account.

Films: We will watch these films during the course of this semester (see syllabus):

I Am Cuba (USSR/Cuba), extracts
Memories of Underdevelopment (Cuba)
A Successful Man (Cuba)
Strawberry and Chocolate (Cuba)
The Cuba Libre Story, Episode 5: "Making Heroes." (Netflix).
Before Night Falls (USA)
The Lost City (USA)
The Last Match (Cuba)

Requirements:	Item	Percent of Final Grade
	Paper 1	15 percent
	Paper 2	20 percent
	Paper 3 or 4	40 percent
	Participation	20 percent

Papers: All students are required to write **four papers**. Paper 1 will be two pages long. Paper 2 will be three pages long. You will write a draft of paper 3 and a draft of paper 4, but I will only grade either one of paper 3 and 4. You will decide at the end of the course which paper (3 or 4) you would like me to grade.

Topics for all papers will be distributed at least one week prior to the due date. Papers will be based on class material; no outside research is necessary.

Each paper will count approximately 20-40 percent of your grade, with your strongest paper counting more than the others. There is no final exam.

Participation: In addition to lectures, readings, and films, this course relies heavily on class participation. Students should come to class prepared to discuss the readings and films. The format of the class will be a combination of lecture and discussion: on some days, I will mostly lecture, on other days, I will mostly lead a discussion.

Class discussion provides a chance for you to talk about the readings, work through the arguments, evaluate events, and engage in lively exchanges.

Attendance at class meetings is mandatory. Attendance, however, is not the same as participation. The latter is the extent to which you make a qualitative contribution to the discussion in progress. It entails addressing the issues raised by me **and** your fellow students, as well as raising your own issues when pertinent. Class participation will be decisive in borderline cases.

I will never call on you to participate in class. Thus, you must take the initiative to participate.

Discussants: At the beginning of the semester, you will be assigned to one of five groups of “lead discussants.” On designated class meetings, lead discussants will be expected to participate more actively and be better prepared than the rest of the class. During discussions, I will first give priority to lead discussants, before turning to the rest of the class. The List of Assignments indicates what days each group is expected to be take the lead. When it’s your turn to be a lead discussant, I will expect your participation to be stellar.

Extensions: The policy is simple: No extensions will be granted (except in extreme circumstances, such as serious medical emergencies). Late papers will be marked down.



Schedule of Assignments

Date	Class discussion	Assignments
Tu Sep 3	<p>1. Introduction: Extremism in Politics</p> <p>Stolberg, Sheryl Gay and Alexei Barrionuevo. 2009. "Obama Says U.S. Will Pursue Thaw With Cuba." <i>The New York Times</i>, April 17. https://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/18/world/americas/18prexy.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=barrionuevo%20and%20stolberg&st=cse.</p> <p>Adams, Gordon. 2014. "The Liberal Fallacy of the Cuba Deal." <i>Foreign Policy</i>, December 19. https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/12/19/the-liberal-fallacy-of-the-cuba-deal-us-castros/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_term=*Editors%20Picks&utm_campaign=2014_EditorsPicksRS19%2F12.</p> <p>Cárdenas, José R. 2014. "The Cuba Rapprochement That Never Will Be." <i>Foreign Policy</i>, December 17. https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/12/17/the-cuba-rapprochement-that-never-will-be/</p> <p>Corrales, Javier. 2014. "Break Out the Cigars!" <i>Foreign Policy</i>, December 18. https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/12/18/break-out-the-cigars-cuba-united-states-deal/.</p> <p>Perez-Stable, Marifeli. 2014. "After the handshake, Cuba has lots to do to normalize relations." <i>The Conversation</i>, December 19. https://theconversation.com/after-the-handshake-cuba-has-lots-to-do-to-normalize-relations-35699</p> <p>Eaton, Paul D. and David L. McGinnis. 2017. "Trump's critical Cuba policy." <i>Politico</i>, May 17. https://www.politico.com/agenda/story/2017/05/17/trump-cuba-policy-threat-national-security-000442.</p> <p>Deutsche Welle. 2019. "US Secretary of State Pompeo blames Cuba for Venezuelan regime." July 21. https://p.dw.com/p/3MRy4.</p> <p>C-SPAN. April 17, 2019. "Secretary Pompeo Remarks at State Department." https://www.c-span.org/video/?459893-1/us-lawsuits-foreign-firms-cuba-secretary-pompeo.</p> <p>Pérez-López, Jorge and Scott Morgenstern. 2019. Introduction. In Scott Morgenstern, Jorge Pérez-López, and Jerome Branche, eds. <i>Paths for Cuba</i> (University of Pittsburgh Press):1-37.</p>	
Thu Sep 5 G-1	<p>2. Cuba on our minds, today and in the 1950s</p> <p>Cabrera Infante, Guillermo. 1978. <i>Three Trapped Tigers</i>. Harper Colophon Books, pp. 3-7.</p> <p>Suchlicki, Jaime. 1997. <i>Cuba. From Columbus to Castro</i>. Fourth Edition. Pergamon-Brassey, pp. 87-172.</p>	

