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 writing assignments.

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.

- **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.

- **Writing and Critical Inquiry** through short-essays that emphasize thesis formulation, documentation, analysis and argument.

**Required Readings**
- Mario T. García, ed., *The Chicano Movement, Perspectives from the Twenty-First Century*.
- Maria de Los Angeles Torres, *In The Land of Mirrors, Cuban Exile Politics in the United States*.
- Selected Readings, available on Blackboard
  - Readings from the National Institute on Latino Policy on Latino Electoral Power
  - Cruz, "Latinos in Office"
  - Cruz, Chapters 1 & 8 from *Out of the Margins*
  - DeSipio and de la Garza, "Forever Seen As New: Latino Participation in American Elections"
  - Duany, *Puerto Rican Exodus to Florida*
  - Fraga, et al., "Su Casa es Nuestra Casa"
  - Melendez, "The Puerto Rican Journey Revisited"
  - Vargas Ramos, "Puerto Rican Political and Civic Engagement"

**Course Requirements**
- Class Participation - 35% of course grade. Class participation will be structured so that each student, with notice, will make at least 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 independently 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 chapter/reading? 2. What did you learn? 3. What did you find 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.

- 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.

- 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.

- Some of the material will be discussed in small groups. Each group will select a recorder who will 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 be peer evaluated and scored on a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being the lowest score and 5 being the highest). Peer evaluators of individual presentations will be chosen randomly by the instructor. In groups, each student will complete a group discussion peer evaluation form of the student seated to his/her left.

- The participation grade will result from a combination of these scores and my evaluation of overall participation throughout the semester.

- 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.

- Two 5-page essays - 20% of course grade each. Each essay will be a critical review of an academic journal article on Latino politics. Both essays must use sources other than the required readings, except if a required reading can be referenced in your critical evaluation. The articles you choose must be approved by the instructor and they can be historical, sociological, anthropological, and even literary so long as they are related to politics. Each
essay should have three parts: summary of the argument and main point, discussion of the evidence used to support the thesis and/or argument, your critical evaluation of the article.

- Attendance - 15% of course grade. 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.

- Proper demeanor and engagement - 10% of course grade. 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. 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.

*Grading Scale*

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<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>100-95</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>94-90</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<td>89-85</td>
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<td>84-80</td>
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<td>60-55</td>
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<td>54-51</td>
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<td>50-45</td>
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**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.

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

If you are late, seat in the back of the room close to the door to avoid disruption. Also, if you must leave class early, let me know in advance and seat in the back close to the door.

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](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](http://www.albany.edu/health_center/medicalexcuse.shtml)

Use of laptop computers, tablets or any other hand held devices in the classroom will be limited to taking notes or to reference class readings. Unless authorized, Googling, facebooking, twittering, instagramming, etc. is prohibited. Cellphones must be silent and stowed away during class.

If you must eat, be discreet.

If you are late, sit in the back of the room close to the door to avoid disruption. Also, if you must leave class early, let me know in advance, preferably in person rather than by e-mail, and sit in the back close to the door.

Office Hours
MWF 9:30-10:30 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 during business hours M-F. Emails sent I after 5pm on weekdays will be answered the next day if possible. Emails sent after 5pm on Fridays will be answered the following Monday if possible.

Course Schedule

January
20 - Introduction - Review of Syllabus
22 – Study abroad presentation; Demographic context of Latino politics.

25 – Begin oral presentation assignments; The Hispanic/Latino/Latin@/Latinx debate.
27 – Where do Mexicans come from?
29 – Puerto Rico and the USA
February
1 – The Opening to Cuba
3 – Dominicans in the United States
5 – NO CLASS, CRUZ AWAY

8 – Latino Threat, Chs 1-2
10 – Latino Threat, Chs 3-4,
12 – Latino Threat, Chs 5-6

15 - Latino Threat, Chs 7-8
17 - Chicano Movement, Chs 1-2
19 - Chicano Movement, Chs 3-4

22 - Chicano Movement, Chs 5-6
24 - Chicano Movement, 7-8
26 - Chicano Movement, Chs 9-10
29 - Chicano Movement, Ch. 11

March
2 - Melendez, "Puerto Rican Journey"
4 - Cruz, Chs. 1 & 8, Out of the Margins

7 - Vargas Ramos, "Puerto Rican Political & Civic Engagement"
(Mid-Term Point)
9 - Duany, Puerto Rican Exodus to Florida. First Essay Due in Class.
11 - DeSipio and de la Garza, "Forever Seen As New: Latino Participation in American Elections.”

14 – Spring Break
16 – Spring Break
18 – Spring Break

21 - Suro on Latino Political Power;" "Ed Morales on Suro;" "Sanchez on Suro" and "Michelson on Suro"
23 - In The Land of Mirrors, Introduction and Ch 1
25 - In The Land of Mirrors, Chs. 2-3

28 - No Class. Easter Break (Classes Resume at 12:35 pm).
30 - In The Land of Mirrors, Chs. 4-5

April
1 - In The Land of Mirrors, Ch. 6-7

4 - In The Land of Mirrors, Ch. 8
6 - Making New York Dominican, Introduction
8 - Making New York Dominican, Chs. 1-2
11 - *Making New York Dominican*, Chs. 3-4
13 - *Making New York Dominican*, Ch. 5-6
15 - *Making New York Dominican*, Ch. 7 and Conclusion

18 - Cruz, "Latinos in Office"
20 - 
22 - (Classes Suspended at 2:35 pm for Passover)

27 - *Latino Lives in America*, Chs. 4-5
29 - *Latino Lives in America*, Chs. 6-7

May
2 - Fraga, et al., "Su Casa es Nuestra Casa"
4 - Class Evaluation. Early Bird Due Date for Second Essay. (Last Day of Classes).
9 – Final Due Date for Second Essay - Due in HU B16 between 10 am and 3:00 pm