

Comparative Latino Cultures [S,D]
CES 254, Section 01
Spring 2011
MW 10:35 am to 11:50 am
Todd 220

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Sometimes the ideologies in particular interpretive frames have unintended and beneficial consequences. But racialization is incapable of generating decency, compassion or progress for any human group. It has been evil through and throughout its operations since the seventeenth century.

—From Introduction to *How the United States Racializes Latinos*

[M]edia spectacles are productive acts that construct knowledge about subjects in our world. This is particularly the case for how we internalize who we are as people. How we as a nation of diverse people, derive our understanding of who to include in our imagined community of fellow citizens is a product of many things, not the least of which is what we glean from the media. Debates over immigration, citizenship, and national belonging are informed by the events we witness through the media's representation of immigrants or anti-immigration events.

—From Introduction to *The Latino Threat*

[C]ontemporary debates that seem to over-ethnicize Latinos—whether by presenting them as a threat or as contributors to the “national community;” by highlighting their growing purchasing power and intrinsic “values;” or because of their coming of age or eagerness to assimilate—are never exempt from racial considerations. These discourses are in fact tied to a larger racial project entailing the very reconfiguration of how we talk or do not talk about race and racial hierarchies in an increasingly racially diversified society.

—From Introduction to *Latino Spin*

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

Acknowledging the heterogeneity of Latino cultures and experiences, this course navigates the difficult terrain of labels, identities, and race relations by looking at both historical and contemporary experiences of Latinos and their interactions with each other as well as with other racialized groups. It also seeks to lead to an analysis of the position of Latinos within, and their interactions with broader US structures, including US mainstream culture and citizens. The course uses a multi- and transdisciplinary approach, focusing on historical and contemporary constructions/formations of the different Latino cultures/groups within the U.S. The central aim of this course is to develop a basic understanding of the ways in which the category “Latino/Latina” has been constructed/racialized, and the role this construction/racialization has played in how they are positioned (politically and economically) within US society.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- (TLT) Chavez, Leo. R. 2008. *The Latino Threat: Constructing Immigrants, Citizens, and the Nation*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. ISBN: 978-0-8047-5934-2.
- (HTUSRL) Cobas, José A., Jorge Duany and Joe Feagin. 2009. *How the United States Racializes Latinos: White Hegemony and its Consequences*. Boulder: Paradigm Press. ISBN: 978-1-59451-599-6.
- (LS) Dávila, Arlene. 2008. *Latino Spin: Public Image and the Whitewashing of Race*. New York: New York University Press. ISBN: 978-0-8147-2007-3.

Two important points about your books:

- (1) Having access to the books is crucial. In order to be able to succeed in this class, you need the books. There is no way around it. And, given the world of hyper-connectivity we live in, “The Bookie ran out of books” will not constitute an excuse for not having your reading summaries ready when they are due.
- (2) Make sure you get the edition I specify here (go by the year of publication I am including in the citation). Other editions may not have all the chapters you will need for your summaries. Note that the bookstore will get the edition that is easiest for them to find, and not necessarily the one we will be using in class. If you happen to get a different edition from the one I am assigning, make sure you still have access to the readings/chapters that you need to turn in your reading summaries on time.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Class Attendance and Participation: Attendance in this class is **required** and valuable. Since class will consistently entail a lecture as well as a discussion, I will expect you to come to class having completed all the readings assigned for that day and willing and eager to engage with the material in class. I will be looking for quality in your

contributions to class discussion. It is also to your advantage to listen closely to the lecture and to respond thoughtfully and respectfully to the topic, to your professor, and to your peers. Taking notes during lectures and films is highly recommended, since I'll expect you to apply key concepts and terms discussed in them in your reading reflections and to show your understanding of them in your exams.

