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 thesis formulation, 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 different types of scholarly sources and will receive individual and collective feedback from oral presentations. They will also exercise critical thinking skills through observation, processing of sense data and ideas, and reflection.

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: Cruz, "Puerto Rican Poverty and Politics;" Duany, Puerto Rican Exodus to Florida; Meléndez, "The Puerto Rican Journey Revisited," Vargas Ramos, "Puerto Rican Political and Civic Engagement."

**Course Requirements**

• **Class Participation - 30% of course grade.**

• Class participation will be structured to include three class presentations.

  o For chapter presentations (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. Within that basic framework, there is room for creativity but whatever students choose to do differently should be done in consultation with the instructor.

  o 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.

  o 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.

  o Students will also present a profile of a Latino elected official assessing their presentation of self. (5%)

  o The third presentation will be of one of the two required papers (10%).
Participation is also expected from everyone independently of assigned presentations. (5%) 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 papers - 20% of course grade each.** Each paper will be a critical review of an academic journal article on Latino politics. The articles you choose must be approved by the instructor and they can be historical, sociological, anthropological, or literary so long as they are related to Latino politics. Each paper 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. Students will present the first one of these papers in class as part of the participation requirement. The papers should be typed, double space, 12 pt font, and submitted electronically as a word file. A model paper is available on Blackboard for citation and formatting guidelines. See deadlines below.

- **Attendance - 10% of course grade.** Three unjustified absences or four absences justified or not equal failure of this requirement. Additional absences, justified or not, will have a negative impact on the class participation grade. A disproportionate number of absences will result in a grade of E for the course. Lateness will also have a negative impact on your grade.

- Students who are absent are responsible for the material missed. I will not recount missed proceedings with anyone who is absent on a given day. 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.

- **One five-page minimum reflective journal - 20% of the 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. See deadline below.
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.\(^1\)

Late submissions will incur a penalty, typically a half grade down but varying according to circumstances.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline for 5-page Papers &amp; Journal</th>
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<tr>
<td>Selection of articles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submission of first essay</td>
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<td>Submission of second essay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submission of Reflective Journal</td>
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**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 according to the grade scale below.

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<th>Grade Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A  4.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+ 3.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+ 2.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+ 1.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>E  0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>A- 3.70</td>
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<td>B  3.00</td>
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<td>C  2.00</td>
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<td>D- 0.70</td>
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\(^1\) 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>
Policies
There will be no opportunities for extra credit in this class. You either meet the requirements specified in the syllabus or you don't.

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/medicalexcuse.shtml

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.

I notice everything and take everything into account, e.g. if you are routinely absent-minded, disruptive, disrespectful, texting, browsing the internet, etc. Texting and browsing the internet will be flagrant violations of proper demeanor and engagement. 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. Cellphones must be silent and stowed away during class.
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 1:30-3:00 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**
24 - Review of Syllabus.
26 – Demographic context of Latino politics.
29 – The Hispanic/Latino/Latin@/Latinx debate
31 – Where do Mexicans come from?

**February**
2 – Puerto Rico and the USA.
5 – The Opening to Cuba.
7 – Dominicans in the United States.
9 – Chicano Movement, Chs. 1,2. **Article selection due, 11:59 pm.**

12 - Chicano Movement, Chs. 3,4
14 - Chicano Movement, Chs. 5,6
16 - Chicano Movement, Chs. 7,8

19 – Chicano Movement, Chs. 9,10
21 – Chicano Movement, Ch. 11
23 – Review

26 - Melendez, "Puerto Rican Journey"
28 - Vargas Ramos, "Puerto Rican Political & Civic Engagement"

**March**
2 - Duany, "Puerto Rican Exodus to Florida"
5 - Cruz- "Puerto Rican Poverty and Politics"
7 - Review
9 - EOs presentations

12 - 18 Spring Break

19 - EOs presentations. Classes resume 8:00 am First paper due, 11:59 pm.
21 - EOs presentations
23 - In The Land of Mirrors, Ch. 1,2

26 - In The Land of Mirrors, Chs. 3,4
28 - In the Land of Mirrors, Chs. 5,6
30 - In The Land of Mirrors, Chs. 7,8

April
2 - NO CLASS
4 - Review
6 - Essay Presentations

9 – Essay presentations
11 – Essay presentations
13 - Essay presentations

16 – Essay presentations
18 - Making New York Dominican, Chs. 1,2
20 - Making New York Dominican, Chs. 3,4

23 - Making New York Dominican, Ch. 5,6,7
25 - Review
27 - Latino Lives in America, Chs. 2,3

30 - Latino Lives in America, Ch. 4

May
2 - Latino Lives in America, Ch. 5
4 - Latino Lives in America, Ch. 6. Second paper due, 11:59 pm.

7 - Latino Lives in America, Ch. 7
9 - Review. Last day of classes.

11 - Reflective journal due, 5:30 pm.