

Chc/Lat 143
F'03

Mexican Americans and Politics Political Science 126A / Chicano/Latino Studies 143

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Course Web Site: <http://eee.uci.edu/03f/67120/>

Course Overview

In the wake of the 2000 election, the President and the political parties are reaching out to Mexican Americans in an unprecedented manner. Although this outreach has declined somewhat since September 11, it will likely be a continuing characteristic of U.S. politics for the foreseeable future. Mexican Americans are also organizing in ways that they have not in the past. New forms of community-based organizing have appeared in Mexican American communities in recent years. And, as the class begins, a Mexican American is the leading candidate for the California Governorship and may be in office before the class concludes.

This new centrality of Mexican Americans and other Latinos to national, state, and local politics has both substantive and symbolic dimensions. Even at the symbolic level, the outreach represents a significant improvement over the neglect that Mexican Americans have experienced in most previous elections. In this course, we will examine the foundations and contradictions of contemporary Mexican American politics.

This course examines the role of Mexican American and other Latino communities in shaping state and national politics in the United States. After we review the political history and political organizational strategies of Mexican Americans, we will examine their contemporary modes of political organization; analyze public policy issues that concern them; evaluate the successes and failures of Mexican American empowerment strategies; and measure the electoral impact of Mexican American votes.

Course Readings

Readings are taken from three sources. I will ask that you read three books as well as a collection of articles that are available for purchase from Anteater Publishing.

The books are:

Louis DeSipio. 1996. *Counting on the Latino Vote: Latinos as a New Electorate*. Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia.

David Gutierrez. 1995. *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants and the Politics of Ethnicity*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Mark R. Warren. 2001. *Dry Bones Rattling: Community Building to Revitalize American Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

The books are available from local bookstores and are on reserve at the library. I identify readings from the reading packet with a “**.” Some of these materials are also on reserve in the library.

I also may distribute some additional readings in class. If you miss a class, check with a classmate and the class website to see if any readings were distributed.

Course Requirements and Grading

I will evaluate your performance in the class in four ways. These include: 1) three analytical essays on course readings; 2) a midterm exam; 3) a quiz on the last day of class that will ask you to identify the theses and methods of course readings; and 4) class attendance, participation, and grades on in-class quizzes, if any.

Essays: I will assign three analytical essay questions throughout the semester. You will be required to complete two of these. Each essay should be between six and eight pages. You may complete whichever two you prefer and I would encourage you to pick assignments that do not conflict with assignments in other classes. If you are dissatisfied with a grade that you receive on one of these essays, you may complete the third essay; I will only count the grades of the highest two when I calculate your final class grade.

These essays will ask you to evaluate arguments made in course readings and, to a lesser degree, themes raised in class discussions. You will be able to answer the essay based on the course readings and I will not expect you to do additional research. The essays will be due on the following dates:

<i>Due date:</i>	<i>Covers readings for:</i>
1) October 21	October 2-21
2) November 6	October 23-November 6
3) December 4	November 11-December 4

Each essay will contribute 25 percent to your final grade for a total of 50 percent.

Midterm exam: The midterm exam is on November 13. The exam will include short answer and essay questions that will ask you to analyze and synthesize class readings, discussions, and lectures. We will discuss the exact format prior to the exam and I will welcome your input on how to design an exam that best tests your knowledge of the material.

The midterm will account for 30 percent of your final grade.

Quiz: During the last class session, you will take a quiz that will ask you to identify the theses and methods used in class readings. The objective of this exercise is to ensure that you

identify the purpose of each of the readings and consider the different types of evidence that scholars use to defend their theses. In our class discussions, we will examine authors' theses and discuss various methods used to analyze Mexican American politics. *I would encourage you to prepare for this quiz throughout the quarter by keeping a list of theses and methods for each of the readings as you first read each assignment.*

The quiz will take place at the beginning of class on December 4 and will make up 10 percent of your final grade.

Class participation: I will reward attendance, thoughtful contributions to class discussions, and grades on in-class quizzes, should I decide to administer them.

Class participation will account for 10 percent of your final grade.

