LACS 80/AAAS 90/GOVT 84.06
Identity and Power in the Americas

Course Description

This course examines how different forms of collective identity—including class, race, ethnicity, indigeneity and gender—have shaped Latin American and Latino politics in the 20th and 21st centuries. We will focus on a range of cases in Latin America and the US to address the following questions: In what ways does the state create and sustain certain categories of identity as the basis for political inclusion and exclusion? What explains changes in the political salience of certain categories of collective identity? Why do some identities become politically salient and others do not? How have forms of political representation changed over the past century? How does state policy affect the ability of groups to mobilize and press for demands? How do organized groups affect state policy? What are the possibilities and limitations of identity-based mobilization?

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to

• Provide a cogent answer to the following questions:
  o In what ways does the state create and sustain certain categories of identity as the basis for political inclusion and exclusion?
  o What explains changes in the political salience of certain categories of collective identity? Why do some identities become politically salient and others do not?
  o How have forms of political representation changed in Latin America over the past century?
  o How does state policy affect ability of groups to mobilize and press for demands? How do organized groups affect state policy?
  o What are the possibilities and limitations of identity-based mobilization?
• Engage as a collaborator in determining the course objectives, developing curriculum and creating standards for assessment for performance in the class.
• Have strengthened your public speaking skills by participating regularly in class and presenting your work to the class.
• Use the theoretical perspectives and substantive content studied in class to make sense of identity-based politics on the Dartmouth campus and beyond.
• Use the materials assigned in class to develop a theoretical argument about the conditions that foster the political representation of certain forms of collective identity.
• Write a research paper that synthesizes the material from class and analyzes a movement or category of identity not fully discussed in class.

Required Books

**Recommended Reading**

I expect that all of the students in this seminar have some background and previous courses on Latin America. If you need to refresh your knowledge of basic history and politics, you might want to read individual country chapters from Skidmore and Smith's *Modern Latin America*, which I have placed on reserve. Stay in touch with current news about Latin America by reading newspapers, blogs, watching the news, etc. For a comprehensive list of Latin American newspapers online, take your pick at http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/news/

**Assignments**

You must complete all the assignments in order to pass the class.

1. **Writing exercises** 5%

   You will do some kind of writing for almost every class. This may include a response to a prompt prior to class, a reflection about discussion after class, creating a slide to present during class, a comment on the discussion board, or comments on another student’s writing. The purpose of this assignment is to practice writing and get your ideas flowing with respect to the assigned readings and material presented in class.

2. **Sample Annotated Bibliography** 5%

   Select a topic you think you might be interested in for your research paper. Locate one academic article in a scholarly journal on your topic. Write a paragraph in which you identify the central question, argument, methodology and data of the article, as well as critique the strengths and weaknesses of the research. Due at beginning of class on Tuesday, January 21.

3. **Complete Annotated Bibliography** 15%

   Locate 4 additional articles in academic journals on your proposed topic. For each, write a paragraph in which you identify the central question, argument, methodology and data, and critique the strengths and weaknesses of the research. Revise the sample paragraph you wrote and include it with the other four paragraphs. Due at beginning of class on Tuesday, February 4.
4. **Draft of Research Paper**  
   Write a complete draft of your paper, with perfect grammar, spelling, formatting, etc. It is due **by the beginning of class on Thursday, February 27.**

5. **Presentation of Research Prospectus**  
   You will present your topic in class and we will hold a research workshop to share ideas about how to proceed with the work. The presentations will take place in class on **Tuesday, March 4 and Thursday, March 6.**

6. **Final Paper**  
   The final paper is due at the end of the final exam period scheduled for this class, which is **March 12 at 6pm.**

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**Daily Class Meetings**

T Jan 7  
*An Introduction to Identities*  
Discuss course objectives

Th Jan 9  
*Marxist Theory of Class Consciousness*  
Read: Communist Manifesto  
Writing Prompt:  

> How does socioeconomic class emerge as a form of political identity?

T Jan 14  
*The Formation of Class Identity in Allende’s Chile*  
Read: Winn, Parts I and II (pp. 1-134)  
Writing Prompt:  

> Peter Winn does not address the question of collective identity formation in an explicit, theoretical way, but the evidence he provides allows us to develop an argument. What factors led to the formation of collective consciousness among the workers in the Yarur factory? To what extent did the workers of Yarur share a collective identity?

Wed Jan 15  
Class will be held during x-hour  
*Limitations of a Workers’ Revolution*  
Read: Winn, Parts III, IV and V (pp. 139-246)  
Writing Prompt:  

> Write about something you find interesting about the book.