Part I: Cuba Prior to 1959: Five Theories of Revolution

<p>Tue Sep 10 G-2</p>	<p>3. The Necessary Revolution (Socio-Economic Structuralism) Marx, Karl and Frederick Engels. 1986 [1848]. "Manifesto of the Communist Party" (excerpts). In Jack A. Goldstone, ed., <i>Revolutions. Theoretical, Comparative, and Historical Studies</i>. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, pp. 20-29. Pérez, Louis A., Jr. 1995. <i>Cuba. Between Reform and Revolution</i>. Second Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. vii-x, 276-312. Estrada, Alfredo José. 2007. <i>Havana: Autobiography of a City</i>. Palgrave (chapter 4 "Don Tabaco y Doña Azúcar", pp. 69-96).</p>	
<p>Thu Sep 12 Until 4:30p G-3</p>	<p>4. The Unnecessary Revolution Ritter, Harry. 1986. "Counterfactual Analysis." <i>Dictionary of Concepts in History</i>, New York: Greenwood Press, pp. 70-75. Cuban Economic Research Project. 1965. <i>A Study on Cuba</i>. Miami, FL: University of Miami Press, pp. 619-622. Pérez-Stable, Marifeli. 1998. "Reflections on Political Possibilities: Cuba's Peaceful Transition that Wasn't (1954-1956)." Paper presented at the Second CRI Congress on Cuban and Cuban American Affairs, Miami, FL. Batista, Fulgencio. 1964. <i>The Growth and Decline of the Cuban Republic</i>. New York: The Devin-Adair Company, pp. 38-48, 61-76. McGuire, James W. and Laura Frankel. 2005. "Mortality Decline in Cuba, 1900-1959: Patterns, Comparisons, and Causes." <i>Latin American Research Review</i> 40, 2 (June):84-116.</p>	<p>Paper 1 Due</p>
<p>Tue Sep 17</p>	<p>No Class</p>	
<p>Thu Sep 19 Until 4:30p G-4</p>	<p>5. Writing an Oped: Bajak 6. The Necessary Revolution, part II O'Connor, James. 1970. <i>The Origins of Socialism in Cuba</i>. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, pp. 1-33, 37-54. Pérez, Louis, pp. 313-336. Discussion of FILM: <i>I Am Cuba</i>. Watch only: Chapters 1-9 (0:00-39:55), 17-21 (1:00-1:47), 22-25, 27-34 (1:50-End)</p>	<p>Film: <i>I Am Cuba</i></p>
<p>Tue Sep 24 G-5</p>	<p>7. Institutional Deficits and Revolution Huntington, Samuel P. 1968. <i>Political Order in Changing Societies</i>. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, pp. 1-8, 53-59, 264-278. del Águila, Juan M. <i>Cuba: Dilemmas of a Revolution</i>. Third Edition. Boulder CO: Westview Press, pp. 25-43.</p>	
<p>Thu Sep 26 Until 4:30p G-1</p>	<p>8. States and Revolution (and the concept of State-Capitalism) Skocpol, Theda. 1979. <i>States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China</i>. Cambridge University Press, pp. 3-33. Domínguez, Jorge I. 1978. <i>Cuba: Order and Revolution</i> (Cambridge, MA:</p>	

