

MAS 120-- Political Economy and Chicana/o Communities

SYLLABUS

(Tentative –will be updated with full citations first week of February)

Instructor: Julia Curry, Ph.D.

Office: YUH 037

Phone: 408.924.5310

Office Hrs: T/TH 2:30-4:30

And by appointment

E-mail: Julia.Curry@sjsu.edu

Website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/julia.curry/>

MAS 120

Class Number: 28707

T/Th 10:30-11:45

BBC 002

Spring 2012

Library Liaison: Kathryn Blackmer Reyes.

Tel: 408.808.2097

E-mail: Kathryn.Blackmerreyes@sjsu.edu

Website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/kathryn.blackmerreyes/>

DESCRIPTION:

Founded on the premise that knowledge must have a fundamental activist praxis Chicana and Chicano Studies posits that educational endeavors must have useful relevance to improve, redress, and even shatter the conditions of persistent inequality experienced by our communities. To this effect, Chicana & Chicano Studyists reclaim knowledge and academia to empower our communities; to address social problems; and to challenge oppressive structures and systems of exclusion. In this broad context the objective of this course is exploratory in nature and evaluative in scope. We will explore various topics in political economy to consider the impact of the structural sources of oppression that shape and create persistent barriers sustained by the ideologies of racism, meritocracy and achievement orientation pervasive in the United States. While the scope of the course is local, we understand the transnational realities of the modern world create webs of systemic relations that transcend national boundaries.

This course examines theoretical and empirical realities present in our communities at diverse historical times. One objective is to explore the changing roles of Chicanas and Chicanos in the political and economic systems of the United States. Simultaneously we must understand that global economies and political processes are shaped and transformed by local national interests and they provide a context for all social life. To make this examination concrete we will explore issues pertaining to wealth, poverty, labor, domestic and foreign policies, education, immigration, politics, etc. Basically, we will explore how our communities are affected by these forces in terms of such concrete acts as budget cuts, financial crises, and the role of government and legal policies & practices on the welfare of our community. To illustrate this point, consider the paradox of demographic growth and increasing inequality as exemplified by poverty and political disenfranchisement experienced by Latinas/Chicanos in contemporary times. That Latinos/Chicanas are overly represented in the foreclosure crisis and poverty; that they are adversely affected by the constant disinvestment in social services such as health care, education, housing, transportation, access to financial institutions and banking, predatory lending, community economic development, political disenfranchisement, forces us to seek institutional answers to make change and accountability for our communities. We understand that the real issue is power at the structural level of the economy and political processes. Knowledge indeed may liberate, but only if it observes the necessary scope for politicized action.

The carefully engineered structural inequality that affects all people of color in the U.S. and any international dependencies must be examined through a systematic approach. This course introduces students to many of these dynamics through readings and class discussions, and most importantly by conducting a relevant research project. We will use the complex history of exclusion and exploitation as well as the evidence of resistance and transformation to develop an understanding conscious of the ethics and politics of strategizing

for social justice, not as leaders, but as participants who reflect community life and struggle. To this effect it is important to listen (*escuchar*) to what and how our people develop a critical consciousness about their existence in society. Moreover, we must understand that what we learn from our communities is dear and we must not usurp their wealth in the common practice of colonizing academic protocol.

TEXTBOOKS & Readings:

Burd-Sharps and Kristen Lewis. 2011, "A Portrait of California: California Human Development Report 2011." Found on [www.Measure of America.org](http://www.MeasureofAmerica.org)

Zloniski, Christian. 2006. **Janitors, Street Vendors, and Activists: The Lives of Mexican Immigrants in Silicon Valley.** Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. ISBN: 0520246438.

Open Source Materials-I will prepare a bibliography which you may access free of charge to substantiate our exploration. I will also make articles and chapters available as pdf files.

These are available at Spartan Bookstore and other locations. You are expected to keep up with all the assigned readings as the course progresses. *This is a major reading course*, because of the urgency of the topic! There will also be readings placed on Reserve at King Library and available as digital files which I will make available on-line at my website while being respectful of copyright.

University Policies

ACADEMIC HONESTY STATEMENT: All students have the responsibility to know and abide by the standards of intellectual honesty expected in an academic community. Please refer to your college handbook for the exact policy statement. Note that faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Judicial Affairs. The policy can be found at: <http://sa.sjsu.edu/judicial/inde.html>.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT: If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me the first week of classes, or see me during my office hours. Presidential directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities **register** with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to establish a record of their disability." The DRC is found at: Administration Building Room 110. Telephone: (408) 924-6000 (Main Office), (408) 924-6542 (Deaf and HoH), and (408) 808-2123 (ATC).

Assignments and Requirements

Attendance: Your attendance at all class sessions is expected. If for some unforeseen reason you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get class notes from a friend. I will not provide you my notes—please do not ask. However, I invite you to come to my office hours to discuss the topics of class (whether you are present or not).