Course Schedule and Assigned Readings

September 30—Introduction and Overview

Part One:

Territorial Foundations and Roots of Political Demand Making

October 2—How do you Start History? Are There Consequences to When you Begin the Story?
Gutierrez, introduction and Chapter 1
** Griswold del Castillo, Richard. 1989. *The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo: A Legacy of Conflict*, chapters 3 and 5, pp. 30-42 & 62-86.

October 7—An Interlude—California's Recall and Mexican American Politics: Themes to Consider as You Watch Election Returns
No reading assigned

October 9— 1) Recall recap
2) Destruction and Rebirth (1860-1920)
Gutierrez, chapter 2
** Arellano, Anselmo. 2000. "The People's Movement: Las Gorras Blancas" In Erlinda Gonzales-Berry and David R. Maciel, eds. *The Contested Homeland: A Chicano History of New Mexico*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, pp. 59-82.

October 14— Laying the Foundation for Contemporary Mexican American Politics ... and its Core Debates (1920-1940)
Gutierrez, chapter 3

October 16— Opportunities and Limits of Pluralism Before the Latino Era (1940-1965)
Gutierrez, chapter 4 and 5

October 21— The Chicano Movement (1965-1975)

** Muñoz, Carlos. 1989. *Youth, Identity, and Power: The Chicano Movement*, London: Verso, chapter 4, pp. 99-126.

Part Two

Mexican Americans and the Politics of Pan-Ethnicity

October 23—Community and Competing Conceptions of Politics
Warren, introduction and chapters 1 and 2, pp. 3-71.

October 28— Pan-ethnicity and the Challenge to Mexican American Politics

** Padilla, Felix. 1984. "On the Nature of Latino Ethnicity." *Social Science Quarterly* 65, pp. 651-664.

DeSipio, chapter 1.

October 30— Mexican American Community Attitudes

** de la Garza, Rodolfo, et al. 1996. "Will the Real Americans Please Stand Up: Anglo and Mexican-American Support of Core American Political Values." *American Journal of Political Science*, 40 #2, pp. 335-51.

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0092-5853%28199605%2940%3A2%3C335%3AWTRAPS%3E2.0.CO%3B2-V>

DeSipio, chapter 2

November 4— The Voting Rights Act and the Protection of Mexican American Electoral Participation

** de la Garza, Rodolfo O., and Louis DeSipio. 1997. "Save the Baby, Change the Bathwater, and Scrub the Tub: Latino Electoral Participation after Twenty years of Voting Rights Act Coverage." In F. Chris García, ed. *Pursuing Power: Latinos and the Political System*, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, pp. 72-126.

November 6— Electoral Participation: Opportunities and Limits

DeSipio, chapters 3 and 4

Warren, chapter 3, pp. 72-97.

November 11— 1. Mexican Americans, Latinos and Recent Elections

2. Midterm review

DeSipio, Louis, and Rodolfo O. de la Garza. Forthcoming. "Muted Voices: Latinos and the 2000 Elections." [Will be posted to the class web site].

November 13—Midterm exam

**Part Three
Policy and Intergroup Relations**

November 18—Immigration and the Restructuring of Mexican American (and Latino) Politics
Gutierrez, chapter 6

** Tolbert, Carolyn, and Rodney Hero. 1996. "Race/Ethnicity and Direct Democracy: An Analysis of California's Illegal Immigration Initiative." *The Journal of Politics* 58 (3):806-818.
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0022-3816%28199608%2958%3A3%3C806%3ARADDAA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-N>

November 20—Naturalization and Mexican American Empowerment
DeSipio, chapters 5 and 6.

November 25—Coalitional Politics and Policymaking
Warren, chapters 4, 5, and 6, pp. 98-190

Conclusions

December 2—Leadership
Warren, chapters 7, 8, and 9, pp. 191-264.

December 4—Mexican Americans, Latinos, and the Politics of the New Millennium
** de la Garza, Rodolfo O. 1996. "El Cuento de los Números and Other Latino Political Myths." In Aníbal Yáñez-Chávez, ed. *Su Voto es Su Voz: Latino Politics in California*, pp. 11-32.
DeSipio, chapter 7.