

ECS 3403 - Economics of Latin America

Section: Fall Term 2025

TuTh 3:30PM - 4:45PM

Location: Green Library 132

Instructor Information:

Name: Mariapia Carbajal Bedon, MA.

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Office Hours: Tuesdays from 11am to 12pm or by appointment.

Location: Department of Economics, Graduate Students Room.

Course Description:

This course explores key economic challenges and developments in Latin America, analyzing both historical and contemporary issues. Topics will span from long-term structural factors—such as productivity growth and income inequality—to short-term dynamics, including inflation, stabilization, and financial crises.

The purpose of this course is to explain the combination of theoretical economic models and quantitative data to deepen students' understanding of the regions and some cases at the country level economic trajectory and current economic policies.

Course Objectives:

The objective of this class is to analyze and investigate Latin America regional economic performance at the aggregate level, as well as some selected countries' economic performances.

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. Explain the geographic and historical foundations of Latin America and how they have shaped the region's economic development.
2. Analyze the impact of colonialism and trade dependency on Latin America's long-term economic structure and development trajectory.
3. Examine the evolution of labor markets and industrialization in the post-independence period, and their role in shaping modern economic outcomes in the Latin America region.
4. Analyze major macroeconomic challenges in the region, including inflation, stabilization efforts, dollarization, and responses to financial crises.
5. Understand trends in income distribution, poverty, and inequality across Latin America using empirical data and economic models.
6. Interpret the effects of commodity booms, volatility, and external shocks on Latin American economies across different time periods.
7. Conduct country-specific economic analyses of selected Latin American nations—Mexico, Argentina, Chile, and Brazil—using time series data to evaluate economic performance and policy outcomes.

Expectations of the Course

Students are expected to read chapters listed below, review PowerPoints, videos, and announcements through Canvas. Students are also expected to complete group homework, individual pop-up quizzes in class, exams and presentations. Students are encouraged to study designated material. Class participation and class attendance are encouraged. It implies that you participate actively in the class discussions.

Textbook and Materials:

INTRO. TO LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMICS

By Scott McKinney

Edition : 21

Publisher : SPRINGER

ISBN 13 : 9783030766160

Grading

• Five In-class individuals short pop-up quizzes by Kahoot	10%
• Two Homework in Groups	20%
• One in-class group discussion	10%
• Three Exams	60%
Total	100%

Five In-class individuals short pop-up quizzes:

There will be **no** make-up for these pop-up quizzes. You need to download the app [Kahoot](#) in order to be able to take the short pop-up quizzes. Every two weeks, I will use Kahoot for a brief 5-10 questions related to the topic of the previous class. We are going to start the third week of class, approx. 5 in total of pop-up quizzes, and the average grade will be 10% of your total grade. I will drop the lowest grade.

Two Homework in groups: To encourage you to share ideas and study in groups, there will be two homework assignments. I'll divide the class into groups by tables. Each group will choose one member to compile your group's work into a SINGLE document and submit it through Canvas and list all the full names and Panther IDs of each group member. Homework will be due before class listed in the schedule.

Please don't upload photos of your homework and recommend that you use a program, such as CamScanner, to convert your document to a PDF.

The first homework will be questions based on the main textbook. The second homework will be questions from the main textbook and additional materials provided or upload into Canvas, including tables, data and charts. Each homework will be 10% of your grade,

One In-class Discussion by groups: I will assign assorted news or different short reports or briefing from The Economist or another sources by group. Each group will have a unique topic that will cover some current news about economics in Latin America and the discussion will center on the group analysis of the article and the goal is to present your findings in class. You should upload a summary of one paragraph that analyzes economic concepts in Latin America by group, list your additional sources. To help you improve your oral communication skills. I will assign 5-10 min per group to present. Also prepare questions for other groups. Tables, data and charts are more than welcome to help you present your point. All presentations will be one week before the final weeks. If you miss this presentation, there won't

be make-up. However, you can communicate with your group members and if you work before on preparation for this discussion, you can get a partial grade. Actively talking and thinking economics may be the most important element to further your economic intuition.

Exams: There will be 3 exams in total. The first exam will be 10% of your grade, midterm exam will be 20% of your grade, and final exam will be 30% of your grade. Exams will be 60% of your grade.

Midterm exam will be composed of both multiple choice and short essay questions. I don't give make-up work or extra credit. If you have an unavoidable conflict, please come see me as soon as possible. Midterm will be 20% of your total grade.

Final exam will be given on the official exam date during Finals week. No late assignments or quizzes will be accepted. Deadlines are strictly enforced. It's not cumulative. I don't give make-up work or extra credit. If you have an unavoidable conflict, please come see me as soon as possible. Final exam will be 30% of your total grade.

Class Schedule

Please note that the course plan can be adjusted.

