

SOCIAL SCIENCE 4452 3.0
STATE & CIVIL SOCIETY IN LATIN AMERICA

Research Essay & Progress Report
Winter 2007

Due Dates: February 22 (progress report); March 22 (research essay)
Weight: 10% (progress report); 25% (research essay)
Length: 1,500 words (progress report); 3,500 (research essay)

TOPIC:

The recent reconfiguration of the relationship between state and civil society in Latin America shaped the range of options available to social movements and NGOs and presented them with new challenges, dilemmas, and opportunities. Select a specific social movement or a locally-based development NGO in a country of your choice to examine the following question: *how does this movement or NGO confront the dilemma of engaging in partnerships with states and/or donor organizations while maintaining its autonomy, legitimacy, effectiveness, and commitment to social transformation?*

INSTRUCTIONS:

This assignment gives you an opportunity to integrate relevant course themes into a research project of their choice. While you are required to use outside sources, your essay is also expected to be informed by, and engage with, the perspectives and arguments presented in class readings and discussions.

The assignment is divided up into two steps in order to assist you through the various stages of preparing the project and to help develop time management skills.

STEP 1: PROGRESS REPORT

The purpose of the progress report (PR) is to assist students to formulate and organize their ideas, and to develop a tentative argument. Students should devote a significant amount of time and energy in preparing the PR. In this stage students must conduct research to identify the case study, identify (and read) the main sources that will be used for the essay, and develop a tentative argument addressing the essay question.

The PR must include the following:

Subject: Identify the topic and offer a tentative title. Justify the choice in relation to its relevance to the ideas presented in course materials.

Bibliography: List TEN scholarly sources that *directly* relate to your topic and that are NOT already included as course readings. Include books, book chapters, and articles from academic journals (do not use newspaper or magazine articles) and indicate the library call numbers for each source. If you are listing internet sources, they must come from academic journals. In

addition to the ten required academic sources students are allowed to consult journalistic or internet sources and (if applicable) the website of the movement or NGO they have selected. In assessing your PR we will take into account the direct relevance of each source for the essay topic.

Discussion of the THREE most important academic sources in the bibliography: Indicate the following for each of these three sources: why is this source useful/relevant for your essay? What is the main argument? What kind of data or argument from this source will you be using? You should write around 250 words for each source.

Tentative Thesis Statement: Based on your research, indicate in a succinct statement the argument that you will develop in the essay. The thesis statement must be clearly written and must indicate *why* you are making the particular argument. It must also directly address the essay question.

Outline: Provide a preliminary structure of the essay indicating the various sections that you will require in order to develop your argument. Indicate the main points to be developed within each section, and any supporting ideas/documentation that you will use. This section should be presented in point form.

Questions/Problems: Indicate whether you have any additional questions about the topic, issues that you cannot resolve, additional material you might need, additional help that you might require in order to develop your ideas.

STEP 2: RESEARCH ESSAY

- ◆ The essay must be primarily analytical (rather than descriptive) and must be organized around a clear argument (thesis statement). The discussion must be presented in the context of the issues and concepts discussed in the course.
- ◆ Essays must provide the necessary background to help the reader situate the case study and introduce relevant concepts and approaches.
- ◆ Essays must be thoroughly and properly documented. You must use proper academic references for direct quotations or for sources you paraphrased. Consult the **MLA Handbook** or Kate Turabian **Manual for Writers** for proper referencing. You must include a proper bibliography.

PENALTIES FOR LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignments submitted late will receive a penalty deduction of 2 points per day. No essays will be accepted after one week (no exceptions). Assignments must be submitted to the course director in person. Faxed or emailed essays will not be accepted. They may also be submitted during office hours at 216 Founders College. Please ask the secretary to sign and date your assignment.