University of Massachusetts Amherst

Department of Anthropology

Anthropology 397LE

Latin@s and Education

Fall 2014

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Office Hours: Mondays, 10:00am-12:00pm; speak with me before or after lecture if you would like to request a meeting on an alternative day and/or at an alternative time.

Course Description
The rapid rise of the U.S. Latin@ population in recent decades has prompted scholarly and popular discussion about the implications of this demographic shift and its institutional management. This course analyzes these trends by focusing on the experiences of Latin@s in educational contexts. As the semester progresses, we will take up three central questions: (1) What is the meaning of “Latin@” as a sociocultural category? (2) What kinds of institutions are schools? (3) What societal structures, practices, and processes can we better understand by tracking Latin@s’ educational experiences? These questions highlight our dual interest in developing understandings of the educational experiences of Latin@s and the broader sociocultural phenomena that shape these experiences. In order to engage these issues, we will draw on interactive lectures, reading assignments, writing exercises of varying lengths, facilitated discussions, and community engagement activities. Students will be exposed to key thinkers, theories, and methodologies in Latin@ studies, education, and sociocultural analysis. In the spirit of engaged scholarship, we will refine our understandings through praxis, the joint consideration of theory and practice. With this approach in mind, we will continually make sense of the theoretical concepts that are central to this course in terms of the ways in which they can be recognized in everyday life. Remember that this effort will require you to re-analyze lived experiences through the lens of social and cultural analysis.

Guidelines and Requirements
Due to the interactive nature of this course and the sensitive topics that it covers, it is imperative to maintain a high degree of mutual respect and maturity. Give one another the benefit of the doubt in class discussions, and analyze one another’s ideas without waging personal attacks. Do not eat, sleep, or carry on private conversations during class. Electronic devices may be used for note-taking purposes only. Disruptive students will be asked to leave. If there are particular learning issues that might exempt you from these regulations, please inform me at the beginning of the academic term. It goes without saying that all written assignments submitted MUST be original work for this course.
Grading and Assignments

Percentage of Overall Grade

* Attendance and Participation 20%
* Critical Analysis Papers 20%
* Facilitation/Discussion Questions 20%
* Community Engagement 20%
* Final Project 20%

100%

1. Attendance and Participation (20%)

Twenty percent of your grade will reflect overall class attendance and participation. These points will be based on attendance, involvement in class by raising questions and issues, listening and responding respectfully to others, and participating in group work. Excellent class attendance and participation means not missing class without notice, being on time and staying for the full time (i.e., not packing up before the class ends), and being actively engaged in the class.

One of the best ways to learn something is to hang out with people who already know how to do what you need or want to learn. They can be role models and give you feedback. You can benefit from observing and working with others who are also learning. They, too, can be role models and provide support. To be prepared for the class you should do the assigned reading and assignments prior to the class, understand the major themes in the reading and/or ask questions related to your lack of understanding, raise questions and issues for discussion, and share materials with others in the class.

2. Critical Analysis Papers (20%)

You will compose two critical analysis papers. The first paper will be assigned at the beginning of Week 4 (9/29) and due in via Moodle at the end of Week 6 (10/17); the second paper will be assigned at the beginning of Week 8 (10/27) and due via Moodle at the end of Week 10 (10/14). Each paper will be 5-7 pages in length and will be worth 10% of your final grade. I will ask you to respond to a question from a set of prompts. Papers must be typed in 12pt. times new roman font and double-spaced. They must contain a title and page numbers. They must list a word count at the end. Papers will lose a letter grade for each day that they are late. Papers that are more than two days late will not be accepted. No excuses.
3. Facilitation/Discussion Questions (20%)

You are each required to facilitate an in-depth discussion of a reading at least one time during the semester; depending on the length of the reading you select, you might be asked to facilitate discussion on more than one occasion. You will present key ideas in the reading, lead a discussion based on the text, and offer examples to illustrate key concepts. Making the discussion successful requires careful preparation; therefore, to be fair to the rest of the class and to me, you may not change your selection or reschedule if you miss class or are unprepared on your designated date.

