

Political Science 3100.004
Topics in American Government: Latino Politics

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COURSE SUMMARY:

This course is intended as an overview of the political status and experiences of Latinos in the United States. Specifically, we will concentrate on the immigrants and later generations from Mexico, Cuba and Puerto Rico, (while acknowledging the scant information available on Latinos from other Central and South American countries) and address the following major questions:

1. To what extent is the demographic category “Latino” or “Hispanic” a meaningful political term, and what do we know about group identity and solidarity among this fastest growing and largest minority group within the U.S. population?
2. What are the historical experiences of the different Latino national origin groups and, comparatively speaking, how do these experiences along with other contextual factors contribute to how they behave and view themselves within the American polity?
3. What are the political circumstances of Latinos with respect to their human capital as well as their civic and political participation, leadership, and representation in the electoral process, in the policy process, and in local, state and federal governments?
4. What theory or theories of minority group politics currently characterize Latino incorporation in the United States? What theory potentially explains the future status of Latinos in a changing America?

Finally we will devote some time to addressing the particular circumstances of immigration and also examine a variety of additional policy issues affecting Latinos, particularly education, voting rights and environmental justice.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Students can expect to learn the following by the end of this course:

- 1) Identify demographic, historic and social factors distinctive to the Latino American population.
- 2) Define and critically evaluate concepts relevant to the study of minority group representation.
- 3) Apply factual knowledge about history, social and political institutions with respect to the Latino population to facilitate a broader understanding of American politics.
- 4) Identify, critique and apply major academic theses and debates regarding minority politics and policy in the United States.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Mid-term examination (worth 25%), currently scheduled for Feb. 20
2. Final examination (worth 25%), firmly scheduled for Wed. May 8, 6:30
3. 7-10 page analytical book report (worth 20%), due March 27
4. Class presentation – Policy Debate or Book Critique (worth 15%)
5. Class participation/attendance/ homework assignments (15%)

Some extra credit points may be available, scheduled as needed by Dr. Martinez. The class presentations of book critique (one or two per class) are scheduled for March 27 thru May 1. More information to come later regarding the policy debates.

REQUIRED CLASS MATERIALS

1. Fraga, Luis Ricardo et al. 2010 *Latino Lives in America: Making It Home*. Temple University Press (LLA). Available at bookstore
2. Garcia, John. 2012. *Latino Politics in America*. 2nd. Rowman and Littlefield.
3. *Latino Decisions*. Subscription is free online at www.latinodecisions.wordpress.com
4. Various chapters and articles posted on Blackboard, PSCI 3100 under Course Content
OR available electronically through the UNT library
6. ONE book from the following list (as assigned by Dr. Martinez):
(Before September 15th, you will need to order the book from Amazon.com or the UNT bookstore or check it out from a local library in order to have sufficient time to complete the assignment.)
 - a. Nazario, Sonia, *Enrique's Journey*, Random House, 2007
 - b. Urrea, Luis Alberto. *The Devil's Highway*. Back Bay Books. 2004
 - c. Gutierrez, Jose Angel. *The Making of a Chicano Militant*. Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1999.
 - d. Melendez, Mickey. *We Took the Streets: Fighting for Latino Rights with the Young Lords*. St. Martins Press, 2003.
 - e. Eire, Carlos. *Learning to Die in Miami: Confessions of a Refugee Boy*. Free press. 2011.
 - f. Garcia, Maria Cristine. *Havana USA*. University of California Press, 1996.
 - g. Suro, Roberto. *Strangers Among Us: Latino Lives in a Changing America*. Vantage. 1998.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are expected to complete the reading and written assignments for each week, come to class and to participate in class discussions. Regular attendance and participation are VITAL components of this class and as a result will work to your advantage in borderline grade cases. More than two absences after Feb 16 will result in the subtraction of a letter grade unless the absence is excused due to documented illness, death in the family, university sponsored travel, etc. More than three absences may possibly result in an "F" for the course.

Readings should be viewed as complimentary to the lectures/class discussions. This means that not all information in the readings will be covered in class and vice versa. Students are, nevertheless, responsible for all material provided in class and in the readings.

OTHER IMPORTANT GUIDELINES

1. It is the policy of the University, the department of political science and me, to comply fully with the Americans for Disabilities Act and to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or if you have emergency medical information to share, please notify me as soon as possible. My contact information as well as my office location and hours are listed above.

2. I have a strict policy on cheating or plagiarism. The penalty for either offense will be to assign a failing grade to the test/paper or to assign a failing grade for the course, subject to my discretion. To avoid the charge of plagiarism, ANYTIME you report the opinions or findings of another writer (even if it is written in your own words) YOU MUST CITE the author, and date of publication, eg. (Martinez-Ebers 2009). You can place it at the end of the paragraph in parentheses or use endnotes or footnotes. Direct quotes require citing the author, date of publication PLUS the page number IMMEDIATELY following the quote.

3. As we are all adults, we will treat one another with respect. Turn off your cell phones and no emailing or web surfing the web during class.

4. Always make a duplicate of your class paper and put it away in a safe place. Occasionally papers are misplaced and this protects you.

5. Always keep any papers, written assignments, exams, etc. that are returned to you. This protects you in case your grade is recorded incorrectly.

6. If an emergency (sickness, accident, death in the family or some other crisis) occurs during the semester that may affect your performance in this course, please inform me promptly. Do not wait until the end of the semester.

7. Makeup exams will be given only in cases of unavoidable conflict or health problems. Students must contact me before the regularly scheduled test in order to qualify for a makeup exam. Make up tests are 100% essay.