You are allowed up to **two absences** (excused or otherwise). **Every additional absence will reduce your final attendance and participation score by 10 points.** Only approved and documented university excuses will be exempted from this rule (for athletes, this means forms from the Athletic Dept. handed in **before** the absence). Finally, disruptive behavior will make you lose points for participation. The followings are examples of disruptive behavior: (1) arriving late to class and/or leaving early, (2) talking to classmates during lecture, (3) reading the newspaper, (4) playing with your laptop computer, etc. If you engage in any of those behaviors during class (or in any other behavior that I deem disruptive), you will lose points from attendance and participation at my discretion and without any warning. Attendance and participation will be worth a total of **120 points**.

- ✓ I will take attendance every day. If you come to class after I am finished taking attendance, you will be marked as being absent.

Exams:

There will be two examinations. The two exams will be comprised of three parts: (1) an objective element (such as multiple choice, definitions, or true or false); (2) short answers; and (3) a longer essay response. All three parts are designed to test your comprehension of and ability to apply the information from class lectures, assigned readings, and films. Each exam will be worth 150 points, for a combined total of **300 points**.

Reading Summaries: You are required to turn in typed summaries (each constituting an entry) of the readings (there will be a total of 32 entries for the semester). The summaries/entries should be between one full paragraph and a page long. In order to get full credit, each entry must be prefaced with the following information: your name, date, title of reading, title of the book, pages, and entry number (entries are to be numbered consecutively from 1-32 as they appear in the schedule). To illustrate, the first of the two entries due on Wednesday, January 19, should have the following info:

Your Name
 1/19/11
 "Racializing Latinos"
How the United States Racializes Latinos
 Pp. 1-14
 Entry #1

Each entry should include a full, detailed summary of the reading. **I will collect the summaries every day in class.** At the end of each week I will grade one random entry from the readings for that time period. The graded entry will be worth up to 25 points for a total of **300 points** (12 entries) at the end of the semester. Although I will not read and grade the additional entries, they will still be worth up to 4 points each for a total of **80**

points (20 entries) at the end of the semester. The maximum score for the reading summaries is **380 points**.

- ✓ What constitutes an entry? If you go to the schedule toward the end of the syllabus, you will notice that I have assigned a number of readings for each day. Each reading is listed numerically and followed by the page numbers and the text where you will find it. Each one of those readings constitutes an entry and must have its own heading. For instance, there are two readings assigned for January 19, which means that on that day at 10:35 am you must have two entries with you as you walk in the door. Note that you do not need to have each entry on a separate piece of paper. They can appear consecutively **as long as each is separated by its proper heading**.
- ✓ The reading summaries will be collected in class. If you miss class one day, you will lose your points for that day's reading summaries.
- ✓ I will not accept late reading summaries, nor will I accept reading summaries brought to my office, sent over e-mail, or left in my mail box. Check your printer for ink, your computer for bugs, and your brain for memory ahead of time. **Late entries are the equivalent of no entries at all**. You may, however, turn in your entries early: you can either bring them to class on the day before they are due, or you can leave them in my box in the CES main office. **I will NOT accept entries on electronic mail (regardless of whether they are early, on time or late)**.

Final Presentations: During the last two weeks of class you and your classmates will be presenting on a topic related to the ones covered in class during the semester or on a topic that was not covered in class but that is still relevant to US Latino cultures. I will assign you to a group at some point during the semester and your group is free to choose the topic for your collaborative presentation, though you should "OK" it with me before researching it. Also, if you choose a topic discussed in class, you must expand on the topic, and not limit yourself to merely "reciting" what the readings said, what I said during lecture, and/or what was discussed in class. Presentations will be worth a total of 150 points of your final score based on the following criteria: Instructor's evaluation of your research and contribution to the topic (150 points), peer evaluation (25 points), and attendance to all three days of presentations (25 points). Should you miss one day of the presentations, you **will lose all attendance and peer evaluation points (a total of 50 points)**. Again, the presentation will be worth a total of **200 points**.