Th Jan 16  
No class will be held today

T Jan 21  
*Writing Workshop*
*Sample Annotated Bibliography Due

Th Jan 23  
*Abolition of Slavery*
Read: Andrews, Chs. 1 & 2
Writing Prompt:

Make a list of the dates of emancipation for all countries in Latin America. What explains the variation in timing of emancipation of the slaves across these countries? To what extent does your argument apply to the US case?

T Jan 28  
*Whitening*
Read: Andrews, Chs. 3 & 4
Writing Prompt: Choose one of the following

Andrews associates “whitening” with the export-oriented economic policies pursued by Latin American governments in the 1880-1930 period. What is “whitening”? In what ways is it associated with export economies? Are those reasons historically specific, or do you think export-oriented economic policy is necessarily associated with whitening, regardless of when it occurs?

Andrews describes several instances of collective action/mobilization among blacks in Chapter Four. What factors fostered these examples of mobilization?

Th Jan 30  
*Browning*
Read: Andrews, Chs. 5 & conclusion
Writing Prompt:

To what extent have the processes of browning and blackening that Andrews describes empowered Afro-Latin people? How has the transition from state-led populist development to neoliberalism affect Afro-Latin people? What do you find surprising or interesting about this book, particularly in comparison to your experience of race and racism in the United States, or the country where you’re from?

T Feb 4  
*Affirmative Action in Brazil*
Read: Brazil’s Identity Challenge
* Complete Annotated Bibliography due

Th Feb 6  
*From Peasant to Indigenous*
Read: Articles posted online

T Feb 11  
*Gay Rights in Latin America*
Read: Articles posted online
Th Feb 13  Student Movements in Chile
Read: Articles posted online

T Feb 18  Latino Identity in the United States
Read: Beltrán, Intro and Ch. 1

Th Feb 20  Identity Politics and Political Theory
Read: Beltrán, Chs. 2 and 3
Writing Prompt:
What’s wrong with community/home as a political ideal? Do you agree with Beltrán on this?

T Feb 25  From Identity to Political Action
Read: Beltrán, Chs. 4 and 5

Th Feb 27  Topic TBA
*Draft of Research Paper due

T March 4  Research Workshop

Th March 6  Research Workshop

Wed Mar 12  Final paper due @ 6pm

Class Policies

1. **The Honor Principle.** All Dartmouth students have agreed to conduct themselves in accordance with the Standards of Conduct in general and with the Academic Honor Principle in particular. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. If you plagiarize, you risk failing the class and having your case brought before the Committee on Standards. Read the code again, here: [http://www.dartmouth.edu/~uja/honor/](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~uja/honor/) We will discuss the ways in which the Honor Principle is relevant to the work you will do in class and I am more than happy to answer any questions you have about it.

2. **Class attendance** is required and there are no excused absences. Please arrive on time. I will assume you have done any reading assigned for class and I expect you to be able to discuss it. If you miss a class, you miss whatever discussion and learning we do that day. Class is a collective endeavor that cannot be "made up."

3. **Class Participation.** Class time will include both lecture and discussion. I expect you to participate fully and regularly. Close reading of the assigned material is only the first step of learning. Much of the work of processing information and generating ideas takes place through talking, listening and debating. I expect you to do all the assigned reading, think about how the readings address the discussion questions, and come to class prepared to
engage. There is no grade for class participation but your performance in class may be considered if your grade is on the cusp.

4. **X-Hours** are optional, unless the syllabus indicates otherwise. I'm available to meet with you during x-hour if we're not having class.

5. **Late assignments.** (even an hour late) will be penalized one-third grade per day. This includes weekends. If you think you might have a problem getting an assignment in on time, contact me before the assignment is due.

6. **Using laptops and other electronic devices in class.** You may use your laptop to take notes during lectures, but not during discussions. You may not access email or the Internet during class.

7. **Blackboard web site.** This syllabus provides an overview of our schedule for the term, but the real structure of the course is the Blackboard web site. I use blackboard to post lecture outlines (outlines, i.e., not the full text), links that are relevant to material in class, announcements, copies of all handouts, regular feedback and any changes to the schedule.

8. **Learning Disabilities.** Students with disabilities enrolled in this course and who may need disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me before the end of the second week of the term. All discussions will remain confidential, although the Student Accessibility Services office may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation of any accommodation requested.

9. **Religious Observance.** Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term. If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with me before the end of the second week of the term to discuss appropriate accommodations.