

Francisco Scarano
Benjamin Marquez
Fall 2008

4134 Humanities
311 North Hall

Latino History and Politics
History 414/Political Science 401

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class will consist primarily of lectures supplemented with videos, and student participation. We will examine the historical, social, political, economic, and cultural experiences and conditions of Latinos, the second largest racial/ethnic minority group in the United States. The focus of the course will be on people who can trace their origins to Mexico, the Caribbean, and countries of Latin America. The main emphasis will be on the experiences of Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans—the three largest U.S. Latino ethnic groups. However, considerable attention will be given to Dominicans, Salvadorans and many other Latino ethnic groups that are fast becoming a force in contemporary U.S. society. Although they share many things in common, Latinos have variegated experiences in the U.S. due to regional and/or national differences. Their historic modes of incorporation into American society will be analyzed and discussed, along with their continuing migration patterns, their experiences of racialization, as well as their current demographic and socio-economic condition. A historical and comparative sociological perspective will be used throughout the course to help explain contrasting experiences.

Course Objectives and Goals

To read and discuss an array of materials on Latino Politics

To develop critical reading and thinking and writing skills

To introduce students to the complexity of the Latino population and divergent political agendas of various subgroups

To develop an understanding of the historical origins of how Latino social/political movements have emerged and changed

To evaluate the role of movements and activists in policy reform and social/political change

To examine the impact of the Latino vote on contemporary politics

To explore contemporary policy issues affecting the Latino population

To examine the agency and contributions of Latinos to the process of political and social change

The following books are available at the Rainbow Bookstore:

Juan Gonzalez. *Harvest of Empire*.

Peggy Levitt. *The Transnational Villagers*.

Benjamin Marquez. *Constructing Identities in Mexican American Political Organizations*.

Gina Perez, *The Near Northwest Side Story: Migration, Displacement, and Puerto Rican Families*.

Gustavo Perez-Firmat. *Next Year in Cuba: A Cubano's Coming-Of-Age in America*.

Roger Waldinger and Michael Lichter. *How the Other Half Works: Immigration and the Social Organization of Labor*.

All assigned readings are on reserve.

Course Requirements

I. Class Participation

We encourage class participation. Extra credit will be given for thoughtful questions, arguments and debate. Extra credit will be given for students who present their research findings at the end of the semester.

II. A Mid-Term Examination

The mid-term exam will consist of essay and short answer questions.

III. Five Book Critiques

Five (5) five-page critiques of the thesis, methods, evidence and conclusions of the assigned books. Students are required to critique Guidelines will be distributed in class. Papers are due on the day the books are discussed. All students are required to critique our first reading, Peggy Levitt's *The Transnational Villagers*. Students can then choose among the remaining books to fulfill the five-critique requirement.

Time will be set aside to discuss all of the assigned readings. In order to facilitate our critique of the assigned readings, all students will be assigned to a small discussion group. On the days discussions of the assigned readings are scheduled, students in these groups will spend about fifteen minutes reading each others papers, offering constructive criticism to one another, and raising issues and questions to be brought before the whole class.

Please note, even if you have not written a book critique during a given week, it is still essential that you read the assigned books each week before coming to class. It is not possible to put off any of the readings before the exams and expect to do well in the class.

IV. A Research Paper

A twelve to fifteen page research paper. Guidelines will be distributed in class. The term paper is due on December 11th. We ask that you turn in both a paper copy and an electronic copy of your research paper, in PDF or DOC format.

IV. A Final Examination.

Thursday, December 18th at 2:45 p.m. Format to be announced.

Grades will be determined using the following weighing scheme:

Book Critiques.....	25% (5% each)
Mid Term Exam.....	20%
Term paper.....	25%
Final Exam.....	30%
Class Participation.....	up to 5% extra credit

Students must complete all required work in order to be eligible to receive a passing grade in the course. Make up exams will be given and late papers accepted without a penalty only in the case of a medical emergency.

Office Hours:

Professor Scarano: Wednesdays, 1:30-2:30 (walk-in); Wednesdays, 2:30-4:30 (by appointment; please sign up outside office, 4234 Humanities or by email, fscarano@wisc.edu)

Professor Marquez: Monday and Wednesday 10:00 to 12:00 and by appointment, 311 North Hall. marquez@polisci.wisc.edu

Feel free to make an appointment or drop by during our office hours. We welcome students.