	The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press): 123-133 Morley, Michael H. 1987. <i>Imperial State and Revolution: The United States and Cuba, 1952-1986</i> . Cambridge University Press, pp. 40-71. Discussion of film: <i>A Successful Man</i> .	
Oct 1	No Class	Film A Successful Man
Oct 3	No Class	Film: Lost City
Tue Oct 8 G-2 Until 4:30pm	9. The Stolen Revolution, Collective Action and Free Ridership, Part 1 Samuels, David. Selections from "Collective Action", Chapter 9, in <i>Comparative Politics</i> (New York: Pearson, 2012), pp. 230-235. Estrada, Alfredo José. 2007. <i>Havana: Autobiography of a City</i> . Palgrave (chapter 6 "the Apostle of Freedom", pp. 113-130). Franqui, Carlos. 1980. <i>Diary of the Cuban Revolution</i> . Viking-Penguin, pp. 9-19, 43-46, 65-67, 72-75, 77-78, 80, 83-87, 93-98, 121-124, 126, 129, 130-132, 202-205, 229-231, 239-242, 244-245, 247-250, 260-266, 268- 270, 272-276, 300-304, 364-365, 396-399, 416-419, 429-430, 486-488. Guevara, Che. 1987. <i>Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution</i> . Pathfinder Press, pp. 45-50, 55-60, 73-81 Revisit Suchlicki.	
Thu Oct 10 G-3	10. Can the U.S. Shape Democratization Abroad? Pastor, Robert. 1991. "Preempting Revolutions," <i>International Security</i> 15, 4 (1991):54-86. Smith, Earl. 1962. <i>The Fourth Floor</i> . Random House, pp. 29-35, 82-89, 97- 100, 115-118, 158-175. Batista, Fulgencio. 1962. <i>Cuba Betrayed</i> . Vantage Press: 92-103, 123-131. Revisit Morley.	Paper 2 Friday Oct 11
Tue Oct 15 and Thu Oct 17	Holiday	Movie: The Cuba Libre Story, Episode 5: "Making Heroes." Netflix.
Special Session Sun Oct 20G-4	11. Constructing the Radical State: When is it rational to be radical? Castro, Fidel. 1972 [1953]. "History will absolve me" (October 16, 1953). In Bonachea, Rolando E., and Nelson P. Valdés, eds. <i>Revolutionary Struggle 1947-1958</i> , Volume 1, The Selected Works of Fidel Castro. Cambridge: The MIT Press, pp. 164-221.	
Tue Oct 22 G-5	12. The Alliance with the USSR and the Bay of Pigs: Explaining Soviet adventurism and U.S. hesitancy Chisem, James. 2012. "Can the security dilemma explain actual conflicts? At https://www.e-ir.info/2012/01/17/can-the-security-dilemma-	Mon Oct 21: Paper 2

	<p>explain-actual-conflicts/# ftn16</p> <p>Bonsal, Philip. 1971. <i>Cuba, Castro, and the United States</i>. Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, pp. 38-153.</p> <p>Alexeev, Aleksandr. Cuba after the Triumph of the Revolution.</p> <p>Haney, Patrick J. and Walt Vanderbush. 2005. <i>The Cuban Embargo</i>. University of Pittsburgh Press, pp. 1-31.</p> <p>Discussion of Film: <i>Crisis in Central America: Cuba</i> Added in 2017</p> <p>https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/10/30/what-did-the-jfk-files-tell-us-about-u-s-covert-actions/?utm_term=.a88f8f94bd4c&wpisrc=nl_cage&wpmm=1</p> <p>13. Comparing US Response to the Bolivian Revolution</p> <p>Farber, Samuel. 2006. <i>The Origins of the Cuban Revolution Reconsidered</i>. The University of North Carolina Press: 104-111.</p>	
<p>III. Labor, Gender and Sexuality in a “Worker’s Paradise”</p>		
<p>Thu Oct 24 G-1</p>	<p>14. The New Man: We Will Be Like Che</p> <p>Fagen, Richard. 1969. <i>The Transformation of Political Culture in Cuba</i>. Stanford University Press, pp. 33-43; 54-108.</p> <p><i>Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution</i>, pp. 203-204, 210-218, 231-245, 337-359, 371-376, 261, 365, 367-370, 371</p> <p>Alford, John R. and John Hibbing. 2004. The Origins of Politics: An Evolutionary Theory of Political Behavior. <i>Perspectives on Politics</i> 2, 4 (December): Read only 707-711.</p>	<p>Film: Memories of Under-development</p>
<p>Tue Oct 29 G-1</p>	<p>15. The Cuban Missile Crisis Visit by Prof. William Taubman</p> <p>Taubman, William. 2003. <i>Khrushchev: The Man and His Era</i>. W.W. Norton & Company, Simon & Schuster, pp. 529-581.</p> <p>Domínguez, Jorge I. 1989. <i>To Make a World Safe for Revolution: Cuba’s Foreign Policy</i>. Harvard University Press, pp. 61-77, 113-146.</p>	
<p>Thu Oct 31 G-2</p>	<p>16. The New Man (cont’d)</p> <p>Pérez-Stable, Marifeli. 1993. <i>The Cuban Revolution</i>, pp. 98-120.</p> <p>Lockwood, Lee. 1990. <i>Castro’s Cuba, Cuba’s Fidel</i>. pp. 87-117, 147-191, 211-234, 290-294.</p>	<p>Film: <i>Strawberry and Chocolate</i></p>
<p>Tue Nov 5 G-3</p>	<p>16. Hyperrepression</p> <p>Valls, Jorge. 1986. <i>Twenty Years and Forty Days: Life in a Cuban Prison</i>. Americas Watch, pp. 1-68.</p> <p>Discussion of <i>Strawberry and Chocolate</i></p>	
<p>Thu Nov</p>	<p>18. Hypergayness</p>	<p>Film: <i>Before</i></p>

