The increasingly greater presence and power of Latino voters will change American politics. Latinos have recently surpassed African-Americans as the most numerous minority group in the United States. Latino voters typically favor Democrats by about a two-to-one margin. This margin, coupled with population growth, immigration, and increased citizenship rates for Latinos, provides opportunities for Democrats and imperils the political prospects for Republicans, even in Republican-tilting states such as Texas. Both Democrats and Republicans have targeted Latinos as an emerging group to court and secure, a targeting strongly evident in the 2004 presidential election.

This course will rely on films, documentaries, and television news coverage clips as well as journalistic and academic accounts of Latino politics. Topics to be considered include the composition and trends of the Latino population—not just their numbers and migration patterns but also the evolving socio-economic characteristics of Latinos; the diversity within the Latino community; the issues, political preferences, and turnout rates of Latino voters; Latino political activism; and Latino elected officials. Recent elections will be considered, but also the broader context offered by Latino politics in recent decades.

Each of the three non-cumulative analytical exams, the research paper assignments, and class participation (largely unscheduled quizzes on the assigned reading to reward those who do and understand the readings) constitutes roughly 20 percent of your course grade.

Ultimately your grade turns on my impression of how well you have done in this course. What impresses me? Think of this course as your job and approach it with professionalism. Take this course seriously and let me know that. How? Attend class; be prepared for class—read the assignments for understanding, be ready to ask and answer questions, take an informed role in discussions; arrive early to class; remain for the entire class; be attentive in class without distracting me or your classmates with cell phones, text messages, side conversations, bathroom trips or any other reason for coming-and-going, and so forth; take exams when scheduled and complete assignments when due; demonstrate your understanding on the exams, quizzes, and research paper assignments.

After six unexcused absences I drop you from the course. An excused absence is almost exclusively restricted to religious reasons, certain university activities, documented medical conditions, or documented family emergencies. Absences for religious reasons or for university extracurricular activities necessitate communication with me in advance. If you have a disability that requires an accommodation, see me in advance.

Each of you must meet with me for 15 minutes in the first two weeks of the semester. Sign up for an appointment time during the first day in class.

Books ordered through the bookstore are John A. Garcia, *Latino Politics in America: Community, Culture, and Interests*; David Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors*; and F. Chris Garcia, ed., *Pursuing Power: Latinos and the Political System*. The three books are on reserve in Fondren. Many readings will be on Blackboard. Also required but not listed below: you are expected to supplement the listed readings by reading or watching news coverage of Latino politics in the states.

There may be changes to the readings and assignments listed below. This course requires the use of Blackboard at http://courses.smu.edu.


F, Oct 7, 4 pm >>>Research paper draft, 500 words

T, Oct 11 * no class meeting: Fall Break


Th, Oct 20 * Exam Two


T, Nov 8 * Gutierrez, W&M, c. 5, 152-178: “Ethnic Politics, Immigration Policy, and the Cold War”

Th, Nov 10 * Gutierrez, W&M, c. 6, 179-206: “Sin Fronteras? The Contemporary Debate”


>>>Research paper due T, Nov 22, 2,500 words

Th, Nov 24 * no class meeting (Thanksgiving holidays)


http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/documentos/151.asp

Th, Dec 1 * no class meeting (Thanksgiving holidays makeup class day, follow Wednesday class schedule)

Sa, Dec 10 * 8:00 am - 9:20 am * Exam Three