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Fall 2019  
403 North Hall  
311 Ingraham Hall

**Mexican-American Politics**  
**Political Science 302/Chican@ Latin@ Studies 302**

**COURSE GUIDE DESCRIPTION:** Mexican American politics in the United States; Race, ethnicity, and identity as political factors; cultural pluralism, politics, and policy in the United States and selected other multi-cultural politics. This class examines the major problems and issues in Mexican-American politics since World War II. An emphasis will be placed on the ways in which race, class and culture have structured politics for the Mexican origin people.

**REQUISITES:** Sophomore Standing.

**DESIGNATION & ATTRIBUTES:**

- Social Science Breadth Requirement
- Level- Intermediate
- Counts as Liberal Arts and Science credit in L&S

**INSTRUCTIONAL MODE, MEETINGS, CREDITS:** Face-to-face course, 3 credits. This class meets for two 75 minute class periods each week over the fall semester and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, problem sets, studying, etc.) for about 2 hours out of classroom for every class period. The class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 to 10:45. The syllabus includes additional information about meeting times and expectations for student work.

**CANVASS URL** <https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/165280>

## **DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

Mexican Americans are now the largest racial and ethnic minority group in the United States. As a group they face problems of poverty, unemployment, and discrimination. At the same time, Mexican Americans are culturally, economically and politically diverse. How the dynamics of race, class, and ethnicity shape Mexican American politics and Latino politics is the central focus of this class. In order to understand change and continuity in race relations, this class will emphasize the historical conflict between Mexican and Anglo Americans. The final third of the course will be dedicated to contemporary political issues.

### **Course Objectives**

The fundamental objective of the course is to provide the student with an analytical framework for understanding the political dynamics of multi-cultural societies. Above all, the course aspires to offer its members a better understanding of the politics of cultural pluralism in the United States. Multi-cultural issues will be central to 21<sup>st</sup> century American politics. Our exploration of these questions in the lectures, section discussions, and readings should help prepare course participants for the policy challenges of tomorrow.

### **Course Requirements**

Regular attendance at lectures is indispensable; the reading material is designed to supplement and not duplicate the lectures. In addition to keeping up with the assigned reading, I encourage you to subscribe to a good daily newspaper like the *New York Times*. The paper version of the *New York Times* is available at a substantial discount to students and it is free online. Reading a good newspaper will enhance your understanding of the lectures and make you better able to participate in class discussions. Students will be expected to complete the readings for each syllabus topic concurrently with class coverage and discussion sections. Attendance at the section meetings is also an obligation. Discussion sections will meet every week, including the first week of classes. You must complete the readings in advance of section meetings. It will be impossible to earn a good section grade if you are unprepared to discuss the material. Some level of participation is required. If this is difficult for you, please see us about some strategies to help you feel more comfortable engaging in discussion.

This class meets two times a week for lecture and discussion. Class meetings are scheduled for Tuesday and Thursday of each week for the entire semester. It carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, problem sets, studying, etc.). The course is open to freshmen.

There will be two midterm exams and final examination. The latter will be comprehensive. The final exam will take place at 5:05 pm on Wednesday December 18<sup>th</sup>. All examinations will be of an essay type. Students affiliated with the McBurney Center should see me about exam arrangements and any other accommodations.

### **Electronic Devices**

The use of laptops in lecture and section is not allowed except by special arrangement. The same goes for other electronic devices. Please turn off and put away your phones before you come to lecture or section.

### **Academic Integrity**

I take academic integrity very seriously. If I suspect academic misconduct, I will investigate and impose penalties in accordance with university guidelines. Depending on the severity of the offense, penalties may include failure in the course and a notice being sent to the Dean of Students. You are encouraged to study with other students, but your work must be entirely your own. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please see me. Academic misconduct, even if it is unintentional, can seriously damage your career and it is not worth the risk. For complete discussion of the rules regarding academic integrity, see the Dean of Students website, or contact the assistant dean for academic integrity at 608-263-5700 or Room 70 Bascom Hall.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform me of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. I will work either directly with you or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

### **Institutional statement on diversity**

“Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.”

### **Course Evaluation**

The grade will be determined according to the following criteria:

Book Critiques (10% each)	40%
Research Paper	30%
Final Examination	30%
Class Participation	(Up to) 5% Extra Credit

Students must complete all required work in order to be eligible to receive a passing grade in the course. In calculating the final grade, number rather than letter grades will be averaged. Make-up exams will be given only in the case of a medical emergency. Students affiliated with the McBurney Center should see me about exam arrangements and other accommodations.

## GRADE SCALE

### Total Grade

A	100 to 93
A/B	92 to 88
B	87 to 80
B/C	79 to 77
C	76 to 70
D	69 to 61
F	60 and below

Your performance will be assessed on your ability to engage in inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking in your written and oral communication. Detailed guidelines will be provided for the midterm examination and the final.

### Books Recommended for Purchase

The following books are required reading for the course and recommended for purchase. They are available at A Room of One's Own Bookstore, 315 W. Gorham Street.

Christina Beltran. *The Trouble With Unity: Latino Politics and the Creation of Identity.*

Angela S. Garcia. *Legal Passing: Navigating Undocumented Life and Local Immigration Law.*

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzalez. *I am Joaquin.* (on reserve and online)

Rodolfo Torres, Armando Ibarra and Alfredo Carlos. *The Latino Question: Politics, Laboring Classes and the Next Left*

Julian Lim. *Porous Borders: Multiracial Migrations and the Law in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands.*

Dowell Myers. *Immigrants and Boomers: Forging a New Social Contract for the Future of America.*

All books may be found in the Helen C. White Library Reserve Room.

