Contemporary Latino Cultures (V55.0529)
Instructor: Arlene Davila
SILVER (Main) Building, Room 207
Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:30 - 10:45
285 Mercer Street
8th Floor
Office Hours: Thursdays 11-12 A.M.
Or by appointment Ext. 87592

This course examines the development of Latinos as a distinct group out of the highly diverse populations of Latin American background in the U.S., paying particular attention to the social processes that are shaping and fueling this emerging identity. This task involves a detailed examination of the processes of cultural creation behind the rising growth of transnational cultures and identities worldwide, and of the global, national and local forces that are fueling their development. We start by exploring the economic and political factors that have historically fueled the immigration of Latin American peoples to U.S. cities and shaped their incorporation into U.S. society as "Latinos." We then turn to three case studies of emerging Latino communities in Los Angeles, Miami and New York to examine similarities and differences among these different Latino social and cultural formations. The last two sections examine contemporary issues involving Latinos in urban centers, such as New York, as well as the impact of global economic and social forces on contemporary Latino cultural politics.

Requirements: There will be an essay-driven midterm and final exam. Additionally, you will be asked to write 3 (3-5 pages each) response essays throughout the semester. There will be no make-ups for these essays. Your grade will be based on the midterm (20%), final exam (30%), papers (30%-10% each) and attendance and participation (altogether a value of 20%).

Books: (**A course package with rest of readings available at Unique Copy Center, 252 Greene St.)

-Juan Gonzales

-Pablo Vila Crossing Borders, Reinforcing Borders: Social Categories, Metaphors and Narrative Identities on the U.S.-Mexico Frontier

-Homero Villa, Raúl
2000 Barrio Logos: Space and Place in Urban Chicano Literature and Culture

I. History and the Cultural Politics of Labeling

1. Week of September 5: Introduction to the Course
   Introduction

2. Week of September 10: The Labeling of a People: Hispanics/Latinos, etc...
   Session #1:
   Challenging Fronteras (Part 1, Essays by Tienda, Oboler and Klor de Alva)

   Session #2:
   Challenging Fronteras (Continue with essays by Tienda, Oboler and Klor de Alva)
(Optional) Flores and Yudice, "Living borders/ Buscando America: Languages of Latino Self-Formation"

3. Week of September 17: The Historical Legacy: The U.S. in/and Latin America
Session #1:
Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America. (Part 1)

Session #2
Film: Gringo in Manana Land

4. Week of September 24: Shaping and Re-shaping Image(s) of Latinidad
Session #1:
Sandoval-Sanchez

Session #2:
Davila, Arlene
2001 "Images: Producing Culture for the Market"
Santa Ana, Otto "Misrepresenting Immigrants and Immigration"
*(Essay question for essay #1 will be handed out in class)

II. Case Studies: The Making of Latinos in Place and Space

5. Week of October 1: From Mexicano to Mexican American to Chicano
Session #1:
George Sanchez: Becoming Mexican-American
"Mexicans: Pioneers of a Different Type" in Harvest of Empire

Session #2:
Film: Chicanos! Quest for a Homeland
*(Essay #1 Due)

Session #1
Cesar Andreu Iglesias, Editor.

"Puerto Ricans: Citizens yet Foreigners" in Harvest of Empire

Session #2:
Manos a la Obra: The Story of Operation Bootstrap

And look through Flores' essay "Que Asimilao" in Challenging Fronteras

7. Week of October 15: Cubans and the Transformation of Miami
Session #1:
Alejandro Portes and Alex Stepick 1993 City on the Edge: The Transformation of Miami. Berkeley: Universities of California Press. (Chapter Five)
"Cubans: Special Refugees" in Harvest of Empire

Session #2:
Film: Against Wind and Tide, A Cuban Odyssey
(*Question for Essay #2 will be handed out in class)

8. Week of October 22: Cultural Nationalism and Latino Social Movements
Session #1:
Tomas Ybarra-Frausto

Tomas Ybarra-Frausto,
1999 "El Movimiento: The Chicano Cultural Project Since the 1960s." In Urban Latino Cultures
Iris Morales

Session #2:
Film: Latino artists: Pushing the Boundaries
(*Essay #2 Due)

III. Selected Topics and Contemporary Issues

Session #1:
Mike Davis, Magical Urbanism (Selections) Midterm

Session #2
Midterm

10. Week of November 5: Flows of People, Work, Ideas
Session #1:
Transnational Villagers (Introduction)
Pablo Vila Crossing Borders, Reinforcing Borders: Social Categories, Metaphors and Narrative Identities on the U.S.-Mexico Frontier

Session #2:
Pablo Vila Crossing Borders, Reinforcing Borders: Social Categories, Metaphors and Narrative Identities on the U.S.-Mexico Frontier

11: Week of November 12: Race/Language/Nation
Transnational Communities
Session #1:
Burgos, Adrian "The Latins from Manhattan' Confronting Race and Building Community in Jim Crow Baseball"
Ginetta Candelario "Hair Race-Ing: Dominican Beauty Culture and Identity Production"
Rivera, Raquel "Hip-Hop, Puerto Ricans and Ethnoracial Identities in New York"

Session #2:
Film: My American Girls

IV. The Latinized City

12. Week of November 19: The Cultural Politics of Place
Session #1 and #2
Barrio Logos

13. Week of November 26: Representations and Struggles over Space
Session #1:
Arlene Davila will talk about her new research in El Barrio (East Harlem)
Look Through Website: "Welcome to East Harlem.com"
*(Essay #3 Due)

Session #2:
No Class, Thanksgiving Recess

14. Week of December 3: Representations and Struggles (Continued)
Session #1
Guest Speaker: To Be Announced

Session #2:
Njorege Njoroge will speak on Latin music and expressive culture

15. Week of December 10:
Session #1: Overview and concluding comments (final exam essays will be handed out on this day)