

POLI 4060: Organized Crime & Violence in the Americas
12:00 – 1:20pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays
Location: 228 Tureaud Hall

Professor: Dr. Yann Kerevel
Office: 230 Stubbs

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Office Hours: T/Th - 3:00pm – 4:00pm, or by appt.

Course Overview:

While organized crime is a global phenomenon, the particular ways in which it manifests itself in individual countries is fundamentally related to the nature of state. This course is designed to introduce students to the study of organized criminal violence with a focus on how particular histories, state policies and periods of democratic transition have influenced the growth of organized criminal organizations throughout the Americas. The first part of the course provides a broad overview of the topic. We will then spend several weeks focusing on individual countries, including the Andean Region (Colombia, Bolivia, Peru), Central America (Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua), and Mexico. The final set of readings focus on a variety of related topics such as how increases in violence influence migration, how domestic gun laws influence violence in other countries, and what rampant criminal violence means for the political process in new democracies.

Required textbook:

All assigned readings are provided in PDF format on Moodle.

Evaluation:

<u>Components</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Grading Scale</u>
Homework	100	485 - 500 A+
Exam 1	100	465 - 484 A
Exam 2	100	450 - 464 A-
Final paper	150	435 - 449 B+
Lab participation	25	415 - 434 B
Simulation participation	25	400 - 414 B-
Total	500	385 - 399 C+
		365 - 384 C
		350 - 364 C-
		335 - 349 D+
		315 - 334 D
		300 - 314 D-
		0 - 299 F

Homework: Throughout the course I will be providing a series of homework assignments. Most of these will be response essays to class material.

Exams: There are two exams in this course, one before fall break and one before Thanksgiving. The exams are not cumulative.

Final Research Paper: Students are required to write an original 7-8 page research paper on a topic of their choice related to the content of the course. The one major requirement of the paper is that students must engage in some basic data analysis and incorporate this analysis into the final paper. Topic choice will be limited by available data. Near the end of the course, we will spend several days in a computer lab where I will introduce you to some data and teach you basic skills needed to analyze these data. More details will be provided in class.

Participation and Attendance: I expect all students to attend class regularly. However, no specific participation grade will be provided nor will I take attendance. A lot of material outside of assigned readings will be presented in class and will be on the exams. Towards the end of the semester, I will provide you with some exercises to complete in a computer lab and we will spend one day conducting an in-class simulation. Completion of the lab exercises and participation in the simulation will be graded.

Students requiring special accommodation: Louisiana State University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments is requested to speak with the Disability Services and the instructor, as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential. This publication/material is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact the Disability Services, 115 Johnston Hall, (225)578-5919.

General Statement on Academic Integrity: Louisiana State University adopted the Commitment to Community in 1995 to set forth guidelines for student behavior both inside and outside of the classroom. The Commitment to Community charges students to maintain high standards of academic and personal integrity. All students are expected to read and be familiar with the LSU Code of Student Conduct and Commitment to Community, found online at www.lsu.edu/saa. It is your responsibility as a student at LSU to know and understand the academic standards for our community.

Students who are suspected of violating the Code of Conduct will be referred to the Office of Student Advocacy and Accountability. For undergraduate students, a first academic violation could result in a zero grade on the assignment or failing the class and disciplinary probation until graduation. For a second academic violation, the result could be suspension from LSU. For graduate students, suspension is the appropriate outcome for the first offense.

Plagiarism and Citation Method: As a student at LSU, it is your responsibility to refrain from plagiarizing the academic property of another and to utilize appropriate citation methods for all coursework. Ignorance of the citation method is not an excuse for academic misconduct. Remember there is a difference between paraphrasing and quoting and how to properly cite each respectively. If you have questions regarding what is appropriate, please consult with the library's tutorials on avoiding plagiarism and proper citation formats (links are also provided on the course Moodle page).

Lectures and Readings:

All assigned readings for each day **MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE ATTENDING CLASS.**

Week 1: Introduction

8/23 (T): no readings

8/25 (Th): Gootenberg 2012, Cocaine's Long March North, 1900-2010, LAPS

Week 2: Organized Crime and the State

8/30 (T): Kendra Koivu, 2013, Organized Crime and the State: the Political Economy of Illicit Markets

9/1 (Th): Snyder, R. and Duran-Martinez, A., 2009. Does illegality breed violence? Drug trafficking and state-sponsored protection rackets. *Crime, law and social change* 52(3): 253-273.

Week 3: Colombia

9/6 (T): Ramirez Lemus, Stanton and Walsh 2005. Colombia: A Vicious Circle of Drugs and War.

9/8 (Th): Tate 2015, Drugs, Thugs and Diplomats (Ch1 & Ch3).

Week 4: Pablo Escobar and Cocacaleros

9/13 (T): Pablo Escobar

9/15 (Th): Cocacaleros

Week 5: Bolivia & Peru

9/20 (T): Ledebur 2005, Bolivia: Clear Consequences

9/22 (Th): Rojas 2005, Peru: Drug Control Policy, Human Rights, and Democracy

Week 6: Central America

9/27 (T): Grillo 2016, Gangster Warlords, Central America excerpt

9/29 (Th): Cruz, J.M., 2011. Criminal violence and democratization in Central America: the survival of the violent state. *Latin American Politics and Society* 53(4): 1-33.

Week 7: Exam #1

10/4 (T): Exam

10/6 (Th): No Class, Fall Break

Week 8: Mexico

10/11 (T): Shirk and Wallman 2015, Understanding Mexico's Drug Violence

10/13 (Th): Flores Perez. 2009. Organized Crime and Official Corruption in Mexico.

Week 9: Mexico

10/18 (T): Grillo 2016, Gangster Warlords, Mexico excerpt.

10/20 (Th): Grillo 2016, Gangster Warlords, Mexico excerpt.

Week 10: Central American Migration & Violence

10/25 (T): Oscar Martinez, History of Violence, Chapters 11, 12, 14.

10/27 (Th): Hiskey, Jonathan, Abby Cordova, Diana Orces, and Mary Malone. 2016.

“Understanding the Central American Refugee Crisis: Why They Are Fleeing and How U.S. Policies Are Failing to Deter Them.” American Immigration Council Special Report.

Week 11: Guns/Democracy

11/1 (T): Dube, A., Dube, O. and García-Ponce, O., 2013. Cross-border spillover: US gun laws and violence in Mexico. *American Political Science Review*, 107(03), pp.397-417.

11/3 (Th): Bateson, R., 2012. Crime victimization and political participation. *American Political Science Review*, 106(03), pp.570-587.

Week 12: Lab

11/8 (T): Meet Stubbs 102, BRING A USB DRIVE

11/10 (Th): Meet Stubbs 102, BRING A USB DRIVE

Week 13: Lab

11/15 (T): Meet Stubbs 102, BRING A USB DRIVE

11/17 (Th): Meet Stubbs 102, BRING A USB DRIVE

Week 14: Exam #2

11/22 (T): Exam

11/24 (Th): No Class, Thanksgiving

Week 15: Simulation/Lab

11/29 (T): Simulation

12/1 (Th): Meet Stubbs 102, BRING A USB DRIVE

Final Exam Week:

No final exam.

Final papers due Wednesday, December 7th at 5pm.