

WIP: Culture and History of Latinos

LLAS 201
Spring Semester 2011
Monday and Wednesday 12:15 pm - 1:30 pm
CBM 113

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Course Description:

Latinos are the largest minority group in the United States. The group is made up of people of Latin American ancestry who live in former Latin American territories acquired by the United States and immigrants from Latin America to the U.S., and successive generations of offspring from both origins in the U.S. Most Latinos are U.S. born, contrary to general perceptions of them as newcomers. However, because of these perceptions as well as the volume and the conditions of adaptation, most Latinos are closely tied to the multiple dimensions of immigration. Furthermore, many of them retain cultural, linguistic, kinship, and economic connections with their immediate or ancestral countries of origin or Latin America as a whole. Latin America is the collective of nations southward of Mexico that came about from the merge of indigenous cultures and Spanish and Portuguese invasions and colonization processes. These countries have forged individual and distinctive cultural identities and institutional realities through their long and complex process of to achieve formal and actual independence.

This course is an introduction to Latino Studies. It looks at the diverse origins and conditions of the multiple groups encompassed by the terms "Latino" and/or "Hispanic." Why are there two words to refer to the same population? In answering this question the course traces connections with ancestral Latin America in terms of its pre-Hispanic and colonial past, as well as its post-colonial present. Issues of ancestry, ethnicity, nationalism, belonging, and entitlement are addressed through an overview of articles and films. Are all Latinos immigrants? Are all Latinos poor? How do the conditions of Latinos compare between the Northeast, Southwest and the Midwest? How similar or different are Puerto Ricans, Argentineans, and Salvadorians? Are Brazilians or Belizeans Latinos? Is Haiti part of Latin America? How similar are the cultures and histories of these nations? How do they change in the United States? How are these questions reflected in their literatures and arts?

Latino Studies is a new and still emergent discipline that relies on a blending of humanity and social science approaches. The field is characterized by the prominence of key topics such as migration, assimilation, U.S.-Latin American relations, etc. The writing assignments along with the readings relate to this multiplicity of themes and disciplinary approaches. Writing assignments are

interwoven into the course through brief in-class writing assignments, brief essays, four letters and two papers.

This course has been approved as a Writing Intensive course as part of the Writing Intensive Program (WIP). Successful completion of this course fulfills the Writing Intensive graduation requirement for Latino and Latin American minors who entered the university in Fall 2008 or later. Speak to your advisor or visit <http://www.neiu.edu/~wip> for more information.

Prerequisite

All WIP courses have ENG 101 with a grade of C or better as a prerequisite.

Readings:

Latinos and the Nation's Future: Henri G. Cisneros, Ed. From now on, this book is referred in the syllabus and the writing assignments as LAF.

Additional readings are posted in Blackboard. Please find them in the Course Documents section. They are organized by the date they will be covered in class.

Course Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate knowledge about social and historical conditions of Latinos.
2. Understand the new ethnic and demographic profiles of the United States.
3. Apply abstract conceptualizations to students' immediate situations and advance in the development of abstract and critical thinking skills.
4. Articulate complex dynamics with clarity and simplicity through oral and written communication.

Related Program Goals/ Learning Outcomes	Course Outcomes	Performance Criteria	Measurement Instrument
1.1 Students will become familiar with historical, and statistical data of the diverse populations that make up the Latino groups	Demonstrate knowledge about the social and historical conditions of Latinos.	Recognize and describe characteristics and developments shaping the diverse groups that make up Latinos into a the largest minority group in the country	Paper 1: What Is Latino?, Essay 3: Affirmative Action, Essay 4: Latino Youth.
2.1 Understand the cultural and social history of	Apply abstract conceptualizations to students' immediate	Engage with readings and data about factors and	Paper 2: The Professional and Civic

Latinos from their own perspectives	situations and understand the new ethnic and demographic profiles of the United States.	situations shaping the socio-political and cultural realities of Latino groups in reference to the students' perspectives	Meaning of Latinos for the United States. Three letters to the editor Essay 1: What Is This Course About? Essay 5: What Did You Learn in This Class?
2.2. Identify the cultural and social diversity among the diverse constituencies among Latinos	Understand the new ethnic and demographic profiles of the United States	Identify trends and characteristics of the ongoing transformations in the make up of society and social interactions	Paper 2: The Professional and Civic Meaning of Latinos for the United States. Essay 2: What Is Latino?

Class Dynamics & Assignments

Some of the ideas and information we will be discussing may be uncomfortable to you or others in the class. I expect you to be tolerant and respectful of each other and the different opinions, perspectives, and experiences that you bring to the class. As much as possible, we will use an empirical approach to examine the issues we address. That means bringing evidence to bear on the questions, not just taken-for-granted beliefs.

