
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
Political Science 4315: Latino/a Politics (Online)
Spring 2020

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Class Website: Blackboard through the [MyUTEP](#) portal

Course Overview

This online course provides an in-depth examination of the state of U.S. Latino/a politics, including an exploration of the historical, demographic-socioeconomic, and cultural settings that help illustrate the Latino/a experience in the United States. In doing so, we will also examine the role that Latinos play in national politics through various means of political participation. We will likewise consider how Latinos are represented by government officials and the institutions, structures, and how policymaking processes of the federal government are affecting members of the Latino/a population. Therein course assignments and assessments are developed in line with UTEP's "Edge Advantages" goals (see more details below). Also in line with UTEP's Edge mission, a portion of the class will deal with civic engagement issues and the prospects for key policy reforms in the current political environment, as well as provide opportunities for students to engage in their communities to affect change through voter registration efforts or other means. I look forward to working with you during the course of the semester and encourage you to be active in our online activities and discussions.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes relevant to Social and Behavior Sciences (SBS) and in line with UTEP's Edge Mission - Students can expect to learn the following by the end of this course:

- (1) to explore, discuss, and understand the U.S. Latino/a experience as a cultural and political phenomenon within the U.S. political system (Targeted Edge Advantages: Communication, Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Global Awareness)
- (2) to define, understand, and use concepts and terms relevant to the study of the Latino/a politics (Targeted Edge Advantages: Communication, Critical Thinking, Problem Solving)
- (3) to identify, formulate, and answer complex questions related to the institutions, structures, and processes that impact the lives and social status of Latinos (Targeted Edge Advantages: Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Global Awareness)
- (4) to develop ideas about the role that Latinos play in national politics through various means of political participation and other forms of civic engagement (Targeted Edge Advantages: Global awareness, Social Responsibility)
- (5) to apply knowledge and general theories from the literature to evaluate and/or test in the real world vis-à-vis civic engagement opportunities the current events and conditions

related to public policy and the Latino/a population (Targeted Edge Advantages: Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Leadership, Confidence, Social Responsibility)

Objectives for Good Citizenship

As a member of this classroom it is vital that you to adhere to the following principles of professionalism:

- interpret the consequences of one’s own actions (unprofessional conduct will be dealt with swiftly through the university),
- have responsible civic engagement—that is,
 - respect different points of view and different cultures
 - work effectively as a leader and/or member of the class
 - articulate the value to society and the workplace of a diverse and global perspective

Grades

Grades will be based on six quizzes, six critical thinking assignments, a midterm major essay, and a final exam, as well as possible bonus points for an extra credit project for voter registration. Online class participation is critical for passing the course. Accordingly, you must actively participate in all online class activities and I expect everyone to keep up with our course schedule dates and times for readings and assignments that are due.

Grading/Exams	
Short quizzes (6 Total, 5% each)	30%
Critical-thinking response assignments (6 Total, 5% each)	30%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Extra Credit UTEP Edge Project for Voter Registration	Up to 2 bonus points
Total	100% (or up to 102% with bonus points)

Final grades are based on accumulated weighted points, rounded to the 2nd decimal:

Final Grade Scale
≥ 89.50% = A
89.49 – 79.50% = B
79.49 – 69.50% = C
69.49 – 59.50% = D
≤ 59.50% = F

I will not change grades. You have the opportunity to earn extra credit in this class so there is no reason to consider grade changes. If you are concerned about your grade, please come and see me during my office hours. This is particularly important if your grade on the first exam is not what you expected. I will not change the grade, but I can give you feedback and suggestions on how to improve your performance in the class.

Required Texts

The course includes one required textbook:

Affigne, Tony, Evelyn Hu-DeHart, and Marion Orr. 2014. *Latino Politics en Ciencia Política: The Search for Latino Identity and Racial Consciousness*. New York: New York University Press.

- **ISBN-13: 978-0814768983**

General Classroom Policies

Online class participation is critical for passing the course. Accordingly, you must actively participate in all online class activities and I expect everyone to keep up with our course schedule dates and times for readings and assignments that are due. This logging into the online class regularly, alert, willing to ask and answer questions, and prepared to contribute intellectually to the online class discussions/submissions. If I consistently detect a pattern of only a few students participating or completing the assignments, there may be additional “pop-quizzes” assigned at random, which will become part of the overall final grade. Note that the class participation portion of each student’s grade is non-negotiable and left solely to the discretion of the instructor.

