

**IMPORTANT FIGURES IN LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND
THE UGLY**
POLS 5381

6-10pm, Tues., 455 UH

<http://www.uta.edu/faculty/story/>

The official syllabus is found only on Professor Story's web site

Dale Story
Summer 2014

449 University Hall, story@uta.edu
Office Hours (by appt.): before and after class

Course Description and Overview

Are political outcomes solely the outcome of the interplay of vast numbers of political actors (citizens) working through established institutions such as political parties, interest groups, branches of government, and the like?

Or do individuals sometimes assume a disproportionately influential role—above and beyond the functions of institutions?

In this course, we will assume that individuals can “make a difference” beyond the limitations of an institutional framework. We will examine the life and times of a number of important figures in Latin American Politics.

While we obviously need to understand the history of the person and their country (what, when, where, etc.), we also want to explain and understand their contributions (good or bad) to their nation.

Student Learning Outcomes

The students will be able to understand the disproportionate role that individuals can play in the political arena.

The students will be able to recognize the socialization process at work that may lead individuals to pursue certain political paths.

The students will be able to analyze the impact of such individuals and to explain the role they play in the context of the larger development process.

Course Requirements and Grading

Instead of traditional textbooks, students will be asked to rely upon specific readings (articles and other narratives) and videos. Each week we will examine one or more individuals.

Your grade will be based on four components.

1. Each student will create a “time-line” for at least one of the individuals we are studying for that week. You will need to email that time-line to me before 6pm on that Tuesday when we are studying that individual. I may ask for additional small projects.
2. Mid-Term Test. A “take-home” test that you will email to me by 6pm on the day it is due.
3. Final Exam. Also, a “take-home” test that you will email to me by 6pm on the day it is due.
4. A Research Paper. You will write a case-study on any individual that has made a significant impact (good or bad) on development and politics in Latin America. Analogous to our objective in class, you will not only convey an understanding of their biographical history, but you will analyze the factors behind their impact on politics. This should be a 10-15 page paper (double-spaced) with several substantive sources.

Each of these components will be equally weighted, i.e., each will count 25% of your final grade.