

Department: PRLS

Course No.: 210

Credits: 3

Title: Contemporary Issues in Latino Studies

Contact: Anne Theriault

Content Area: CA4 Diversity and Multiculturalism

Diversity: CA4 Non-International

Catalog Copy: PRLS 210. Contemporary Issues in Latino Studies. Either Semester. Three credits. Staff. Topics in socio-demographic patterns, cultural identity claims, community organization, migration and citizenship issues of Latino groups in post-WWII United States. Emphasis on comparative analysis of issues and on policy implications.

Course Information:

A. Brief Course description: Course presents U.S. Latinos after WWII with focus on several key issues in Latino studies, including socio-economic and demographic patterns, cultural and ethnic identity, community organizing, migration, immigration., civil rights, citizenship. Students acquire knowledge about Latinos in the United States. Students conduct research exercises in order to become familiar with selected methods, topics, debates in Latino Studies.

B. Course Requirements: midterm 25%, final 25%, class participation 25%, research tasks 25%, failure in any area is failure in class.

C. Major themes to be covered [see above] AND students explore, critically examine and intelligently discuss major debates and issues in Latino studies from a multi-disc perspective. Students will enhance research skills. By end of semester, students should be able to selectively use and analyze different types of materials and data in Latino Studies.

Meets Goals of Gen Ed.:

1. Become articulate: Students must express critical thoughts in the classroom by participating in class discussions and giving at least one presentation. As they speak, they should be giving evidence that they are carefully reading, considering, grappling with given topics. As they post responses in Webct, they must show evidence that they are carefully considering, grappling with given topics. Thoughts, ideas must reflect command of required materials, though students need not agree with everything they read.

Students must expand upon ideas presented in materials. For example, open-ended questions on exams demand integration, synthesis, of topics such as Latino cultures, marginalized subculture groups in Latino communities, race and racism, ethnicity, migration, immigration, the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, education and the mass media.

6. Acquire consciousness of diversity of human culture and experience: Course materials squarely address ethnicity and the development of ethnic identities of a given U.S. Latino group or generation in light of historic, social, economic, political contexts in the United States and ethnic Latin American homeland (when that must be taken into account). Students also deal with (discuss, write about) topics of migration, assimilation, and demographics (U.S. Census), which they can compare across several U.S. Latino groups. No instructor can guarantee a new or improved diversity consciousness in the minds of students. It is desired that students taking this course will develop more sophisticated, and sensitive perspectives about U.S. Latino cultural groups and their experiences in the United States.

CA4 Criteria: Specific Criteria Diversity and Multiculturalism: SPECIFIC CRITERIA, DIVERSITY AND MULTIC: #5 5. It is desired that students develop an awareness of the dynamics of social, political, and/or economic power in the context of varieties of human experience, subcultures, human rights, migration (e.g.).

The entire course is about Latinos in U.S. society. Latinos are heterogeneous (e.g. Mexican heritage, Puerto Rican, Colombian, El Salvadoran, Dominican). They differ from mainstream European Americans because of language, culture, and traditions, migratory circumstances, for example. Students learn that Latinos are identifiable ethnic minorities in the United States that have undergone struggle and conflict in the goals of acceptance or tolerance, integration, and full participation in society.

As a non-mainstream group, Latinos are challenging "power" limits in regard to social realms (e.g., public opinion, mainstream mores, ascension in social class), political realms (laws, regulations, informal and formal policies), economic realms (entrepreneurship, pay equity). Latinos are consistently pushing limits in order to attain justice in migration policies, better working conditions for underclass agricultural and other laborers, humane housing conditions for factory and other workers, and educational opportunities. Latinos challenge school segregation, real estate redlining, labor discrimination, and anti-foreigner sentiments.

It is desired that students develop more complexity in their awareness of dynamics among Latinos and dynamics between Latinos and others in U.S. society.