COURSE OUTLINE/TOPICS

Week One. September 1-5. : The Latino Population in the U.S.

- A. Introduction, assignments, administrative matters [Sept. 2]
- B. U.S. Latinos: A Profile [Sept. 4 - BM]

Reading: Levitt, Peggy. *The Transnational Villagers: Dominicans in Boston*.

Week Two September 8-12 Latino Ethnicity: Culture and Identity

- A. Assimilation Theory and the Experience of Latino Immigrants [Sept. 9 - BM]
- B. Discuss *The Transnational Villagers: Dominicans in Boston*. [Sept. 11 FS and BM]. Critique due.

Readings: Gina Perez, *The Near Northwest Side Story: Migration, Displacement, and Puerto Rican Families*.

Week Three. September 15-19: Culture and Negotiation: Latinos in the New Megalopolises

- A. Latinos in Los Angeles [Sept. 16 – BM]
- B. Negotiated Latinidad: Culture and Identity in the New Chicago [Sept. 18 – FS]

Week Four. September 22-26: The Culture Wars: Assimilation, Bilingualism and its Discontents

- A. Discuss Perez, *The Near Northwest Side Story*. [Sept. 23 - FS and BM] Critique due.
- B. English-only Movements [Sept. 25 – BM]

Week Five. September 29-October 3: The Mexican American Civil Rights Movement

- A. Bilingualism and the Complexities of Cultural Promotion [Sept. 30 - FS]
- B. Historical precedents: The Mexican American Civil Rights Movement [Oct. 2 - BM]

Reading: *Next Year in Cuba: A Cubano's Coming-of-Age in America*.

Week Six. October 6-10: Cuban Exile Politics

- A. The Chicano Movement of the 1960s and 1970s [Oct. 7 - BM].
- B. Cuban Exceptionalism? [Oct. - 9 FS]

Week Seven. October 13-17: Puerto Rico, USA?

- A. (Guest Lecture) [Oct. 14].
- B. Discuss *Next Year in Cuba*. [Oct 16] Critique due.

Week Eight. October 20-24: Puerto Rico, USA?

- A. Puerto Ricans in the American Century: Coloniality, Incorporation, and Nationhood [Oct. 21 - FS]
- B. The Puerto Rican Status Debate /Review session [Oct. 23 - FS]

Week Nine. October 27-31:

- A. Midterm exam [Oct. 28]
 - B. Looking Back: U.S. Empire and the Construction of a Latino Colonial World [Oct. 30 - FS]
- Reading: *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*.

Week Ten. November 3-7. Latinos and the Election

- A. Latinos and Voting [Nov. 4 – BM]
 - B. Latinos and the New Obama or McCain Administration [Nov. 6 - BM & FS]
- Reading: *Constructing Identities in Mexican American Political Organizations*.

Week Eleven. November 10-14: Latino Culture & Politics

- A. Caribbeans in the post-WWII Order [Nov. 11 – FS]
- B. Pizza Party and discussion of *Harvest of Empire*. Wednesday November 12th at 6:30 pm. Location TBA. Critique due.
- C. Race, Culture, and Politics among Caribbean (Im)migrants [Nov. 13 – FS]

Week Twelve. November 17-21: Latinos and Participation in the Political Process

- A. Mexican Immigration to WWII [Nov. 18 – BM]
- B. Mexican-Americans in the post-WWII Order [Nov. 20 – BM].

Week Thirteen. November 24-28:

- A. Discussion of Reading: *Constructing Identities in Mexican American Political Organizations*. Critique due. [Nov. 25]

*****November 27-30 Thanksgiving Recess*****

Week Fourteen. December 1-5: Globalized Production and Latino Workers

- A. Latinas and the Garment Industry in the United States [Dec. 2 – BM]
- B. A. Women Workers, Household Transformations, and the Caribbean Garment Industry [Dec. 4 – FS]

Reading: *How the Other Half Works: Immigration and the Social Organization of Labor*.

Week Fifteen. December 8-12: Globalized Production and Latino Workers (cont.)

- A. Discussion of *How the Other Half Works: Immigration and the Social Organization of Labor* [Dec. 9 - FS and BM] Critique due.
- B. Student presentations & review session [Dec. 11 FS & BM]