Decaying Democratic Institutions or Resurgent Popular Movements? The Puzzles of Bolivia and Ecuador (November 12, Wednesday)

Instructions: All students are to prepare an outline of answers to the following two discussion questions based on the readings and classroom materials. Then, in class, given random group assignments, prepare a “team response” after a period of deliberation. Prof. Montero will assess individual participation in each group and the insight of each group response.

Discussion Questions:

(1) A key ingredient in political governability is the governance of the party system, presidential succession, the legislature and its relationship with the executive. Compare Colombia, Ecuador, and Bolivia and be prepared to explain how each addressed the challenges of political governability through the make-up of its formal political institutions. Underscore the generalizable lessons from these cases for all other Latin American countries.

(2) The role of civil societal movements and organizations have played both pro-democratic and anti-democratic roles in Colombia, Ecuador, and Bolivia. Based on a comparison of these three countries, evaluate under what conditions civil society strengthens democracy and under what conditions does it weaken it.