

Latino History (LCS 01:595:369 / History 01:512:360)

Instructor: Aldo Lauria Santiago

For full syllabus, see

<http://www.sas.rutgers.edu/virtual/lhcs/lauria/latinohistory/Latinohistory.htm>

People from “Hispanic” and Indo-America have been incorporated into life and work in the United States even before it became a republic. Often perceived by Anglo others as members of an “alien” culture regardless of legal or generational status, Latinos have had to deal with specific forms of incorporation into US society. These forms often reference the immigration experience of Europeans, the colonial experience of Native Americans, and the highly racialized story of African Americans. In many ways Latinos have their own unique path through the American maze. Through histories of coercion, migration, labor recruitment, family networks, religious conversion, wars of occupation, economic need, political exile, etc., millions of people from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and the rest of Latin America, have somehow become “American,” while still remaining (or becoming) a racial or cultural “other” to most Anglo-Americans and the State. This course will examine the process of departure and arrival—the forces pushing and pulling people from Latin America to the United States. We will also examine how “Spanish,” “Latins,” “Hispanics,” “Latinos” adjust, integrate, assimilate, resist, and adapt to the many forces that affect their lives in the United States over the last century and a half, creating new ethnic, racial, and local identities in the process. By studying the experience of Latinos and Latin American immigrants with racism and discrimination, identity formation, ethnic culture, community formation, work and labor struggles, and social mobility, we will map out the heterogeneous mosaic of Latin American and Caribbean diasporas in the United States. The study of Latino History is a young discipline, with many gaps and grey areas. It also exists in a complex and tense dialogue (often a monologue) with “larger” Anglo-centric US history. During the last two decades there has been a boom in research and writing in this field, and we will be taking advantage of some of its products, although its fruits are still uneven.

Course Learning Goals

- Become familiar with the main themes of Latino economic, political and social history in the context of Latin American, US, and regional histories.
- Understand the origins and causes of large-scale migration/incorporation of Mexicans, Dominicans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans and other Latinos.
- Understand the complex racializations of Latinos in the US
- Analyze the characteristics of Latino labor history and community formation processes.
- Distinguish between the distinct regional Latino experiences within the US.
- Understand the economic importance of migrant/immigrant labor to the US's economy.

Required Reading*

Required readings are available electronically through the course Sakai site and website.

Evaluation*

Three short papers = 20% each, with credit given for improvement

Class Participation and Attendance = 20%

Final Exam = 20%

*This synopsis is intended for informative purposes only; it is provisional and subject to change before the beginning of the semester.