Dr. José E. Cruz  
Spring 2014  
LCS 375 Class Number 7558  
POS 324 Class Number 7658

 Latino Politics in The United States  
MWF 11:30-12:25 pm HU 128

Description and Objectives  
This course will review Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central American, and Dominican participation, perspectives, and issues in American politics.

Learning objectives:

1. To help students understand how political science approaches the subject of political participation developed historically;

2. To expose students to different ways of understanding political participation both theoretically and empirically;

3. To expose students to the historical narratives that explain Latino politics in the U.S., including an understanding of the relationship between the historical context and development of Latino political participation and their political and socioeconomic status;

4. To engage students in the process of critically evaluating data and information by focusing on the identification and interrogation of the assumptions, values, evidence, conclusions, and implications of different types of scholarly sources;

5. To help students understand difference as an analytical category, as a source of conflict, as well as one possible basis for democratic participation, negotiation, and understanding between Latinos and other groups as well as among Latino sub-groups.

Learning objectives will be pursued through lectures, class discussions, structured class participation, and in-class exams.

The course will help students develop the following competencies:

- **Critical thinking** through structured participation that involves analyzing information and data to identify assumptions and values, evaluate evidence, findings, and conclusions, and consider the particular and general implications of findings and conclusions; and through exams (essay or multiple choice depending on class size and teaching assistance) that will test the ability to recall information and/or to
distinguish and evaluate different approaches to the study of Latino politics, aspects of Latino political participation, and/or interpretations of the significance of Latino politics to American politics in general.

- **Oral discourse** through class discussions and oral presentations that will critically interrogate class readings. Oral presentations will be peer-evaluated in class in confidence. These evaluations will be synthesized by the instructor who will add his evaluation and share it with each individual presenter.
- **Information literacy** through the evaluation of content of a variety of scholarly sources, lectures, and oral presentations.

**Required Readings**
Leo R. Chavez, *The Latino Threat*, available at University bookstore.
Selected Readings, available on Blackboard.

**Class Requirements**
- **Class participation** - 20% of course grade. Class participation will be structured so that each student, with notice, will comment on class readings. Students who are absent on the day they are given notice of participation will lose five points on this requirement for every occurrence. Students who are absent on the day when they are supposed to comment will fail the requirement for that given day and will not be allowed to make up the assignment unless their absence is justified and documented according to university policy.

- **Attendance** - Although attendance will not be taken, it is requirement of the course and will impact your grade especially if you are absent when your name is called for a participation assignment and/or for failing to attend on the day you are scheduled to make an oral presentation. Students who are absent are responsible for the material missed.

- **Midterm exam** – 40% of course grade.

- **Final exam** – 40% of course grade.

**Grading**
The course is graded A-E. The course grade will be tabulated according to the weights indicated above for each requirement. Letter grades will be converted into scores between 0-100 according to the scale noted below. As a matter of policy, letter grades will be converted to the top score in the range for each grade. For example, if you receive a grade of B+ on a given assignment, your score will be 89. You will receive a letter grade for your participation in class and you will gain or lose points depending on your attendance record, which I will keep on my own.

There will be no opportunities for extra credit in this class but there will be ample
opportunities for spirited and substantive class participation.

Statements or questions that reveal that a reading or readings have not been done or that do not measure up to standards of reason and civility are not only discouraged but will not be considered meaningful contributions.

**Grading Scale**

- 100-95 A
- 94-90 A-
- 89-85 B+
- 84-80 B
- 79-75 B-
- 74-71 C+
- 70-65 C
- 64-61 C-
- 60-55 D+
- 54-51 D
- 50-45 D-
- 44-0 E

**Policies**

This course is guided by the following general principle: the powers and stipulations not included in the syllabus are reserved to the instructor, who shall use reasonable discretion in the event of contingencies.

I reserve the right to modify the terms of this syllabus and to make changes as needed within reason. To the extent that it is possible, any changes made during the course of the semester will be cost-neutral. Students will be given reasonable notice of any changes and every effort will be made to accommodate special needs and circumstances so that there is no negative impact on the ability of students to meet all their academic obligations.

Students are encouraged to provide feedback on the proceedings of the course at any point in time, including suggestions for additional readings and/or activities that enhance the pedagogical process.

Other than to store and make available class readings, I will use Blackboard sparingly. There will be no posting of lecture or discussion notes on Blackboard. Students must come to class, be attentive, take notes, and raise questions if in need of clarification or to present a differing interpretation.

I will alert students to especially significant facts and statements through emphasis and repetition but the burden of proof is on the student to understand the main points, facts, arguments, issues, debates, and interpretations.