Make-up work for time missed from the online course activities will only be allowed if you have a university excused absence and follow university guidelines. If you miss a deadline due to an emergency or illness, or if you have a university-approved excuse ahead of time, you must notify me *as soon as possible* to make any necessary arrangements. Note that if you will miss the final exam deadline, I expect you to contact me *immediately* of your emergency situation in order to make arrangement, which may include an incomplete “I” for the course. If you miss a test and do not have a university acceptable excuse, you will receive a “0” on the test. Keep in mind that a make-up exam or assignment may be of a different format than the original exam or assignment.

Online etiquette is particularly important for this course, please note the separate, detailed section below:

Online Etiquette and Effective Communication

It is essential that the utmost respect and professionalism be adhered in all exchanges between class members. This is a political science course and we will be discussing at times sensitive and controversial topics. Avoid any unnecessary arguments with other class members, such as political polemical arguments (e.g., negative partisan talking points targeting those of opposing ideological perspectives or particular political figures) or, even worse, personal attacks on others for having different views. No inappropriate behavior will be tolerated. Unprofessional conduct will be dealt with swiftly through the university and it is at the professor’s full discretion to have a student dropped from the course for any inappropriate behavior.

Please carefully read the following rules for online etiquette and effective communication:

Language: Given the absence of face-to-face clues, written text can easily be misinterpreted. Avoid the use of strong or offensive language, all capital letters, and the excessive use of exclamation points. If you feel particularly strongly about a point, it may be best to write it first as a draft and then to review it, before posting it, in order to remove any strong language.

Respect: A Web-based classroom is still a classroom, and comments that would be inappropriate in a regular classroom are likely to be inappropriate in a Web-based course as

well. Treat your professor and your fellow students with respect. Remember that members of the class and I will be reading any postings.

Be Forgiving: If someone states something that you find offensive, mention this directly to the professor. Remember that the person contributing to the discussion is also new to this form of communication. What you find offensive may quite possibly have been unintended and can best be cleared up by the professor.

This is Permanent: Think carefully about the content of your message before contributing it. Once sent to the group, there is no taking it back. When reacting to someone else's message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.

Edit Your Work: The grammar, spelling, and punctuation of a message are part of the grading criteria – you should not expect your professor and peers to decode misspelled words or poorly constructed sentences. It is a good practice to compose and check your comments in a word-processor before posting them.

Test for Clarity: Messages may often appear perfectly clear to you as you compose them, but turn out to be perfectly obtuse to your reader. One way to test for clarity is to read your message aloud to see if it flows smoothly. If you can read it to another person before posting it, even better.

Follow the Parameters/Stick to the Point: Follow the posting requirements and parameters set up by your professor. Contributions to a discussion should have a clear subject header, and you need to stick to the subject. Don't waste others' time by going off on irrelevant tangents. Also keep in mind that no credit will be received for yes/no answers. Posts should justify positions and provide specific examples. Students must demonstrate that they have read the assignment and their classmates' comments carefully and thoughtfully.

Read First, Write Later: Do not add your comments to a discussion before reading the comments of other students unless the assignment specifically asks you to. Doing so is tantamount to ignoring your fellow students and is rude. Comments related to the content of previous messages should be posted under them to keep related topics organized, and you should specify the person and the particular point you are following up on.

E-mail Protocol

When e-mailing me, please put the course and section number in the subject line. In the body of your e-mail clearly state your question. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name and UIN (University Identification Number). Please do not e-mail me about information you can obtain from the syllabus. I do not answer substantive material from lectures or readings via e-mail as it is not an effective means of communicating. If there is class material you are confused about, please come and see me during my office hours.

Short Quiz and Critical-Thinking Response Assignments

For every week of the course (except for the midterm point and final week), there will be key readings assigned to the class and you will have the week to do those readings and then complete two main activities. First, there will be a short quiz (each worth 5% of the total grade) that will help test how well you are able to recall and identify correctly some of the key concepts, terms, findings, and other information from the readings. Second, I will assign critical-thinking response assignments (each also worth 5% of the total grade) that will test your ability to apply key concepts, develop original ideas and opinions, at times think outside the box, and thereby answer complex questions in a meaningful and insightful manner. I will provide the full details and instructions for these tasks via email on the day they are assigned.

