Dr. José E. Cruz  
Spring 2015  
LCS 375 Class Number 7111  
POS 324 Class Number 7196  

Latino Politics in The United States  
MWF 10:25-11:20 am HU 133  

Description and Objectives  
This course will review Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, 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. The instructor will add his evaluation and
make a final judgment about each student’s performance.

- **Information literacy** through the evaluation of content of a variety of
scholarly sources, lectures, and oral presentations.

**Required Readings**
- David C. Brotherton and Luis Barrios, *Banished to the Homeland, Dominican Deportees and their Stories of Exile.*
- Leo R. Chavez, *The Latino Threat.*
- Selected Readings, available on Blackboard
  - Casellas, "Latino Representation in Congress."
  - Friedman and Scotece, "The Home Styles of California Latino Political Representatives."
  - DeSipio and de la Garza, "Forever Seen As New: Latino Participation in American Elections."

**Recommended Reading**

**Course Requirements**
- **Class Participation - 15% of course grade.** Class participation will be
structured so that each student, with notice, will make one oral presentation
on a class reading. Students who are absent on the day they are assigned to
present or do not show up the day of their presentation will lose that
opportunity and will not be able to make it up unless their absence is justified
and documented according to university policy. Participation is also expected
from everyone independent of assigned presentations.
  - Presentations should be no longer than 10 minutes. Presenters will
answer the following questions: 1. What is the main point of the
particularly interesting or provocative? 4. Is (are) there any value
judgment(s) that you disagree with and/or assumption(s) that is
(are) unfounded? 5. Is there anything in the chapter/reading that was not entirely clear? These questions must be addressed. Each student will address the class as if he/she was giving a lecture. Within that basic framework, there is room for creativity but whatever students choose to do differently should be done in consultation with the instructor.

- The presentations about the profiles in the book *The Latino Generation* should briefly summarize the profile and discuss one or two salient features of significance in the profile. The general questions that each presenter should have in mind are: 1. What does this portrait suggest about Latino lives in America; and 2. what connections can be made between this particular experience and your own, socially, economically, culturally and/or politically?
- Presenters should speak loudly, projecting their voice so it can reach the far end of the room. They should avoid excessive reliance on reading their presentation, make sure their diction is clear and their voice attuned to the environment (e.g. if someone coughs at the same time you say something, repeat what you said). They should make good eye contact with the audience and speak at a pace that allows the audience to process the information.
- Some of the material will be discussed in small groups. Each group will randomly select a recorder who will write down the names of his/her group and hand the list to the instructor at the end of the session. The recorder will also write down and present the analysis and conclusion of the small group discussion to the whole class. Small groups will address only questions 3-5 above. Group discussions and presentations will not be graded but will be scored on a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being the lowest score and 5 being the highest). Scores will be distributed according to individual performance, in consultation with group recorders. These consultations will take place during office hours or at a time mutually convenient for the recorders and the instructor.
- Individual oral presentations will be peer evaluated. Grades will result from the combination of peer and instructor evaluations. Because presentation opportunities are limited, students must prepare well in advance. Presentation assignments will be made so that everyone has an opportunity to consult with the instructor about anything extra or different from the guidelines provided here that they might want to do to make their presentation the best it can be. Advice should not be misconstrued, however, as a surefire formula for success. The proof of your success will be in your actual performance, and ultimately, my judgment.

- **Midterm exam** – 40% of course grade.
- **Final exam** – 40% of course grade.
• 6 random quizzes – 5% of course grade.

• Attendance - Although attendance will not be taken, it is a 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 if you are absent the day you are scheduled to make an oral presentation or for a quiz. There will be no make-up opportunities for missed quizzes, unless your absence is justified and documented. For missed quizzes there will be only one make-up opportunity. Absences due to work, job interviews, weddings, birth of nieces, nephews, cousins, etc. are not justified. If you have decided to be a student you have to be a student. You cannot expect to be enrolled in this class and be excused from its requirements because the class conflicts with other choices you make. Students who are absent are responsible for the material missed. Lateness will also have a negative impact on your grade. I will not recount missed proceedings with anyone who is absent on a given day. Points will be added (only in borderline cases, e.g. if you have a spotless attendance record and the difference between grades is one or two points) or subtracted based on your observed performance.

• Proper demeanor and engagement - Points will be added (again, only in borderline cases) or subtracted based on my assessment and evaluation of your behavior during the semester. I notice everything and take everything into account, e.g. if you are routinely absent, absent-minded, late, disruptive, disrespectful, texting, browsing the internet, etc. Texting and browsing the internet will be flagrant violations of the terms set here (see below). I assume that everyone knows how to behave appropriately during class and unless a student's disregard for the basic norms of classroom behavior is flagrant, I will try not to put anyone on the spot. I may call your attention privately but I will do so only on a discretionary basis.

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 your class presentation, your score will be 89. You will receive a letter grade for your class presentation and you will gain or lose points depending on your attendance and class demeanor as explained above.

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

Use of laptop computers will not be allowed in class. All cellphones must be silent and stowed away during class.

Office Hours
MWF 9:00-10:00 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. I do not answer emails sent after 5pm on weekdays until the next day and after 5pm on Fridays until the following Monday.

Course Schedule

January
21 - Introduction
23 – Study abroad presentation; Review of learning objectives; Demographic context of Latino politics.

26 – Begin oral presentation assignments; The Hispanic/Latino debate.
28 – Where do Mexicans come from?
30 – Puerto Rico and the USA.

February
2 – The Opening to Cuba.
4 – Latino Threat, Chs 1-2
6 – *Latino Threat*, Chs 3-4

9 – *Latino Threat*, Chs 5-6
11 – *Latino Threat*, Chs 7-8
13 – *Chicano Movement*, Chs 1-2

16 - *Chicano Movement*, Chs 3-4
18 - *Chicano Movement*, Chs 5-6
20 - *Chicano Movement*, 7-8

23 - *Chicano Movement*, Chs 9-10

**March**

4 – Cruz at Ford Panels
6 – Cruz at Ford Panels

9 – *Latino Generation*, “Alejandra Vargas,” “Susana Gallegos,” “Rafaela Espinosa.” (Mid-Term Point)
11 – Mid-Term Exam
13 – *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movement*, Chs 1-2

16 – Spring Break
18 – Spring Break
20 – Spring Break

23 - *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movement*, Chs. 3-4
25 - *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movement*, Chs 5-6
27 – *Banished to the Homeland*, Chs 2-4
30 - *Banished to the Homeland*, Chs 5-6

**April**

1 - *Banished to the Homeland*, Chs 7-9
3 - *Banished to the Homeland*, Chs 10-11

6 – Easter Holiday
8 – *Latino Lives in America*, Ch 2
10 - *Latino Lives in America*, Ch 3

13 - *Latino Lives in America*, Ch 4
15 – *Latino Lives in America*, Ch 5
17 - *Latino Lives in America*, Ch 6
20 - *Latino Lives in America*, Ch 7  
22 - *Life in the Hyphen*, Chs 1-3  
24 - *Life in the Hyphen*, Chs 4-5  

27 - *Life in the Hyphen*, Chs 6-7  
29 - Casellas, "Latino Representation in Congress.”

**May**  
1 - Friedman and Scotece, "The Home Styles of California Latino Political Representatives.”

4 - DeSipio and de la Garza, "Forever Seen As New: Latino Participation in American Elections.”

6 – NYLARNet, "Latino Politics in the Northeast: Selected Findings from NYLARNet's 2008 Northeast Latino Survey." (Last day of classes)

15 – Final Exam, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm.

16-17 - Commencement