

SOCIOLOGY 197J/ CHICANO STUDIES 197: THE SOCIOLOGY OF MEXICAN AMERICANS: IDENTITY AND SCHOOLING IN A CHANGING SOCIAL CONTEXT

Spring Quarter 2002
Course Time: Tuesdays, 2:00-4:50
Course Room No., Public Policy 2317

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Description:

This course examines recent research on ethnic identity and education among Chicanos in a seminar format. Course requirements include five books, with one on the Los Angeles context and another three about identity and education and a fifth on the interview methodology. There will be about 100 pages of reading each week. Students will also be required to interview one or more persons about their lives for several hours over the duration of the course and then submit a 15-page report reporting your findings. I will discuss this later in the first two weeks of the course so that students can begin preparing their research projects early and we will have opportunities to discuss our individual projects, especially during weeks 5-8. There will be a short final exam based on the readings and the material presented in class.

The focus of the course is meant to accompany a major research project by me with a colleague (Professor Ortiz). The research project is titled "The Mexican American People: A Generation Later" and it examines ethnic identity and social mobility among Chicanos in Los Angeles county and San Antonio city. It is an intergenerational and longitudinal study of a randomly selected Chicanos in the two cities that were interviewed in 1965 and re-interviewed again in the past three years. In the recent time period, a random sample of their children was also interviewed. The study relies on survey methodology for the two time periods but also uses a limited number of unstructured interviews. Since we are about to complete our data collection, I will attempt to present some findings in class.

Enrollment is limited to 20 students. Students must be Social Science or Chicano Studies students in good standing. The course is intensive so do not enroll unless you plan to complete the requirements and participate in class discussions.

Students will be required to submit a two to three page report at the beginning of class for each week's readings (except the Atkinson book). These reports should be an evaluation of the readings with a discussion of some aspect that you found interesting rather than a mere summary. There are nine weeks of readings and you

can miss two, so you are responsible for seven reports. (However, you are responsible for each week's readings.) These reports are also meant to help you formulate your thoughts for discussion in class. I expect all students to actively participate in the weekly class discussions. I may occasionally call on students. Finally, I will present supplemental material to the readings throughout the course.

Books are available at the bookstore and are on reserve at the library.

Grading is based on the following breakdown:

Seven weekly reports	35%
Interview paper	35%
Final Exam	20%
Participation in class	10%

Guiding Questions:

Following is a list of questions that may help you draw out some of the central concepts or for critically examining the readings. You may also add your own.

What has been the experience of Chicano identity and education in the US, especially in Los Angeles? What is so special about the Chicano experience? How are ideologies about the Chicano experience different from the realities based on the social science evidence? How is it different from that of other groups including African Americans, earlier European immigrants and recent Asian and other Latin American immigrants and their descendants?

How might the experience of Chicanos in Los Angeles be different or similar to that in other places? What is the role of culture? What is the role of race? When is ethnic or racial identity important? What is the difference between race and ethnicity?

What accounts for differences among Chicanos regarding their identities or mobility? How does identity affect educational outcomes? How have the educational outcomes and identity of Chicanos changed over time? How does skin color, nationality, generation away from immigration affect their experiences? What is the role of gender and class? Does geographic location, for example living in suburbs or central cities or living in urban or rural areas affect their experiences?

What difference does the social science methodologies (e.g. quantitative, ethnographic, interview, historical) employed make in our understandings about Chicanos?

What are appropriate social policies for improving the conditions of Chicanos?

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week 1 (April 1)

Introduction

Overview of Mexican American Study Project

Week 2 (April 8):

Valle, Victor M. and Rodolfo D. Torres 2000. *Latino Metropolis*. University of Minnesota Press. Pages 3-100 (Introduction to Chapter 3)

Week 3:(April 15)

Valle, Victor M. and Rodolfo D. Torres 2000. *Latino Metropolis*. University of Minnesota Press. Pages 101-194 (Chapters 4-6)

Week 4 (April 22)

Oboler, Suzanne. 1995. *Ethnic Labels, Latino Lives. Identity and the Politics of (Re)Presentation in the United States*. University of Minnesota Press. Pages xi-79 (Introduction to Chapter 3)

Week 5 (April 29)

Oboler, Suzanne. 1995. *Ethnic Labels, Latino Lives. Identity and the Politics of (Re)Presentation in the United States*. University of Minnesota Press. Pages 80-176 (Chapters 4 to 7)

Group 1 progress reports

Week 6:(May 6)

Vigil, James D. 1997. *Personas Mexicanas: Chicano High Schoolers in a Changing Los Angeles*. Harcourt & Company Press. Pages 1-68 (Chapters 1 to 4).

Atkinson, Robert. 1998. The Life Story Interview. "Contexts and Uses of Life Stories" Pages 1-21.

Group 2 progress reports

Week 7 (May 13)

Vigil, James D. 1997. *Personas Mexicanas: Chicano High Schoolers in a Changing Los Angeles*. Harcourt & Company Press. Pages 69-145 (Chapters 5 to 8 and Appendix)

Atkinson, Robert. 1998. The Life Story Interview. "Planning the Interview" Pages 22-38.

Group 3 progress reports

Week 8 (May 20)

Ricardo D. Stanton-Salazar. 2001. *Manufacturing Hope and Despair : The School and Kin Support Networks of U.S.-Mexican Youth*. Teachers College Press, Columbia University. Pages 1-80 (Chapters 1 to 4).

Atkinson, Robert. 1998. The Life Story Interview. "Completing the Interview" and "Conclusion" Pages 54-76.

Group 4 progress reports

Week 9 (May 27)

Ricardo D. Stanton-Salazar. 2001. Manufacturing Hope and Despair : The School and Kin Support Networks of U.S.-Mexican Youth. Teachers College Press, Columbia University. Pages 81-160 (Chapters 5 to 7)

Week 10 (June 3)

Ricardo D. Stanton-Salazar. 2001. Manufacturing Hope and Despair : The School and Kin Support Networks of U.S.-Mexican Youth. Teachers College Press, Columbia University. Pages 161-264 (Chapters 8 to 11)

Final interview report due

Finals Week: Final exam