As you may know, UTEP has recently begun an initiative called Edge, which recognizes that “Students enter UTEP with many talents, great strengths, and big dreams. The UTEP Edge – the cross-campus culture of student success and empowerment – develops these assets through high-impact experiences made possible by the expertise and dedication of faculty, staff, alumni and community partners.” Accordingly, the course short quizzes and critical-thinking response assignments are developed with a mindset to allow each student to apply their learning exercises and skills in a way that aligns with what UTEP refers to as “Edge Advantages” goals as listed under our learning outcomes for the course. To see more information about UTEP’s Edge Experiences and Edge Advantages assets, visit: <https://www.utep.edu/edge/about/about.html>

Midterm and Final Exams

There are two exams for the course. Each exam constitutes 20% of your final grade point average, and the final exam will be cumulative. Questions are based on our course readings, discussions, and other exercises such as a gamification component for the midterm essay exam. The exams will be “open book” so that you will be able to have all support materials you think are necessary to answer the exam questions. The exams will be administered via Blackboard and a deadline for final submission will be provided with plenty of time to complete the exam upon activation (please contact the instructor immediately if any major technical issues arise with the exam or its submission). The exams are to be taken individually—one is not allowed to discuss the exam questions with classmates or anyone else. Please refer to the section on “Academic Integrity” below to review the university and instructor policies on cheating, collusion, and plagiarism.

Among other Edge Advantages mentioned above, the exams in this course are primarily designed to trigger the Edge Advantage “Problem Solving” where students find solutions to difficult or complex issues as well as “Critical Thinking” in which students become adept at analyzing and evaluating issues in order to solve problems and develop informed opinions.

Extra Credit

I will be providing up to 2 bonus points added to the final average for those who complete 2 hours of voter registration outside of class on their own. Essentially, you can do 1 hour for 1 bonus point or 2 hours for 2 bonus points (I will provide more information about this opportunity at the time I assign it for those who are interested).

Academic Dishonesty and Misconduct

Academic integrity and standing require a respect and adherence to the grading policies and rules against cheating, collusion, and plagiarism. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student and possessing unauthorized materials during a test. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. *One example of collusion is signing in for another person (or having someone sign for you) on the class attendance sheet.* As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with the definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of the person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys the trust among colleagues without which research cannot be safely communicated.

I encourage students to study together and work collectively; however, working together to write any part of a written assignment, research paper, and/or exam is plagiarism. If you are unsure whether a citation is required, err on the side of caution and provide one. A document detailing different forms of plagiarism is provided on Blackboard. Here is an informative webcast on plagiarism: <http://www.plagiarism.org/resources/webcasts>

Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be subject to disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions. For further information, please refer to <http://studentaffairs.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=4386>.

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you require specific accommodations and support services, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Please keep in mind that accommodations need to be requested at least two weeks (or a month if advance planning, such as the acquisition of books-on-tape, is required) prior to the beginning of the semester. Here is the contact information for CASS: web: <http://sa.utep.edu/cass/>; phone: (915) 747-5148; fax: (915) 747-8712; e-mail: cass@utep.edu; location: UTEP Union Building East Room 106.

Copyright Statement for Course Materials

The course materials used in this course are copyrighted. By course materials, I mean all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to syllabi, quizzes, exams, lecture notes and PowerPoint slides, in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets. This also includes any information posted on the course webpage. Because these are copyrighted, you do not have the right to distribute the course materials, unless I expressly grant permission.

Software Requirements

You will need the following software on your computer to efficiently work in this course (your computer may already have some of these programs installed):

- Adobe Acrobat Reader. To get this program, go to <https://acrobat.adobe.com/us/en/products/pdf-reader.html> and follow the instructions.
- Adobe Flash Player. To get this program, go to <https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/> and follow the instructions.
- QuickTime Player. To get this program, go to <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/> and follow the instructions.

Microsoft Office. If you do not have a word-processing software, go to <https://my.apps.utep.edu>. Using My.Apps interface, UTEP students can access most software offered in student computer labs (including Microsoft Office) from their personal computing devices. Students can use any laptop, tablet, or smartphone with an Internet connection and use the software from anywhere at any time. For more information, go to <http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=73740> and follow the instructions.

UTEP Technical Support

The University of Texas at El Paso offers complete technical information and Help Desk support at: <http://issweb.utep.edu/techsupport/>.