<i>Important Topics</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Dates</i>
Introduction and Chapter 1	Geography of Latin America	08/26 and 08/28
Chapter 2	Background History of Latin America	09/02 and 09/04
Chapter 3: Trade and Dependency	Colonial Latin America Kahoot 1	09/09 and 09/11
Chapter 4: Independence	Labor Markets	09/16 and 09/18
Exam 1	Chapter 1-4	09/23
Chapter 5	Industrialization	09/25 and 09/30
Chapter 7: Commodity Boom	1970's Kahoot 2	10/02 and 10/07
Chapter 8: The Lost decade 1980	(Inflation, Stabilization, and Dollarization)	10/09 and 10/14
Chapter 9	Emerging Markets and Financial Crisis	10/16 and 10/21
Homework 1	Chapter 1 - 9	Due date: 10/23
Midterm Exam	Chapter 5,7,8,9	10/23
Chapter 10	Income, Poverty and Inequality (page 178) Kahoot 3	10/28 and 10/30
Chapter 11	Commodity Super cycled interrupted (Volatility and Crises)	11/04 and 11/06

No Class	(Veteran's Day Observance)	11/11
The Mexican Economy: Time series (Country selection)*	From "A MONETARY AND FISCAL HISTORY OF LATIN AMERICA, 1960–2017"	11/13
The Argentina Economy: Time Series (Country selection)*	From "A MONETARY AND FISCAL HISTORY OF LATIN AMERICA, 1960–2017" Kahoot 4	11/18
The Chilean Economy: Time Series (Country selection)*	From "A MONETARY AND FISCAL HISTORY OF LATIN AMERICA, 1960–2017"	11/20
The Brazilian Economy: Time series (country selection)*	From "A MONETARY AND FISCAL HISTORY OF LATIN AMERICA, 1960–2017"	11/25
No Class	(Thanksgiving Observance Day)	11/27
Homework 2	Chapter 10 -11 and additional class and materials until Dec 04 Kahoot 5	Due date: 12/02
In-class group Discussion	Presentations	12/04
Final Exam (No cumulative)	Chapter 10-11 and additional class and materials until Dec 04	12/09

*Lectures will be provided electronically one week before class from textbook:

A MONETARY AND FISCAL HISTORY OF LATIN AMERICA, 1960–2017

By Timothy J. Kehoe and Juan Pablo Nicolini (Editors)

Edition : 2021

Publisher : University of Minnesota Press

ISBN 978-1-5179-1136-2 (pb)

ISBN 978-1-5179-1198-0 (hc)

Grading Scheme Range

Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%
A	95 or above	B	83-86	C	70-76
A-	90 - 94	B-	80-82	D	60-69
B+	87 - 89	C+	77-79	F	59 or less

Course Communication Email policy

Please use common courtesy when sending e-mails. I will respond to all emails within 24 business hours. E-mails will be checked periodically. Messages will not necessarily be checked on the weekends.

Policies

Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared by the student.

You are likely to use generative AI such as ChatGPT this semester. As with other tools or resources, remember two important things:

1. You are responsible for what you submit
2. In order to facilitate review of your work, provide appropriate references.

For generative AI, this includes prompt used, the specific AI used, and a short description of your methodology (how you used it).

Uncited use of generative AI will be considered a violation of academic honesty and reported through appropriate channels.

You are not allowed to use ChatGPT for quizzes, homework, assignments, and exams.

Please review the [FIU's Policies webpage](#). The policies webpage contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU, as well as additional information about acceptable netiquette for online courses. For additional information, please visit [FIU's Policy and Procedure Library](#). As a member of the FIU community, you are expected to be knowledgeable about the behavioral expectations set forth in the [FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code](#).

Accessibility and Accommodation

The Disability Resource Center collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable.

The DRC provides FIU students with disabilities the necessary support to successfully complete their education and participate in activities available to all students.

If you have a diagnosed disability and plan to utilize academic accommodation, please contact the Center at 305-348-3532 or visit them at the Graham Center GC 190. For additional assistance please contact [FIU's Disability Resource Center](#).

Academic Integrity

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational

mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Conduct and Honor Code.

Academic Misconduct includes:

Cheating

The unauthorized use of any materials, information, study aids or assistance from another person on any academic assignment or exercise, unless explicitly authorized by the course Instructor; Assisting another student in the unauthorized use of any materials, information, study aids, unless explicitly authorized by the Instructor; and Having a substitute complete any academic assignment or completing an academic assignment for someone else, either paid or unpaid;

Plagiarism

The deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own. Assisting another student in the deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own. Use of AI Students are welcome to use AI as an additional resource to learn the material and prepare for the exams. Learn more about the academic integrity policies and procedures as well as student resources that can help you prepare for a successful semester.

Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

If you are looking for help for yourself or a fellow classmate, Panthers Care encourages you to express any concerns you may come across as it relates to any personal behavior concerns or worries you have, for the classmate's well-being or yours; you are encouraged to share your concerns with [FIU's Panthers Care website](#). [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) offers free and confidential help for anxiety, depression, stress, and other concerns that life brings. Professional counselors are available for same-day appointments. Don't wait to call (305) 348-2277 to set up a time to talk or visit the online self-help portal.

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