COURSE POLICIES:

Academic Etiquette Policy: Class will begin promptly at 10:35 am. Arriving late and leaving early is not tolerable; if you have class, job, or childcare conflicts, please talk to me as soon as possible. Do not attempt to carry on private conversations with other students during lectures or discussions. I also require that guest speakers be treated with respect, courtesy, and your complete attention. Finally, toleration for diverse opinions voiced in class is essential, and I expect all students to treat each other respectfully. Name calling and other forms of verbal harassment will not be tolerated and will result in either the student being asked to leave the class or in having penalty points deducted from your attendance and participation at my discretion.

Cellular Phones and other Communication Devices: Turn your cell phones and communication devices off before coming to class (that includes laptop computers—even if your computer lacks an internet connection, blackberries and any other electronic device utilized to communicate with the world outside our classroom). Of course, iPods and other gadgets used for entertainment are also prohibited. The world can survive without getting a hold of you for an hour and fifteen minutes. And you will also survive without knowing what’s going on outside the classroom for a few minutes. If, for a reason I cannot fathom at this point, you forget to neutralize your communication device, and it does go off during class, you will annoy the heck out of me, and will have the option of (1) turning it off immediately, or (2) handing it to me and letting me answer it. You will take full responsibility for what happens when/if you allow me to answer your phone. If your device goes off more than once during the semester, I will deduct points (at my discretion and without notifying you) from your attendance and participation points. I may also ask you to leave the classroom.

- ✓ If I catch you “texting” during class, I will confiscate your phone and will make you stand in front of the entire class to share with your classmates why you were texting, who you were texting, and the content of your message. You will also lose points for attendance and participation (see explanation above). Finally, under those circumstances, I reserve the right to keep your phone in my office until one of two things happens: (1) you drop the class, or (2) the semester ends.
- ✓ But what if I want to take notes using my computer?—you may ask. Here is my standard answer: for over a century now, students have been able to take notes using a pad of paper and a pen or a pencil. This method has worked for generations of students, so it will work for you as well.

Disability Accommodation: Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Disability Resource Center (DRC). All accommodations **MUST** be approved through the DRC (Washington Building, Room 217). Please stop by or call 509-335-3417 to make an appointment with a disability specialist.

Campus safety plan/emergency information: In the interest of campus safety and emergency procedures, please become familiar with the information available on the following WSU-provided websites:

- ✓ <http://safetyplan.wsu.edu> (Campus Safety Plan);
- ✓ <http://oem.wsu.edu/emergencies> (Emergency Management Website); and
- ✓ <http://alert.wsu.edu> (WSU Alert Site).

Academic Integrity Policy: In all instances, you must do your own work. Otherwise, you are being dishonest. There is no excuse for plagiarism, for submitting another person's work, ideas, or wording as your own, or for not doing your own work. In simple terms, plagiarism is the act of using another person's words or work without giving them credit for it. Relatedly, academic dishonesty involves not doing the work you are supposed to do on your own and claim you did. If you do not understand the seriousness of plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty, and the importance of avoiding those behaviors, I would recommend that you read *WSU's Academic Integrity Policy* (WSU

Student Handbook, WAC 504-26-202—Acts of Dishonesty and WAC 504-26-010--Definitions). Plagiarism and academic dishonesty, whether intentional or unintentional, may result in a grade of "F" for the assignment in question, or a grade of "F" for the entire course, at my discretion. Should there be any suspicion of plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty, I will discuss the situation with you first and then with the Chair of Comparative Ethnic Studies. I will then alert the Office of Student Conduct, which may result in an academic integrity hearing and university sanctions against you. If you are at any time unclear about what constitutes plagiarism, cheating, or academic dishonesty, contact me and I will clarify it for you.