You are expected to be an active participant in class discussions and do all readings and assignments on time. Therefore, your attendance and use of Blackboard are mandatory and graded. Active participation does not mean a lot of interventions but quality interventions regarding listening to/with others, applying yourself to graded and un-graded activities that further the learning experience, asking appropriate questions, integrating the readings in class discussions.

Plagiarism is a serious infraction that undermines the learning process and purpose of advanced learning. It includes but is not restricted to 1) the paraphrasing of another's idea or conclusions without acknowledgement; 2) the

lifting of entire sentences, paragraphs, chapters, etc. from another's work without acknowledgement; and 3) the submission as one's own work, any work prepared by other persons" (NEIU Student Code of Conduct). Upon fair review of evidence, confirmed suspicion of plagiarism will result in your failing the course.

Grading

Five essays	20%
Class participation:	10%
1 st Paper	25%
2 nd Paper	25%
Attendance	10%
Blackboard Participation	10%

All outside-of-class assignments must be word-processed.

The two papers will be submitted first as drafts and then as final papers.

Essays: The five essays provide the opportunity for you to refine your analytical and communication skills through various graded and ungraded exercises. The topics of the essays are integral to the development of the course and guide your reflective engagement through their thematic relations. Your essays must provide evidence of a critical understanding of the topics and materials covered on the specified topic for the essay. The word count is to be between 240 - 260 words.

Papers: There will be two five-page papers. Your two papers will give you the opportunity to synthesize your thoughts on the central question of the course: What is Latino? The first paper engages with the question in general terms while the second one is done in terms of your professional future.

Blackboard participation: All of your written work in the course needs to be posted in Blackboard for classmates' comments and feedback. Likewise, you are expected to provide feedback of their work and engage with their feedback. You must post two entries with comments, feedback, or replies every week.

Attendance and class participation: Your active engagement with class topics and dynamics is essential. Therefore, your attendance as well as your pertinent and informed participation in class discussion is graded. Pertinence of your contributions will be assessed in terms of clarity and relationship to readings. Simple statement of opinions, while valued, do not account for pertinent participations.

Performance Criteria on Written Assignments:

Your written assignment will be graded in terms of content and form. Content relates to the accuracy and pertinence of your insights and engagement. Form

relates to the eloquence and precision of your observations according to grammatical rules and clarity of exposition. Most of your assignments require a draft. Such drafts provide you with the opportunity to focus primarily on content, provided that your statements are clear. The re-written assignments will give you the opportunity to pay closer attention to grammatical conventions and style than in your drafts.

A = Your written assignment is well-constructed and responds thoroughly to the assignment or question asked. In the case of papers and essays, your thesis is clear and is supported by appropriate evidence. The writing is organized logically with transitions between paragraphs and sections. The essay or paper exhibits original thinking, if that is part of the assignment, or expresses the ideas in your own words. The writing is mechanically correct (spelling, grammar).

B = Your assignment responds to the assignment or question asked, and is generally well written. You have a thesis and offer some evidence to support it. The writing is organized logically with transitions between paragraphs and sections. Some errors in writing mechanics may be present.

C = Your assignment attempts to respond to the assignment but may have limitations in how well it communicates its points. It may have a poorly stated thesis or evidence may be inadequate or limited in relevance or specificity. Your writing is not sufficiently logical in its organization to be easily followed. There may be errors in writing mechanics that interfere with reading the paper.

D = Your assignment is incomplete in some major way - it does not adequately address the assignment, may be missing a thesis and evidence, and exhibits little or no organization of thoughts. There may be errors in writing mechanics that interfere with reading the paper.

F = Your assignment is incomplete in some major way - it does not address the assignment, is missing a thesis and evidence, and exhibits little or no organization of thoughts. There may be numerous errors in writing mechanics that interfere with reading and understanding the paper.

There are no incompletes in this class. The grading scale is as follows:

91-100	A
81-90	B
71-80	C
61-70	D
≤60	F

A Note on Reading and Writing:

Much of our reading will be challenging! You may not understand all the ideas on the first reading, especially if you are not actively working at understanding. If you have trouble with the readings there are things you can do to improve your

comprehension. For example, you can allow enough time to read carefully and make sure you find a setting (time and place) where you can concentrate. One important technique is to take notes or test yourself frequently as you read. (Highlighting is not the same as taking notes!) Talk to me about other things you can do to improve your reading skills.

Similarly, writing at the college level demands that you communicate clearly and appropriately. You have to be able to tell the difference between different styles of writing that are appropriate for your purpose, whether it's taking notes, writing a love letter, taking a quiz, or writing a paper. I expect you to give me your best and to continue to improve your writing skills in this class. Writing skills include spelling and punctuation, writing in complete sentences, constructing paragraphs that are logical, and having a beginning, middle, and end in longer pieces, such as papers.

Make use of university resources that can greatly help you improve your writing. For example, get to know the Writing Lab. It is located in LWH 2046. The writing lab home page is <http://www.neiu.edu/~ewlab/> and its phone number is (773) 442 - 5480. Please be aware that you need to make appointments in advance to see a tutor. I also recommend that you visit the LLAS Program Office (CLS 2096) where computers are available for your use.