If you miss a class, do not ask me whether “you missed anything important.”
Come see me during office hours and we can have a conversation about the material that was covered in the class you missed but make sure you have read the material before coming to see me. This is not an online course. Therefore, I will not discuss class material by e-mail.

Regarding academic integrity, the undergraduate bulletin states: “It is every student’s responsibility to become familiar with the standards of academic integrity at the University. Claims of ignorance, of unintentional error, or of academic or personal pressures are not sufficient reasons for violations of academic integrity.” If you have any questions regarding standards of academic integrity and the consequences following violation of those standards please seek clarification by meeting with me during office hours or by special appointment.

As the undergraduate bulletin indicates: “students will not be excused from a class or an examination or completion of an assignment by the stated deadline except for emergencies, required appointments or other comparable situations. Students who miss a class period, a final or other examination, or other obligations for a course (fieldwork, required attendance at a concert, etc.) must notify the instructor or the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education of the reason for their absence and must do so in a timely fashion.”

Undergraduate academic regulations are fully disclosed and available at http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html

I follow the University's Medical Excuse Policy, which is available at http://www.albany.edu/health_center/medicalexcuse.shtml

Office Hours
MW 9:30-11:00 am, HU B16. If this schedule does not work for you, please make an appointment with me for a mutually convenient time and day. Contact information: jcruz@albany.edu I will check e-mail only during business hours M-F.

Course Schedule

January
22 - Introduction.
Theory: Liberalism vs. Identity Politics:
24 - Identity Politics: Character and Origins;
27 - Identity Politics and Liberal Political Theory;
29 - Liberalism and the Politics of Difference
Chavez, The Latino Threat
31 - Chs. 1-2

February
3 - Chs. 3-4

February, cont.
5 - Chs. 5-6
7 - Chs. 7-8

Latino/Hispanic Political Participation: Background, Context, Sub-Group Participation:
10 - Bedolla, Chapters 1-2
12 - Bedolla, Chapter 3-4
14 - Bedolla, Chapter 5-7
17 - Haub, "How Hispanics are Counted;" Cruz, "Identity and Power;"
19 - Montero-Sieburth, "The Sí Se Puede Newcomers: Mexicans in New England;"

21 - No Class

24 - Santoro and Segura, "Generational Status and Mexican American Political Participation: The Benefits and Limitations of Assimilation;
26 - Cruz, "Puerto Rican Politics in New York City During the 1960s;
28 - Cruz, "Pluralism and Ethnicity in New York City Politics: The Case of Puerto Ricans"

March
3 - Cruz "Barriers to Political Participation of Puerto Ricans and Hispanics in Osceola County, Florida: 1991–2007;
5 - Eckstein, "The Personal is Political: The Cuban Ethnic Electoral Policy Cycle;"
7 - Alberts, "Changes in Ethnic Solidarity in Cuban Miami
10 - Itzigsohn and Dore-Cabral, "Competing Identities? Race, Ethnicity and Panethnicity among Dominicans in the United States

12-14 - No class, Cruz travel to Ford fellowship Panel

17-21 No class, Spring break

24 - Mid-term Exam

26 - Pantoja, "Transnational Ties and Immigrant Political Incorporation: The Case of Dominicans in Washington Heights, New York;

Latinos and African Americans, Representation, Public Opinion, Electoral Participation:
31 - Rodriguez and Segura, "A Place at the Lunch Counter;"

April
2 - Cruz "Interminority Relations in Urban Settings;"
4 - Cruz, "Interminority Relations in Legislative Settings;"
7 - Cruz, "Latinos in Office;"
9 - Barreto, "The Role of Latino Candidates in Mobilizing Latino Voters;"
11 - Fraga and Navarro, "Latinas in Latino Politics;"
April, cont.
14 - Montoya, "Gender and Citizenship in Latino Political Participation;"

16 - No Class

18 - Casellas, "Latino Representation in Congress;"

21 - No Class

23 - Friedman and Scotece, "The Home Styles of California Latino Political Representatives;"
25 - Leal, "Latino Public Opinion;"
28 - DeSipio and de la Garza, "Forever Seen As New: Latino Participation in American Elections;"
30 - Borges Mendez, "The Latinization of Lawrence: Migration, Settlement and Incorporation of Latinos in a Small Town of Massachusetts"

May
2 - Hayduk, "Latinos and Immigrants: The Case for Non-citizen Voting Rights;"
5 - NYLARNet, "Latino Politics in the Northeast: Selected Findings from NYLARNet's 2008 Northeast Latino Survey;"

May 15 - Final Exam, 3:30-5:30 pm, HU 128