

CURRICULUM AND COURSE SYLLABUS

PUBPOL 674-001

Economic and Social Policies of Brazil

Begins: Jan. 16th, 2015

Fri 2:30-5:30pm

Weill 1210

Winter 2015

Prof. Melvyn Levitsky

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Class overview

This course meets once a week for seven weeks, then travels to Brazil for the week of Spring Break. Students doing the trip must register for both PubPol 674.001 and PubPol 674.002, each of which is 1.5 credits and together constitute a single 3-credit course. The seven-week course is the prerequisite to the International Economic Development Program (IEDP) policy research trip.

The first session will provide an overview of the history of development in Brazil, with particular focus on the institutions, actors and debates surrounding contemporary Brazilian development. The final session will cover aspects of Brazilian culture and preparations for travel. The remaining sessions will be planned and led by students, split into groups that will focus on the following policy areas:

- Social Welfare
- Environmental Policy
- Security
- Microeconomic Policy
- Urban Planning

The two briefing sessions and subsequent group presentations will prepare students for a week-long field study in Brazil, where they will interview policy professionals in the public sector, business community and civil society. Together, the class and research trip will strengthen students' understanding of issues pertinent to developing countries, introduce them to key stakeholders, encourage them to identify and assess policy options, and strategize ways to overcome obstacles. IEDP is designed to help students apply their classroom learning to concrete policy processes taking place as public officials and non-state actors pursue various forms of development in a particular country context.

Course structure

Each of the policy groups will be responsible for one class period during the semester, as scheduled below. The final class period will be reserved for final trip preparations and a discussion of language and cultural values led by Professor Levitsky.

Each policy group will meet with Professor Levitsky to discuss guest speakers and reading assignments (approx. 50-75 pages) **during the first two weeks of the semester**. Readings will be assigned to the whole class **by Friday of the week prior to the**

presentation. Policy groups are also responsible for soliciting guest speakers and leading classroom discussion. The following would be a typical class:

- 30 minutes trip logistics update
- 45 minutes policy group presentation
- 15 minutes break
- 1 hour guest speaker presentation
- 30 minute wrap-up discussion

Assignments and grades

The class will feature a number of different assignments, often involving teamwork. Professor Levitsky will assign all grades, basing them on the following components and assignments:

- **IEDP Blog Submissions (10%)** – Each student will submit two posts of approximately 500 words to the Documentation Committee to be used on the IEDP Brazil website, iedpbrazil.com. Students will hand in each post to Professor Levitsky for editing, commentary and grading. After making revisions, students will send their posts to the Documentation Committee, who will publish one submission from each student.
- **Annotated Trip Timeline (10%)** – During the trip, each policy group will be responsible for documenting their meetings with policymakers and organizations in Brazil. This timeline should include clear information as to who/what/when/where and why students met with each organization, so that it may be developed into a job/internship resource for students in the Ford School's Career Services Office.
- **Individual Committee Contributions (15%)** – The IEDP is a team exercise, and students are expected to be diligent in carrying out their responsibilities on one of the organizational committees. Professor Levitsky will consult with the members of the Board in determining the contribution of each of the committee members for their team service and towards the overall responsibilities and duties of the committee.
- **Class Participation (15%)** – This is a highly interactive course featuring student presentations and guest speakers in a collaborative learning environment. In addition to preparing their own Policy Group Presentations, students are expected to come prepared and contribute thoughtfully to all class discussions with comments, insights and questions.
- **Final Team Paper (50%)** – Each group will write a 15-20 page final paper that gives comprehensive background, analysis and policy recommendations for its assigned issue area. The first draft will be due on TBA and the draft can include incomplete sections clearly indicating the kind of information the group seeks to research on through the in-country interviews. Professor Levitsky will review the drafts and share his comments with the groups to help channel the in-field research.

Upon returning from the trip, the group shall incorporate the findings from its in-country interviews and observations and complete the draft papers, which will be due in the beginning of April. Each team paper will be graded for clarity, organization, strength of analysis, supporting evidence, and policy recommendations. All members of the team will receive the same grade.

Organizational Committees

Part of what makes IEDP unique is the work that students must do outside of the traditional classroom setting. *Everyone* must pitch in to coordinate and carry out plans for the in-country study trip. This means making substantive contributions to one of the following committees:

- **Finance:** Research funding opportunities across the university; write grant proposals; plan and stage fundraisers; manage budgets; facilitate financial transactions for travel arrangements; follow up with donors upon return from Brazil.
- **Logistics:** Book flights and accommodations; manage passport and visa logistics; coordinate in-country travel and activities; understand, communicate and monitor the implementation of university policy with regards to health and safety.
- **Document/Communications:** Write and update syllabus; compile readings and other background material; maintain CTools site, blog and Facebook page; handle publicity of IEDP functions; photograph and film the trip.

Board Contacts

Melvyn Levitsky, *Faculty Advisor*, levitsky@umich.edu

Rory Pulvino, *President and Logistics Chair*, rorypul@umich.edu.

Cyrus Jadun, *Treasurer and Finance Chair*, jadunc@umich.edu

Christopher Owens, *Document Chair*, csowens@umich.edu.

*Note: Class sessions will be held in Weill 1210 unless otherwise noted. Class order is subject to change based upon the needs of the Policy Groups in arranging guest speakers. **Readings and Additional Resources** are available on CTools under "Resources." Literature under the heading **Readings** are required prior to the session.*

January 7th Opening Session

5:30 – 7:00 pm

January 16th *Social Welfare*
Readings TBD

Guest Lecturer – Professor Gladys Mitchell-Walthour, “Racial Policy in Brazil.”

January 23rd *Security*
Readings & Guest Lecture TBD

January 30th *Environmental Policy*
Readings & Guest Lecture TBD

February 6th *Microeconomic Policy*
Readings & Guest Lecture TBD

February 12th: OUTLINE OF FIELD RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

February 13th *Urban Planning*
Readings & Guest Lecture TBD

February 21st *Cultural Values and Preparation for Travel*
Readings & Guest Lecture TBD

DRAFT FINAL GROUP PAPERS

FEBRUARY 25

BRAZIL STUDY TRIP

FEBRUARY 28 – MARCH 9

FINAL GROUP PAPERS

MARCH 26