For the day that you sign up to facilitate discussion, you are expected to develop a set of discussion questions and a creative way in which to guide the discussion. You will prepare a handout with your reflections on the reading and your discussion questions. This handout should be approximately one single-spaced page. Feel free to bring in any audiovisual media to supplement your handout.

Your Discussion Question and Facilitation assignment will be worth 20% of your final grade. Points will be based on your preparation, relevant examples, and classroom presentation.

4. Community Engagement (20%)

You are required to volunteer in an after school program or an evening adult educational program in Holyoke, MA at least once a week throughout the semester. Transportation will be provided for the after school programs. You will need to provide your own transportation if you prefer to participate in the evening program. You will keep a journal of your community engagement work consisting of a 300-400 word observation/analysis (using one or more readings from class) for each visit to Holyoke. You will submit your observations/analyses for the first half of the semester via Moodle by 5pm on October 24 (the end of Week 7); the second half of your observations/analyses are due via Moodle by 5pm on the last day of the final exam period (Saturday, December 13). You are also required to participate in Holyoke Bound on Saturday, September 27, 2014 (https://www.fivecolleges.edu/cbl/holyokebound). You can learn more about transportation information here: http://cesl.umass.edu/transportation-service-sites#Holyoke. Community Engagement is worth 20% of your grade.

5. Final Project (20%)

You are required to partner with your classmates to create a final project focused on a major educational challenge facing U.S. Latin@s. The project will consist of a paper and presentation. The length of the paper will be determined by the number of students in your group. For each student, the paper should be 5 pages (e.g., a group of 2 students would submit a 10-page final paper, a group of 3 students would submit a 15-page final paper). You are also required to present your research during the last week of class. In the second half of the semester, you will be provided with more information regarding the final project. The final project is worth 20% of your overall grade.
**Required Text**
There is only one required text for this course. It is available for purchase at the UMass Textbook Annex:


**Course Schedule**
*Note on readings:*
All readings other than those from the required text are available on the Moodle site for this course. Please contact me if you have any problem accessing these readings. Students are expected to complete ALL readings for this course before the class meeting for which they are assigned.

I. What is the meaning of “Latin@” as a sociocultural category?

Week 1 (September 3): Introduction and Course Overview

Week 2: Shifting Demographics and Increasing Anxieties

*Monday, September 8*

*Wednesday, September 10*
Week 3: Constructing Latin@ Identities

Monday, September 15

Wednesday, September 17

Week 4: A Shared Educational History and Future for Latin@s?
*First critical analysis paper assigned in class

Monday, September 22

Wednesday, September 24
II. What kinds of institutions are schools?

Week 5: Sorting Students

Monday, September 29

Wednesday, October 1

Week 6: Working and Learning in Urban Schools

*First critical analysis paper due on Moodle by 5pm on Friday, October 17

Monday, October 6

Wednesday, October 8
III. What societal structures, practices, and processes can we better understand by tracking the experiences of Latin@s in schools (urban and otherwise)?

Week 7: (Im)Migration, Racialization, Diasporization
*Submit Community Engagement Observations/Analyses via Moodle by 10/24 at 5pm

*Monday, October 13, No Class, Indigenous Peoples Day*

Tuesday, October 14 (Monday Class Schedule)

Wednesday, October 15

Week 8: Assimilation and Multiculturalism
*Second critical analysis paper assigned in class

Monday, October 20
Wednesday, October 22

Week 9: Gendered Experiences of Violence and Marginalization

Monday, October 27

Wednesday, October 29

Week 10: Reframing Deficits through Critical Pedagogy
*Second critical analysis paper due on Moodle by 5pm on Friday, November 14

Monday, November 3
Wednesday November 5

Week 11: School, Home, and Community Connections as Institutional Interrelations

Monday, November 10

*Wednesday, November 12, No Class (Tuesday Class Schedule)*

Week 12: School Reform, Spaces of Resistance, and Social Transformation

Monday, November 17
Wednesday, November 19

Week 13: Research for Social Justice in Education

Monday, November 24

*Wednesday, November 26, No Class (Thanksgiving)*

Week 14: Presentations

Monday, December 1, Group Presentations of Final Projects