Course Schedule

Note: This is a provisional schedule of our course. With advanced notice, I may introduce specific changes based on progress in class.

Part I: Latino/a Politics and Identity

Week 1	3/23-3/27	<p>Latino/a Politics and the U.S. Political System</p> <p><i>Getting started:</i> Review syllabus, purchase main required textbook (Affigne, Hu-Dehart, and Orr 2014, hereafter referred to as “Affigne et al.”)</p> <p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The People, Politics, Power, and the U.S. Political System” (Garcia and Sanchez 2008, Ch. 1; posted in PDF on Blackboard) • *see also “Identity Revisited: Latinos(as) and Panethnicity” (Affigne et al., Ch. 2; supplemental reading posted in PDF on Blackboard for those still waiting on your book order) <p><i>Assignments:</i> Short quiz and critical-thinking response assignment due by 3/27</p>
Week 2	3/30-4/3	<p>From Exclusion to Empowerment: The Latino Voice in Political Analysis, 1970-2014 (and up to 2018!)</p> <p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Latino Voice in Political Analysis, 1970-2014: From Exclusion to Empowerment” (Affigne et al., Ch. 1) • *see also “Attitudinal, Constitutional-Legal, and Historical Settings” (Garcia and Sanchez, Ch. 2; supplemental reading posted in PDF on Blackboard) <p><i>Assignments:</i> Short quiz and critical-thinking response assignment due by 4/3</p>
Week 3	4/6-4/10	<p>Transnational Ties, Social Networks, Identity, and Linked Fate</p> <p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Latino Immigrant Transnational Ties: Who Has Them, and Why Do They Matter?” (Affigne et al., Ch. 3) • “Multiple Paths to Cynicism: Social Networks, Identity, and Linked Fate” (Affigne et al., Ch. 4) <p><i>Assignments:</i> Short quiz and critical-thinking response assignment due by 4/10</p>
Week 4	4/13-4/17	<p>Latino Civic Engagement: Acculturation, Motivation, and other Drivers Leading to Political Participation; MIDTERM ESSAY EXAM (with Gamification Component)</p> <p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Politics of Latino Publics: Immigration Reform, Political Participation and Intention to Vote” (Len-Ríos 2017; posted in PDF on Blackboard)

		<p><i>Assignment:</i> Midterm Essay Exam on civic engagement, Latino/a political participation, and the issue of immigration reform due by 4/17 *Please note that a portion of the midterm exam will employ “The Migrant Trail” gamification component for key reflection questions. Full instructions will be provided on the day the midterm is released (link: http://themigranttrail.com/)</p> <p><i>Extra Credit:</i> Please also note that this week I will also provide information and instructions for an extra credit voter registration assignment that will be worth up to 2 bonus points towards the final average due by 5/8</p>
Part II: Identity, Interminority Relations, and Community		
Week 5	4/20-4/24	<p>Building an American Identity (Beyond the Latino Bubble) and Finding Acceptance</p> <p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “¿Quién Apoya Qué? The Influence of Acculturation and Political Knowledge on Latino Policy Attitudes” (Affigne et al., Ch. 5) • “The Boundaries of Americanness: Perceived Barriers among Latino Subgroups” (Affigne et al., Ch. 6) <p><i>Assignments:</i> Short quiz and critical-thinking response assignment due by 4/24</p>
Week 6	4/27-5/1	<p>Latino Interminority Connections, Relations, and Linked Fate</p> <p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Black and Latino Coalition Formation in New England: Perceptions of Cross-Racial Commonality” (Affigne et al., Ch. 7) • “Racial Identities and Latino Public Opinion: Racial Self-Image and Policy Preferences among Latinos” (Affigne et al., Ch. 8) <p><i>Assignments:</i> Short quiz and critical-thinking response assignment due by 5/1</p>
Week 7	5/4-5/9	<p>Latino Interminority Connections, Relations, and Linked Fate (Continued); FINAL CUMULATIVE ESSAY EXAM</p> <p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “A “Southern Exception” in Black-Latino Attitudes? Perceptions of Competition with African Americans and Other Latinos” (Affigne et al., Ch. 9) <p><i>Assignments:</i> Short quiz and critical-thinking response assignment due by 5/6 Final cumulative essay exam due by 5/8 Extra credit due by 5/8</p>