

Dr. José E. Cruz
Spring 2019
RPOS 324 Class # 7604
ALCS 375 Class # 7740

Latino Politics in The United States

MWF 9:20-10:15 am HU 132

NOTA BENE: If there is something in this syllabus that is missing, incorrect, inconsistent, or not clear, check with me immediately. Thanks!

Description and Objectives

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

Learning objectives:

1. Through case studies students will learn about and evaluate 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;
2. Through these case studies, students will learn about the different ways in which political science approaches the question of political participation. They will also 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.
3. Using short papers and a reflective journal as tools, students will exercise and hone writing and critical thinking skills through documentation, analysis and argument. They will exercise and hone these skills through the identification and interrogation of the assumptions, values, evidence, conclusions, and implications of primary and secondary sources and will receive individual and collective feedback for oral presentations. They will also exercise critical thinking skills through observation, processing of sense data and ideas, and serious reflection.

Required Readings

- Abigail Leslie Andrews, *Undocumented Politics, Place, Gender, and the Pathways of Mexican Migrants*. Available online at university library.
- Edna Acosta Belen and Carlos E. Santiago, *Puerto Ricans in the United States, A Contemporary Portrait*, 2nd edition

- Christian Krohn-Hansen, *Making New York Dominican, Small Business, Politics and Everyday Life*. Recalled. Once it is available to me I will place on reserve at university library.
- Sharon A. Navarro and Rodolfo Rosales, *The Roots of Latino Urban Agency*. Available online at University library.
- Maria de Los Angeles Torres, *In The Land of Mirrors, Cuban Exile Politics in the United States*. On reserve at University library.
- Selected Readings, available on Blackboard.

Course Requirements

- **Class Participation - 35% of course grade.** Class participation will be structured to include three class presentations. The guiding principles of class participation will be learning objectives 1 and 2 above.
 - One chapter presentation (10%). Students 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 and will make an effort to generate a group discussion. After the first presentation students will be given feedback for improvement if necessary. Evaluations will take into account the fulfillment of these steps. I will turn the answer(s) to question number two into a question(s) and at the end of the review of each book we will go over the resulting set of questions in plenary.
 - Students will also present a profile of a Latino elected official assessing their presentation of self. (10%) Guidelines for writing the profile will be distributed separately.
 - The third presentation will be of the second paper, that is, of the review of a scholarly article on Latino politics of your choosing (10%). See Below.
 - Guidelines for presentations: 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. The presentation should be dynamic and coherent with a clear sense of a beginning, middle, and end. Powerpoint slides should be concise and readable all the way to the back of the room. The allotted time for presentations will be about ten minutes. In addition to the instructions on bullet one noted above, these guidelines will be the basis for the evaluation of presentations.

- Participation (asking questions, answering questions, making comments, helping generate class discussion) is also expected from everyone independently of assigned presentations (5%).
- **Two 4-page papers - 35% of course grade.** One of these papers will be the profile of your assigned elected official (15%). The second paper will be a review of a scholarly article on Latino politics of your choosing (20%). This article will be other than the required readings and it must be approved by the instructor. **Students will submit their choices electronically no later than February 1st no later than 5:30 pm.** Both papers should be typed, double space, 12 pt font, and handed in class on February 11 (EO profile) and April 15 (Article review). Any academic format is acceptable. Be advised that it is entirely possible that your grade for the **presentation** of these papers may be different than the grade for the **papers themselves** as the criteria for evaluating an oral presentation will be different than the criteria to evaluate the written work. The papers will be evaluated for the quality of the writing and for the quality of the exercise of the critical thinking skills noted in learning objective 3 above.
- **Attendance - 10% of course grade.** Students who are absent are responsible for the material missed. If you know you have to miss class in advance, let me know and if you don't know in advance let me know why you were absent in a timely fashion. Please do so in writing, by email. At the end of the semester, I will look at your record and take into consideration the reasons for absences before assigning the final attendance grade.
- **One 5-page minimum reflective journal - 20% of course grade.** This journal will be based on the course proceedings throughout the semester. The journal will give students an opportunity to reflect on the material covered, class interactions, and interactions outside class that may be relevant, e.g. discussions about Latino politics in private as well as public spaces. You should avoid *ad hominem* criticism as well as direct references to individuals but if these are necessary they should be disguised to protect their privacy. **The journal should be typed single space**, 12 pt font, and submitted electronically as a word file on May 11, 2019 no later than 5:30 pm.

- Reflective journaling is based on observation, participation, and then writing. For this journal, your participation and observation will be in class, in your residential hall or neighborhood, and in any other public or private spaces that you frequent. As time goes by, make sure you review past entries as this will help you keep a coherent flow and help you save time when putting the complete journal in shape for submission. The final journal can be in the form of a diary or it can be organized topographically, e.g. observations carried out over the course of the semester at a frequent location or locations, or by issue.
- You should jot down your reflections while they are fresh. It is important to write regularly so that you can keep your journal organized and also to make sure you have enough material at the end of the course to meet the minimum page requirement. You can write as many entries as you like but I suggest a minimum of two entries per week.
- Remember these steps: 1. keep your journal at close range, whether you use a paper notebook, your smart phone, tablet or laptop computer; 2. make regular entries; 3. participate, observe, and summarize; 4. review regularly.¹
- The journal will be evaluated for the quality of its observations, the processing of sense data and ideas, and depth of reflection, as noted in learning objective 3 above.
- Late submissions will incur a penalty, up to 5 points depending on the circumstances.

