

## Chicano/a Studies/Sociology 197: Research Seminar on Chicano Identity and Education

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Office Hours:

This course examines recent research on ethnic identity and education among Mexican Americans in a seminar format. Course requirements include five books, including two about ethnic identity and two on education. Aside from doing the readings, students must produce a research paper on Chicano identity and/or schooling based on interviews they will conduct. A fifth book will be about Latino Los Angeles, which will provide a context for the interviews and readings. We will also read about interviewing and ethnographic methods from a sixth book. There are about 100 pages of reading per week on average in this course. Students will be required to interview one or more persons for several hours over the duration of the course. A 20 page paper is required and due in the final week of the course.

Enrollment is limited to 20. Students must be Social Science or Chicano Studies majors in good standing. The course is intensive so do not enroll unless you plan to complete the requirements and participate in class discussions. Sociology students are encouraged to apply and they may receive credit toward the Sociology major.

The course accompanies a major research project by the author and one of his colleagues. The research project is titled *The Mexican American People: A Generation Later* and it examines ethnic identity and social mobility among Mexican Americans in Los Angeles County and San Antonio City. It is an intergenerational and longitudinal study of a random sample of 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 sample of their children were also interviewed. The study relies on a survey methodology for the two time periods but also uses a small number of ethnographic interviews.

The course emphasizes research methods, both ethnographic, which will be used for the final paper and survey/quantitative, which will be introduced in the course through the readings and supplementary project material. Since we are about to complete the surveys in the two cities, I will be able to present some preliminary findings throughout the course.

Approximately one-half of the course will be dedicated to discussing the texts and the progress of student research project while I will lecture in the other half. Aside from the research paper, students will be required to do all the readings and

participate in class discussions. Students will write 2-3 page summaries of the first four books.

Grading: Research paper: 65%

Participation in class: 15%

Reports for Each Book: 20%

Required Readings:

Los Angeles:

Victor M. Valle and Rodolfo D. Torres. 2000. *Latino Metropolis*. University of Minnesota Press.

Ethnic Identity:

Vila, Pablo. 2000. *Crossing Borders, Reinforcing Borders: Social Categories, metaphors, and narrative identities on the U.S.-Mexico Frontier*. University of Texas Press.

Oboler, Suzanne. 1995. *Ethnic Labels, Latino Lives. Identity and the Politics of (Re)Presentation in the United States*

Education:

Vigil, James D. 1997. *Personas Mexicanas: Chicano High Schoolers in a Changing Los Angeles*. Harcourt & Company, Orlando, Florida.

Stanton-Salazar, Ricardo. 2001. *Manufacturing Hope and Despair : The School and Kin Support Networks of U.S.-Mexican Youth (Sociology of Education Series, No. 9)*

A Book on Ethnographic Methods:

Maybe **The Cultural Experience : Ethnography in Complex Society**  
by [James P. Spradley](#), [David W. McCurdy](#)