

# Brazilian Politics: Modern Methods and Approaches

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## Course Description

This course is an Introduction to Brazilian Politics for advanced undergraduate students. After a brief discussion on the historical roots of Brazil, we will focus on contemporary topics, such as poverty, clientelism, inequality, violence, legislative politics, foreign and environmental policies, redistribution, and voting behavior.

## Prerequisites

You should become familiar with the history of Brazil. For those who are not familiar with Brazilian politics and economics, I recommend reading the following book:

- Fausto, Boris, and Sergio Fausto. *A concise history of Brazil*. 2nd Edition. Cambridge University Press, 2014.

For those fluent in Portuguese, I recommend the below book:

- Caldeira, Jorge. *História da riqueza no Brasil: cinco séculos de pessoas, costumes e governos*. Sextante, 2017.

The reading of those books offers a solid background for the classes, but we will not discuss them in greater detail.

Most articles we will read involve causal testing. Because of this, the readings are technical. You are expected to identify the main substantive arguments of all the assigned papers and to have a basic understanding of the methodologies used. During the classes, I will briefly overview the most common methods employed in the articles and the intuitive justification for using specific techniques.

## Course Objectives

Familiarize students with contemporary Brazilian problems and rigorous political science research. At the end of the course, students should be able to understand better Brazilian politics as well as modern methods employed to explore pressing political science questions.

## Course Structure

There will be student-led presentation sessions and lectures. The 15-minute student presentations of assigned readings should address the readings' central question, methodology, and conclusions. If you have trouble understanding any part of the readings or want to discuss other aspects of your presentation, please, go to my office hours before your scheduled presentation.

## Grading

- **25% Presentations:** You will be graded on your ability to identify the relevant parts of the assigned reading and on the clarity of your presentation.
- **15% Participation:** You must come to class after reading all the assigned session material. We will have short discussions about the readings at the end of each student presentation. In principle, I expect participation to be voluntary, but I reserve the right to call on students to ask them questions.
- **30% Midterm exam:** The midterm exam will require short, essay-style responses to questions concerning core issues we cover in class. Students should be able to define concepts, describe theoretical arguments, and summarize the empirical tests of the theories we cover.
- **30% Final exam:** The final exam will have the same format as the midterm. It is non-cumulative.

## 1 Outline

### Session 1. Brazilian History I: State Building

- De Carvalho, José Murilo. "Political elites and state building: the case of nineteenth-century Brazil." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 24, no. 3 (1982): 378-399.

### Session 2. Brazilian History II: Suffrage Restriction

- Gingerich, Daniel W. "Ballot reform as suffrage restriction: evidence from Brazil's Second Republic." *American Journal of Political Science* 63, no. 4 (2019): 920-935.

### Session 3. Brazilian History II: Clientelism

- Gingerich, Daniel W. "Buying power: electoral strategy before the secret vote." *American Political Science Review* 114, no. 4 (2020): 1086-1102.

### Session 4. Brokers and Weak Parties

- Novaes, Lucas M. "Disloyal brokers and weak parties." *American Journal of Political Science* 62, no. 1 (2018): 84-98.

### Session 5. Corruption and Elections

- Ferraz, Claudio, and Frederico Finan. "Exposing corrupt politicians: the effects of Brazil's publicly released audits on electoral outcomes." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123, no. 2 (2008): 703-745.

### Session 6. Corruption and Quality of Politicians

- Brollo, Fernanda, Tommaso Nannicini, Roberto Perotti, and Guido Tabellini. "The political resource curse." *American Economic Review* 103, no. 5 (2013): 1759-96.

### Session 7. Taxation I

- Christensen, Darin, and Francisco Garfias. "The politics of property taxation: fiscal infrastructure and electoral incentives in Brazil." *The Journal of Politics* 83, no. 4 (2021): 1399-1416.

### Session 8. Taxation II

- Hollenbach, Florian M., and Thiago N. Silva. "Fiscal capacity and inequality: evidence from Brazilian municipalities." *The Journal of Politics* 81, no. 4 (2019): 1434-1445.

**Session 9. Federal Transfers**

- Brollo, Fernanda, and Tommaso Nannicini. "Tying your enemy's hands in close races: the politics of federal transfers in Brazil." *American Political Science Review* 106, no. 4 (2012): 742-761.

**Session 10. Land Inequality**

- Albertus, Michael, Thomas Brambor, and Ricardo Ceneviva. "Land inequality and rural unrest: theory and evidence from Brazil." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62, no. 3 (2018): 557-596.
- Carlson, Chris. "The agrarian roots of divergent development: a case study of twentieth-century Brazil." *American Sociological Review* 87.4 (2022): 698-722.