Schedule	
Assignment of EOs and Chapters	January 25, in class
Selection and submission of article for approval	By email, February 1, 5:30 pm
Submission of first paper (EO profile)	February 11, in class.
Submission of second paper (Article review)	April 15, in class.
Submission of Reflective Journal	By email, May 11, 5:30 pm

¹ Adapted from *How to Write a Reflective Journal with Tips and Examples*
<https://penzu.com/how-to-write-a-reflective-journal> <Accessed August 8, 2017>

Grading

The course is graded A-E. But the course grade will be tabulated according to the percentages for each requirement using the grade scale below.

Score Grade Scale				
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	E 0-59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

For example, one of the three-page papers is worth 20% of the course grade. If you earn 90 (A-) for this paper, multiply .20 (20%) by your score of 90 and you'll see that you earned 18 points out of the total 20 points possible for this requirement; that is also 18 points towards the total of 100 for the course. The course grade will be tabulated according to this procedure.

Policies

The syllabus cannot possibly include every single provision, rule, guideline, or course specification/requirement. Therefore, when in doubt, make sure to ask for clarification or guidance. Otherwise, common sense and my discretion prevail.

There will be no opportunities for extra credit in this class.

Please note that, as indicated in the University's Undergraduate Bulletin: "Each instructor retains the right to modify the syllabus and give notice in class of any modifications in a timely fashion. Students are responsible to apprise themselves of such notices."

Concerning standards of academic integrity, freedom of expression, and attendance and timely completion of course requirements please refer to: http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html

Concerning medical excuses please refer to: http://www.albany.edu/health_center/medicalexercise.shtml

There will be no posting of lecture or discussion notes on Blackboard.

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.

Take advantage of my office hours if you wish to follow up on a class discussion, especially if during class time you are uncertain of what you think about a given question or topic or something comes to mind after the fact that you would like addressed or clarified.

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 on a discretionary basis.

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.

If you must eat, be discreet.

If you are late, sit 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 close to the door.

Office Hours

MW 1-2:30 pm, 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 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

23 - Review of Syllabus. Assignment of EOs.

25 –Assignment of Chapters. Discussion of guidelines for writing EO profiles. Demographic context of Latino politics.

28 –The Hispanic/Latino/Latin@/Latinx debate.

30 – Where do Mexicans come from? Do we really need a wall?

February

- 1 – NO CLASS-Cruz at Intercultural Learning Workshop. **Article selection due, by email, 5:30 pm.**
- 4 – Puerto Rico and the USA.
- 6 – The Opening to Cuba.
- 8 – Dominicans in the United States.
- 11 - EO presentations
- 13 - EO presentations
- 15 - EO presentations
- 18 – EO presentations
- 20 – EO presentations
- 22 – EO presentations
- 25 - Cuba Latino White Privilege. Reading on Blackboard.
- 27 - Puerto Rico Latino White Privilege. Reading on Blackboard.

March

- 1 - Dominican Republic Latino White Privilege. Reading on Blackboard.
- 4 - Navarro and Rosales, Chs. 1,2
- 6 - Navarro and Rosales, Chs. 3,4
- 8 - Navarro and Rosales, Ch. 5, Conclusion
- 11 - Andrews, Chs. 1,2
- 13 - Andrews, Chs. 3,4
- 15 - Andrews, Ch. 5, Conclusion
- 18-22 - Spring Break
- 25 - Acosta-Belén and Santiago, Chs. 1,2
- 27 - Acosta-Belén and Santiago, Chs. 3,4
- 29 - Acosta-Belén and Santiago, Chs. 5,6

April

- 1 - Acosta-Belén and Santiago, Chs. 7,8
- 3 - Acosta-Belén and Santiago, Ch. 9; *In The Land of Mirrors*, Ch. 1
- 5 - *In The Land of Mirrors*, Chs. 2,3
- 8 - *In The Land of Mirrors*, Chs. 4,5
- 10 – *In The Land of Mirrors*, Chs. 6,7
- 12 – *In The Land of Mirrors*, Ch. 8; Article review presentations.
- 15 - Article review presentations.
- 17 – Article review presentations.
- 19 - Article review presentations.
- 22 - NO CLASS Classes resume at 12:35 pm
- 24 - Article review presentations.
- 26 - Article review presentations.
- 29 - *Making New York Dominican*, Chs. 1,2

May

1 - *Making New York Dominican*, Chs. 3,4

3 - *Making New York Dominican*, Chs. 5,6

6 - *Making New York Dominican*, Ch. 7

8 - The future of Latino political influence: Barretto, Collingwood and Manzano, "A New Measure of Group Influence on Presidential Elections: Assessing Latino Influence in 2008." Reading on Blackboard. Last Day of Classes

11 - **Reflective journal due by email, 5:30 pm.**