A Few Points about Earning your Grade: As you can gather from the detailed syllabus I have provided for you, the only thing you can do to get a passing grade in the class is complete the work assigned in the syllabus on time and without excuses. In order to pass the class (i.e., obtaining at least a C-) you need to do two fundamental things: (1) follow the syllabus, and (2) do the assigned work **well**. In order to do better (i.e., obtaining at least a B), you need to follow the syllabus and do the assigned work **very well**. And in order to receive an excellent grade in this class (i.e., at least an A-) you need to follow the syllabus and **excel in your work**. Thus, only the quality of your work will guarantee your grade. What does this all mean? I am basically warning you that the level of effort you put into the class, may not correspond to the quality of your work (which is what ultimately matters in obtaining a grade). That is, sometimes a person's best effort grants him/her a C. Thus, note that I will tolerate no drama at the end of the semester about how you "wanted an A in this class" and are actually getting a C- and can I do something to help you "improve your grade." My standard response to that kind of request will always be: "sorry, but you had an entire semester to work on improving your grade." Always bear in mind that the grade you obtain in this class will depend entirely on (1) having followed the syllabus, and equally important, (2) the quality of your work.

Last but Not Least (or the "How is that my problem" clause): I am a pretty busy person, and as a professor, my role is to teach you about race and race relations and to generally prepare you for the professional world. I feel the need to warn you, then, that often times I will have a standard response to many of your requests or "conflicts." The response will usually be a variation of: "How is that my problem?" For instance, if you tell me that your parents are going on a vacation to Cabo San Lucas during the week we are having an exam, and they want you to come along (and already bought your tickets), I will ask you: How is that my problem? Similarly, if your best friend is getting married in California and you want to go to the wedding the day of your final presentation: How in the world is that my problem? Or, if your roommate/friend needs a ride to the Spokane airport and you decide to take him/her and miss class: not my problem! Thus, before you raise any issue with me, please understand that your personal matters should bear no effect on me or on how this class is conducted. It is your responsibility to conform to and abide by the schedule and the syllabus. You will need to consider that if you decide to bask under the Mexican sun, or eat wedding cake in "sunny California," or go to Spokane during class time, the activity will come with a cost to your grade. It is ultimately up to you to make your own decisions, but decisions, even in college, have consequences attached to them. Keep that in mind.

SPRING 2011 SCHEDULE

- ✓ Though I will try to remain as faithful as possible to this syllabus, I still reserve the right to make changes. These will be announced in advance.
- ✓ This syllabus tells you the dates by which you need to have the material read.

MON JAN 10: **First Day: Course Introduction**

WED JAN 12: **Important Concepts**

MON JAN 17: **MLK JR. DAY–University Holiday**

WED JAN 19: **Racialization and Pigmentation**
 Read 1. Racializing Latinos (pp. 1-14); and
 2. Pigments of our Imagination (pp. 15-36) in [HTUSRL].

MON JAN 24: **Counting Latinos and the Darkening of Latinos**
 Read 3. Counting Latinos in the US Census (pp. 37-53); and
 4. Becoming Dark (pp. 54-67) in [HTUSRL].

WED JAN 26: **Jim Crow and Latinos**
 Read 5. Repression and Resistance (pp. 68-86); and
 6. Opposite One Drop Rules (pp. 87-100) in [HTUSRL].

MON JAN 31: **Latinos and Language**
 Read 7. Racializing the Language Practices of US Latinos (pp. 101-115); and
 8. English-Language Spanish in the United States as a Site of Symbolic
 Violence (pp. 116-133) in [HTUSRL].

WED FEB 02: **Cubans**
 Read 9. Racialization Among Cubans and Cuban-Americans (pp. 134-148); and
 10. Racializing Miami (pp. 149-165) in [HTUSRL].

MON FEB 07: **Immigration and Racialization**
 Read 11. Blacks, Latinos, and the Immigration Debate (pp. 166-182); and
 12. Central American Immigrants and Racialization in a post-Civil Rights
 Era (pp. 183-199) in [HTUSRL].