Weekly Course Outline

LLAS 201
Spring 2011 Plan

WEEK	TOPIC	IN CLASS	SUBMITTING	DOING FOR LATER READING, WRITING, PREPARING
1.1 1/10	Introduction to the Course	Reviewing syllabus		Review notes and syllabus: topics, assignments, mechanics, aims of course
1.2 1/12		In-class writing exercises	In-class writing assignment on your goals in the class	Upload writing exercise on your goals to Blackboard LAF 1
2.1 1/17	MLK birthday	No class		
2.2 1/19	What is Latino?	LAF 1 Clustering and writing: 250 words Discussion of classmates' reflections Census power point presentation and clustering exercises	Draft of essay 1: what is this course about?	Review U.S. Census power point and post 3 observations Read: From Affirmative Action to Affirming Diversity by R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr. and the online article "The Invisibility of White Privilege."

WEEK	TOPIC	IN CLASS	SUBMITTING	DOING FOR LATER READING, WRITING, PREPARING
3.1 1/24	Affirmative Action	Discussion of Diversity and Invisibility readings Discussion of first paper: what is Latino	Draft for essay 2: what is Latino?	LAF 3 Review comments and feedback for rewrite of essay 1 you got in class today.
3.2 1/26		LAF 3 Writing exercise on affirmative action	Final version of essay 1: what is this course about?	LAF 2
4.1 1/31	Social and economic Class	LAF 2	Draft of essay 3: how does affirmative action relate to you?	LAF 5 Review comments and feedback for rewrite of essay 2 you got in class today.
4.2 2/2		LAF 5	Questions for interviews and interviewees names for paper 1	LAF 4
5.1 2/7		LAF 4	Final version of essay 2: what is Latino?	Read Children of the Future
5.2 2/9		Children of the Future		Review comments and feedback for rewrite of essay 3 you got in class today.

WEEK	TOPIC	IN CLASS	SUBMITTING	DOING FOR LATER READING, WRITING, PREPARING
6.1 2/14	Who is Latino:	Documentary: Americas	Draft of essay 4: five ways you are and you are not Imelda	
6.2 2/16	Imelda: social being and being social	Discussion of first paper	Email message to Imelda	
7.1 2/21	Field Trip		Final version of essay 3: affirmative action	Field trip is on Saturday
7.2 2/22		Discussion of field trip and essay 4	Bring draft of essay 4 to work with classmates	Review comments and feedback for rewrite of essay 4 you got in class today.
8.1 2/28	Relation of First and Second Paper	What is a Latino professional	Draft of paper 1	Read Avalos' chapter on "Latino Professionals"
8.2 3/2	Paper Rewrite	Discussion of "Latino Professionals"	Final version of essay 4: five ways you are and you are not Imelda	LAF 15
9.1 3/7		LAF 15		LAF 6 Review comments and feedback for rewrite of

WEEK	TOPIC	IN CLASS	SUBMITTING	DOING FOR LATER READING, WRITING, PREPARING
				Paper 1 you got in class today.
9.2 3/9		LAF 6	Bring draft of paper 1 with my comments to work with classmates	LAF 7
10.1 3/14	Education	LAF 7	Paper 1 re-write (Final version due)	LAF 13
10.2 3/16	Health	LAF 13	Letter to the editor on education	LAF 14 Post letter to the editor on education in Blackboard
11.1 3/28	Housing	LAF 14		Read letters to the editor on education posted by classmates in Blackboard
11.2 3/30		Discussion on letter to the editor on education	Letter to the editor on housing or health	LAF 8 Post letter to the editor on housing or health in Blackboard
12.1 4/4	Politics	LAF 8 Discussion on housing or health letters to the editor		LAF 9 Read letters to the editor on health or housing posted by classmates in Blackboard
12.2 4/6		LAF 9	Letter to the editor on politics	LAF 10 Post letter to the editor on politics in

				Blackboard
WEEK	TOPIC	IN CLASS	SUBMITTING	DOING FOR LATER READING, WRITING, PREPARING
13.1 4/11		LAF 10 Discussion of draft of paper 2	Draft of paper 2	Read editorials on politics posted by classmates in Blackboard Post draft of paper 2
13.2 4/13		Discussion on politics letters to the editor		LAF 11
14.1 4/18	Demographics again	LAF 11		Review comments and feedback for rewrite of paper 2 you got in class today.
14.2 4/20	Collective Rewrite	In class work on rewrite of paper 2		LAF 12
15.1 4/25	Culture	LAF 12	Draft of essay 5: what did you get out of this class?	LAF 16
15.2 4/27		LAF 16		Review comments on essay 5 received today in class.
16.1 5/2	Wrap up		Rewrite of paper 2 (Final version due) Final version of essay	

			5: what did you get out of this class?	
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