8. Papers and written assignments should be submitted at the beginning of class on the day they are due. Points will be deducted for late submissions (usually 10 points per day).

9. PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus serves as a guideline for your reading and preparation for exams. HOWEVER, as your professor, I reserve the right to deviate from the syllabus when necessary. I will make every effort to announce changes at least 2 classes prior to the adjustment, but, ultimately, students are responsible for keeping in touch with me regarding changes.

DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT ME OR CHRISTINE IF YOU ARE HAVING A PROBLEM WITH THE COURSE. I MAY BE ABLE TO HELP YOU STUDY MORE EFFECTIVELY OR RECOMMEND ASSISTANCE ELSEWHERE ON CAMPUS. REMEMBER...I WANT YOU TO DO WELL IN THIS CLASS.

SEMESTER SCHEDULE:

What follows is an approximate timetable for the covering of the topics planned for the course. The reading assignment for each day is fixed without regard to our progress through the topics, unless I announce otherwise.

- 1/16 Topic: Introduction to Course -Syllabus and Course Requirements
- 1/23 Topic: Changing Demographics and Political Realities
Assigned Reading: Fraga ch.1 and Garcia chs. 1-3
Written Assignment: Garcia ch. 1 #1 & #4; also ch.3 #3 & #4
- 1/30 Topic: Historical Antecedents
Assigned Reading: Garcia-Bedolla, chs. 3-6 (posted on blackboard)
Written Assignment: #1 How do the reasons for immigration to the US differ for Mexicans, Cubans and Guatamalans?
In class video: The Longoria Affair
- 2/6 Topic: Identity, Americanism and Acculturation
Assigned Reading: Fraga chs. 2,6 &7
Written Assignment: #1. How does the American Dream of Latinos compare to the American Dreams of others living in this country? and #2. How do transnational ties affect Latino behavior in the United States?
- 2/13 Topic: Ideology and Partisanship
Assigned reading: Garcia and Sanchez, ch. 8 and other readings (Posted on blackboard)
Written assignment: identify one poll on Latino Decisions that measures Latino ideology or partisanship and summarize its findings
- 2/20 **Midterm Examination**
In-class meeting of groups for book presentation and policy debates

- 2/27 Topic: Officials and Political Leadership
 Guest Speakers: San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro and UW Associate
 Vice Provost Luis Fraga
 The CLASS will be held in the Lyceum of Student Union
 No reading or written assignment
- 3/6 Topic: Political Participation, Voting and Elections
 Assigned Reading: Garcia chs 5, 6 and 7
 Written assignment: Garcia . ch. 5 #3, ch. 6 # 2 & #4, ch. 7 #1 & #2
- 3/13 SPRING BREAK
- 3/20 Organizations and Political Leadership
 Assigned reading: Garcia ch. 8
 Written assignment: Garcia ch. 8 #1, #2 and #4
 In class presentations: *The Making of a Chicano Militant* and *We Took the Streets*
- 3/27 NO CLASS due to WPSA CONFERENCE (but we will try to make this
 class up on another day!!!)
Analytical Book Reports ARE due (submit to Christine by 6:30 pm)
- 4/3 Topic: Immigration Politics and the Huntington Debate
 Assigned Reading: Garcia ch. 9; also Samuel Huntington. 2004. "The
 Hispanic Challenge" in *Foreign Policy* March/April.; also Bowler and
 Segura, "Immigration and Its Discontents" (posted on Blackboard)
**Written Assignment: #1. Is Huntington correct about Hispanic
 immigration? Why or Why not? also Garcia ch9 #1, #3 & #4**
 In class presentations: *Enrique's Journey* and *The Devil's Highway*
- 4/10 Topic: Education: Great Hope Meets Harsh Reality
 Assigned Reading: Fraga chs. 3 & 5; also Garcia ch. 10
 In class presentations: *Havana USA* and *Learning to Die In Miami*
- 4/17 Guest Speaker: Dr. Jose Angel Gutierrez
 In class presentations: *Strangers Among Us*
- 4/24
- 5/1 Topic: Coalition Formation and Prospects
 Assigned Readings: Garcia ch. 11 and HUPS ch. 13,
 G. Sanchez. 2008. "Latino Group Consciousness and Perceptions of
 Commonality with African Americans. *Social Science Quarterly*.
 K. Kaufmann. 2003. "Cracks in the Rainbow: Group Commonality as a
 Basis for Latino and African-American Political Coalitions" *Political
 Research Quarterly*, Vol. 56, No. 2, 199-210.

Instructions for the Analytical Book Report

All papers should be within the required 7-10 page length, NOT including the title page.

Or reference page(s)

All papers should include a separate title page and a separate reference page(s)

The remaining pages should be double-spaced, numbered, printed in 12 point type with no greater than one inch margins on ALL four sides, including the first page of text.

The first section of paper should provide a good summary of the book AND a paragraph with up to date biographical information about the main author or editor (probably no more than three and one-half pages for this first section). The remainder of the paper should discuss/answer the following questions in an essay format. What factors led to the group consciousness of the main character or group? Cite specifics that support your answer.

1. Broadly defined, what were the political and or social issues or dilemmas faced by the main character or group? Cite specifics that support your answer.
2. What theory or theories of minority group politics is evidenced in the character's or group's efforts to resolve these issues/dilemmas? Cite specifics that support your answer.
3. How would you probably have acted in these circumstances? Why?
4. What significant lessons did you learn about Latino Politics from reading this book?