WED FEB 09: **Pan-Ethnicity**
 Read 13. Agency and Structure in Pan-Ethnic Identity Formation (pp. 200-213);
 and

14. Racializing Ethnicity in the Spanish-Speaking Caribbean (pp. 214-227) in [HTUSRL].

MON FEB 14: **Latinos and Transnationalism**
Read 15. Transnational Racializations (pp. 228-244) in [HTUSRL].

WED FEB 16: **LIBRARY DAY**

MON FEB 21: **PRESIDENT'S DAY—University Holiday**

WED FEB 23: **The Narrative of Threat**
Read 16. Introduction (pp. 1-18); and
17. The Latino Threat Narrative (pp. 21-43) in [TLT].

MON FEB 28: **Citizenship and Latinos**
Read 18. Cultural Contradictions of Citizenship and Belonging (pp. 44-69) in [TLT].

WED MAR 02: **EXAM 1**

MON MAR 07: **Gender, Sexuality and Reproduction**
Read 19. Latina Sexuality, Reproduction and Fertility as Threats to the Nation (pp. 70-95); and
20. Latina Fertility and Reproduction Reconsidered (pp. 96-110) in [TLT].

WED MAR 09: **A Different Kind of Citizenship**
Read 21. Organ Transplants and the Privileges of Citizenship (pp. 113-131) in [TLT].

MON MAR 14: **SPRING BREAK**

WED MAR 16: **SPRING BREAK**

MON MAR 21: **Anti-Immigrants, Anti-Latinos**
Read 22. The Minuteman Project's Spectacle of Surveillance on the Arizona-Mexico Border (pp. 132-151); and
23. The Immigrant Marches of 2006 and the Struggle for Inclusion (pp. 152-176) in [TLT].

WED MAR 23: **The Latino Threat**
Read 24. Epilogue (pp. 177-186) in [TLT].

MON MAR 28: **Latinos and the Latino Middle Class**
Read 25. Introduction (pp. 1-21); and
26. Here comes the Latino Middle Class (pp. 25-45) in [LS].

WED MAR 30: **Latinos and Politics**
Read 27. Latinos: “The New Republicans” (pp. 46-70) in [LS].

MON APR 04: **Latinos and Consumerism**
Read 28. The Hispanic Consumer (pp. 71-94) in [LS].

WED APR 06: **Latinos, The Barrio, and the Mainstream**
Read 29. The Times-Squaring of El Barrio (pp. 97-118); and
30. From Barrio to Mainstream (pp. 119-137) in [LS].

MON APR 11: **Latino Studies and Wishful Thinking**
Read 31. The “Disciplining of Ethnic Studies (pp. 138-16); and
32. Conclusion (pp. 161-172) in [LS].

WED APR 13: **EXAM 2**

MON APR 18: **GROUP PRESENTATIONS (1 AND 2)**

WED APR 20: **GROUP PRESENTATIONS (3 AND 4)**

MON APR 25: **GROUP PRESENTATIONS (5 AND 6)**

WED APR 27: **GROUP PRESENTATIONS (7 AND 8)**

KEEP TRACK OF YOUR CLASS GRADE POINTS BELOW**1st EXAM (200 PTS)**

2nd EXAM (200 PTS)

READING SUMMARIES (380 PTS)

#1 _____ #7 _____

#2 _____ #8 _____

#3 _____ #9 _____

#4 _____ #10 _____

#5 _____ #11 _____

#6 _____ #12 _____

Total for Reading Summaries

FINAL PRESENTATION (100 PTS)**ATTENDANCE (120 PTS)**

Total points accumulated

FINAL GRADING SCALE

A 950 points and above

A- 900-949 (90-94%)

B+ 870-899 (87-89%)

B 840-869 (84-86%)

B- 800-839 (80-83%)

C+ 770-799 (77-79%)

C 740-769 (74-76%)

C- 700-739 (70-73%)

D+ 670-699 (67-69%)

D 600-669 (60-63%)

F 599 and below