## **Course Requirements**

### **I. Class Participation**

Regular attendance at lectures is indispensable; the reading material is designed to supplement and not duplicate the lectures. In addition to keeping up with the assigned reading, I encourage you to subscribe to a good daily newspaper like the *New York Times* (available at a substantial discount to students). Reading a good newspaper will enhance your understanding of the lectures and make you better able to participate in class discussions. Since this is an election year, I urge you to keep up with the latest public opinion polls. I recommend the work of these two polling companies: <http://www.pewhispanic.org/> and <http://www.latinodecisions.com/> Extra credit will be given for thoughtful questions, arguments and debate.

### **II. Book Critiques**

Time will be set aside to discuss all of the assigned books. You will be required to write four (4) book critiques. You are asked to analyze the author's thesis, methods, evidence, and conclusions of the reading assignments. Guidelines will be handed out in class. Everyone is required to critique Lim's *Porous Borders*. You can then choose three other books (excluding *I am Joaquin*) on the reading list to critique. Remember, even if you have not written a book critique during a given week, it is still essential that you read the assigned books each week before coming to class. It is not possible to put off any of the readings before the final exam and expect to do well in the class.

### **III. A Research Paper**

Your research paper will include a transcript and analysis of an interview with an individual, not affiliated with the University of Wisconsin System, who is involved in Mexican American politics or community affairs, broadly defined. The finished product should be about fifteen to twenty pages in length. Guidelines will be distributed in class.

**Note:** All paper topics and persons to be interviewed must be cleared with me by October 14<sup>th</sup>. Please make an appointment to see me in my office. Bring a one-page description of your project with you. The final paper is due on December 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **IV. A Comprehensive Final Examination**

The final exam will take place on December 22, 2016 at 7:45 am. Location to be announced.

### **Electronic Devices**

The use of laptops in lecture and section is not allowed except by special arrangement. The same goes for other electronic devices. Please turn off and put away your phones before you come to lecture.

### **Academic Integrity**

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### **Office Hours**

My office hours are on Wednesdays from 1:30 to 3:30 or by appointment. Please feel free to make an appointment or drop by during my office hours. I welcome students.

Please be aware that I have two offices. My Political Science office is 403 North Hall. My Chican@/Latin@ Studies office, where I will hold regular office hours, is 311 Ingraham Hall. If you make an appointment to see me be sure you know where we agreed to meet.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **Week One. September 5: Course Requirements, Socio Economic Overview**

- a. Syllabus distributed. Introduction to class format, grading, etc.
- b. Overview of Mexican American earnings, education, employment patterns.
- c. Book critique guidelines distributed

### **Week Two. September 10 & 11: The History of Anglo and Mexican American Conflict**

- a. An Overview of Colonial Southwestern History.
- b. Spanish and Anglo Immigration Patterns.

**Week Three. September 17 & 19: The History of Anglo and Mexican American Conflict (continued)**

- a. United States-Mexico War and its Consequences for Mexican Americans Research Paper guidelines distributed
- b. Class discussion Lim. *Porous Borders*. Critique due

**Week Four. September 24 & 26: Organizing Against Racism**

- a. Debating race, class and culture.
- b. The Mutualistas, Labor Unions and Civil Rights Groups.

**Week Five. October 1 and 3: the Chicano Movement**

- a. Roots of the Chicano Movement
- b. Organizations, leaders and Ideology

**Week Six. October 8 & 10: The Chicano Movement (continued)**

- a. Chicano Identity and La Raza Unida Party. Video "I Am Joaquin." Read text of poem before class.
- b. Discussion of Beltran. *The Problem With Unity*. Critique due

**Week Seven. October 15 & 17: The Chicano Movement (continued)**

- a. The Ford Foundation and Mexican American Politics.
- b. Foundation Money and Lawyers – The Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund

**Week Eight. October 22 & 24: Political Organizing in the Contemporary Period**

- a. Becoming Part of Texas Party Politics
- b. Are Latinos Assimilating Into American Society?

**Week Nine. October 29 & 31: Political Organizing in the Contemporary Period (continued)**

- a. Contemporary Immigration Politics.
- b. Video: *Harvest of Loneliness: The Bracero Program*.

**Week Ten. November 5 & 7: Political Organizing in the Contemporary Period (continued)**

- a. The Dilemmas of Crafting Immigration Policy
- b. Class discussion of Garcia. *Legal Passing*. Critique due.

**Week Eleven. November 12 & 14: Politics and Identity (continued)**

- a. Environmental Justice Organizing.
- b. Organizing Garment Workers—Labor and Technology.

**Week Twelve. November 19 & 21: Politics and Identity (continued)**

- a. Latinos, Voting, and the 2016 & 2020 Presidential Election.
- b. Forming Electoral Coalitions.

**Week Thirteen. November 26: Contemporary Immigration (continued)**

Discuss *The Latino Question*. Meet the author! Armando Ibarra will lead the discussion.

**\*\*\*\*\*Thanksgiving Recess November 28<sup>th</sup> - December 1<sup>st</sup>\*\*\*\*\***

**Week Fourteen. December 3 & 5: Bridging the Racial and Generational Divide**

- a. The Alinsky School of Organizing in Latino communities.
- b. Class discussion of Myers *Immigrants and Boomers*. Critique due

**Week Fifteen. December 10: Concluding Thoughts**

Summary and review for final exam