**Session 11. Compulsory Voting: Inequality and Political Information**

- Cepaluni, Gabriel, and F. Daniel Hidalgo. "Compulsory voting can increase political inequality: evidence from Brazil." *Political Analysis* 24, no. 2 (2016): 273-280.
- Holbein, John B., and Marcos A. Rangel. "Does voting have upstream and downstream consequences? Regression discontinuity tests of the transformative voting hypothesis." *The Journal of Politics* 82, no. 4 (2020): 1196-1216.

**Session 12. Descriptive Representation I: Race and Politics**

- Driscoll, Amanda; Gabriel Cepaluni; Feliciano de Sá Guimarães; Paolo Spada, 2018, "Prejudice, strategic discrimination, and the electoral connection: evidence from a pair of field experiments in Brazil." *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 62, Issue 04, 781-795.

**Session 13. Descriptive Representation II: Political Polarization**

- Desai, Zuheir, and Anderson Frey. "Can descriptive representation help the right win votes from the poor? Evidence from Brazil." *American Journal of Political Science* (2021).

**Session 14. Social Policy I: CCTs, Election Effects, and Welfare**

- Zucco Jr, Cesar. "When payouts pay off: Conditional cash transfers and voting behavior in Brazil 2002–10." *American Journal of Political Science* 57, no. 4 (2013): 810-822.
- Cepaluni, Gabriel, Taylor Kinsley Chewing, Amanda Driscoll, and Marco Antonio Faganello. "Conditional cash transfers and child labor." *World Development* 152 (2022): 105768.

**Session 15. Social Policy II: Electoral Cycles and Public Spending**

- Bueno, Natália S. "The timing of public policies: Political budget cycles and credit claiming." *American Journal of Political Science* (2021).

**Session 16. Redistributive Politics I: Water Cisterns and Clientelism**

- Bobonis, Gustavo J., Paul Gertler, Marco Gonzalez-Navarro, and Simeon Nichter. "Vulnerability and clientelism." Forthcoming. *American Economic Review*.

**Session 17. Redistributive Politics II: Water Cisterns and Allocation of Benefits**

- Frey, Anderson. "Strategic allocation of irrevocable and durable benefits." *American Journal of Political Science* 66, no. 2 (2022): 451-467.

**Session 18. Violence and Politics I: Drug Gangs**

- Lessing, Benjamin, and Graham Denyer Willis. "Legitimacy in criminal governance: managing a drug empire from behind bars." *American Political Science Review* 113, no. 2 (2019): 584-606.

**Session 19. Violence and Politics II: Killing in the Slums**

- Magaloni, Beatriz, Edgar Franco-Vivanco, and Vanessa Melo. "Killing in the slums: social order, criminal governance, and police violence in Rio de Janeiro." *American Political Science Review* 114, no. 2 (2020): 552-572.

**Session 20. Health Politics I: Zika Virus and Electoral Incentives**

- Boas, Taylor C., and F. Daniel Hidalgo. "Electoral incentives to combat mosquito-borne illnesses: experimental evidence from Brazil." *World Development* 113 (2019): 89-99.

**Session 21: Health Politics II: Disease Epidemics and Misinformation**

- Carey, John M., Victoria Chi, D. J. Flynn, Brendan Nyhan, and Thomas Zeitzoff. "The effects of corrective information about disease epidemics and outbreaks: evidence from Zika and yellow fever in Brazil." *Science Advances* 6, no. 5 (2020): eaaw7449.

**Session 22: Education and Electoral Responses**

- Boas, Taylor C., F. Daniel Hidalgo, and Guillermo Toral. "Competence versus priorities: Negative electoral responses to education quality in Brazil." *The Journal of Politics* 83, no. 4 (2021): 1417-1431.

**Session 23: Legislative Politics and Welfare**

- Mignozzetti, Umberto, Gabriel Cepaluni, and Danilo Freire. "Legislature size and welfare: evidence from Brazil." Forthcoming. *American Journal of Political Science*.

**Session 24: Environmental Politics I: Property Rights and Deforestation**

- Baragwanath, Kathryn, and Ella Bayi. "Collective property rights reduce deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 117, no. 34 (2020): 20495-20502.

**Session 25: Environmental Politics II: Domestic Response to Foreign Climate Shaming**

- Spektor, Matias, Umberto Mignozzetti, and Guilherme N. Fasolin. "Nationalist backlash against foreign climate shaming." *Global Environmental Politics* 22, no. 1 (2022): 139-158.

**Session 26: Brazilian Foreign Policy: Commodity Boom and Presidential Success**

- Vigevani, Tullo, and Gabriel Cepaluni. "Lula's foreign policy and the quest for autonomy through diversification." *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 7 (2007): 1309-1326.
- Campello, Daniela, and Cesar Zucco Jr. "Presidential success and the world economy." *The Journal of Politics* 78, no. 2 (2016): 589-602.