7 G-4	Arenas, Reinaldo. 1992. <i>Before Night Falls</i> (read only: Eroticism, Violence, A Student, Havana, Fidel Castro, Good-bye to the Chicken Farm, My Generation, A Trip, Eroticism, Super Stalinism, Sugar Mill). Discussion of <i>Before Night Falls</i>	<i>Night Falls</i>
	Part IV. Coping with Extreme Circumstances	
Tue Nov 12 G-5	19. Cuba's Special Period: Surviving Extreme Circumstances Facio, Elisa. 2000. Jineterismo During the Special Period. In Eloise Linger and John Cotman, eds. <i>Cuban Transitions at the Millenium</i> . Largo, MD: International Development Options, pp. 55-74. Prieto Espina. 2005. "Structural Changes since the Nineties and New Research Topics on Cuban Society." In Tulchin et al., pp. 81-102 http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=1425&fuseaction=topics.publications&group_id=7505	Mon Nov 11 Paper 3
Thu Nov 14 G-1	20. The Non-Transition: Explaining (Non)Democratization Przeworski, Adam. <i>Democracy and Market</i> . Cambridge University Press: 51-79. Hirschman, Albert O. 1970. <i>Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States</i> . Cambridge: Harvard University Press, selections. Portes, Alejandro (pp. 187-205) and Eckstein (pp. 207-227) in Joseph S. Tulchin, et al., eds. 2005. <i>Changes in Cuban Society Since the Nineties</i> . Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson University Press. http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=1425&fuseaction=topics.publications&group_id=7505 Hoffman, Bert. 2007. Cuba's Dilemma of Simultaneity. In Bert Hoffmann and Laurence Whitehead, eds., <i>Debating Cuban Exceptionalism</i> . New York: Palgrave, pp. 101-122.	
Tue Nov 19 G-2	21. More on The Non-Transitions: the 2000s Skype with Bert Hoffman Corrales, Javier. 2004. "The Gatekeeper State." <i>Latin American Research Review</i> . 22. Change in Cuba today... Debate between Omar Everleny Pérez and José Antonio Ocampo, <i>Americas Quarterly</i> (Spring 2011), pp. 24-27. Corrales, Javier. 2011 Cuba's 'Equity-Without-Growth' Model. <i>Latin American Politics and Society</i> . Hernández. 2011. "Intimate Enemies." Hansing, Katrin and Bert Hoffmann. 2019. "Cuba's New Social Structure: Assessing the Re-Stratification of Cuban Society: 60 Years after Revolution. Hamburg, Germany: GIGA Research Paper no 315	

	(February). https://www.giga-hamburg.de/en/system/files/publications/wp315_hansing-hoffmann.pdf	
Thu Nov 21 G-3	<p>23. ... and in Miami</p> <p>Eckstein, Susan. 2009. The Personal Is Political: The Cuban Ethnic Electoral Policy Cycle, <i>LAPS</i> (p 119-148).</p> <p>Pérez-Stable, Marifeli. 2010. "The United States and Cuba since 2000." In Jorge I. Domínguez and Rafael Fernández de Castro, eds., <i>Contemporary U.S.-Latin American Relations</i>. Routledge, pp. 44-63 Reading TBA.</p>	
Thu Dec 5 Until 4:30p G-4	<p>24. Rapprochements with the United States, comparisons with the 1970s</p> <p>Kornbluh, Peter. 2014. "Cuba: A Way Forward," <i>Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies</i> (Fall):2-7.</p> <p>Domínguez, Alzugaray and Ritter in Domínguez and Hernández.</p> <p>Pérez-Liñán, Aníbal and Scott Mainwaring. 2019. The Prospects for Cuban Democracy in the Post-Transition Era. In Scott Morgenstern, Jorge Pérez-López, and Jerome Branche, eds. <i>Paths for Cuba</i> (University of Pittsburgh Press):192-210.</p>	
Sun Dec 8 U4:30p G-5	<p>25. Conclusion</p> <p>Domínguez, Jorge. 2000. "Your friend, Fidel." <i>Harvard Magazine</i>.</p> <p>Corrales, Javier. 2005. "Cuba After Fidel." <i>Current History</i>.</p> <p>Reading TBA</p>	Paper 4 Due date TBA.