Preparation and Participation: 20% of Course Grade

You are expected to complete assigned reading as requested, and actively participate in class discussion. You are also required to communicate by email where you have the opportunity to pose questions about lectures, readings, general issues pertinent to our class. I will lecture, but only to encourage class discussion. I hope you will bring questions about reading assignments or topics presented in class, please feel free to ask questions or make comments at any time. Concretely, you will turn in two (2) three page written responses to the readings from previous weeks. For example, **Reading Response #1 is due Week 3** and you may draw from the readings for Week 2 and 3; for **Reading Response #2 is due Week 9**, you may draw from readings for weeks 5-9. I do not have a set approach for these assignments. Rather, you may approach the readings in any way except to summarize. Your responses must include explanation of main arguments, political

implications, author's goals, and you may compare between/among authors as well. You need not submit a bibliography since you will be using class readings. However, read critically and actively, consider theoretical and methodological issues keeping in mind that these assignments will help you with your own research projects. **200 Points.**

FINAL: 20% of Course Grade. Monday, May 21-9:45-12:00

There will be a final that draws on all course assignments focusing on actions and/or solutions to issues and problems. The final will be a take-home which you will be asked to bring to class on May 21 so that you may share your thoughts and proposals. **200 Points.**

Research Project: 60% of Course Grade. 600 Points.

Drawing on class readings and discussions conduct a bibliographic search that allows you to examine one issue or problem for which you wish to propose a solution or action within the scope of the class-Chicana/os and Political Economy. Your topics may take any focus. For the paper you must identify additional a minimum of 10 sources and integrate course readings. Your paper must include the following parts: 1) a description of the problem/issue you are exploring, 2) a scholarly discussion of the topic, 3) a clearly delineated action plan focusing on the conclusions you have drawn from your readings and reflections. 4) Bibliography. To help you with the project we will have a library search instruction given by our liaison, Kathy Blackmer. To begin the research please prepare a one-page statement of the problem or issue with at least three citations from either the class readings or other references as indicated below. Once you have done some reading and thought about your paper and action, please submit a draft outline and four pages of your paper. You will receive more detailed guidelines for this project in class. You will be expected to provide regular updates about the progress of your project.

Deadlines:

One-page Statement of the Research Problem/Issue with Citations: Due February 28. (50 points)

Paper Draft: Due April 10. (100 points)

Final revised paper is due the last day of class-May 15. 450 Points.

GRADING: I will not round up for your grade, so please insure you earn all points possible.

A+ = 1000 - 970	B+ = 899 - 870	C+ = 799 - 770	D+ = 699-670	F=599-0
A = 969 - 950	B = 869 - 850	C = 769 - 750	D = 669 - 650	
A- = 949 - 900	B- = 849 - 800	C- = 749 - 700	D- = 649 - 600	

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

Reading assignments are noted for each week and must be completed by that week's class session to ensure timely engagement with concepts and issues for participation in class.

Week One: January 26 --Introductions

Objectives and class goals and overview of topics. Discuss readings. Go over syllabus. Fill out student information form. Identify class buddies who can share notes, work with you on projects, and generally be your community contact during the course. I will introduce myself and speak about my training on this day. I invite you to introduce yourselves and to tell us why you are in this class. Burning questions. Active discussion of issues you bring/want to address/ learn in this class. Before you leave class today make sure you sign in and provide me with an email address which we will use to build our email group.

Begin discussion about Chicana/os and Political Economy.

Note on Readings: You will receive electronic messages with citations and information on how to access course readings on a weekly basis. Please be certain to check your email regularly. All messages will include the subject heading: MAS 120 plus information on the particular message. I have inserted tentative authors and some titles in the syllabus. I will have a complete bibliography for next Thursday. I will also post it on my webpage.

Week Two: January 31 & February 2--Overview of Political Economy (PE)

Political Economy draws on economic theory and methods to unpack the influence of political ideology. Drawing on economics, law and politics PE engages systemic analysis of structures and social forces to determine roots of social and economic systems such as capitalism and socialism. How does this approach help us to understand the imbedded practice of racism and class oppression in contemporary times?

Readings: Chapters and articles available as pdf files.

Peña, D. 2006. "Toward a critical political ecology of Latina/o urbanism." Available through the Acequia Institute at www.acequiainstitute.org

Devon Peña and Food Sovereignty- YouTube
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dovjAlOu7ek>

Harrison, Faye V. "The Persistent Power of Race in the Cultural and Political Economy of Racism." *Annual review of anthropology* 1995, 24: 47-74

Castells, M.

Feagin, J.R.

Week Three: February 7 & 9—Occupied Americans: The Legacy of Colonization and Annexation

Drawing on Rudy Acuña and Mario Barrera we explore the significance of the U.S war on Mexico to situate the roots and complexity of oppression experienced by Chicana/os.

Readings:

Acuña, R.-book chapter

Barrera, M.-book chapter

Almaguer-book chapter

Montejano, D.- article

★ Reading Response # 1 Due

Week Four: February 14 & 16—Race, Gender and Labor

The scholarship on the labor market from the point of view of people of color is not equal or open. Rather it is segmented in terms of race and gender. Policies of certification and eligibility serve to make normative the exclusionary practices of the labor market

Readings:

Segura, D.-article

Baca-Zinn, M.- article

García, M.

Almaguer, T.

Peña, D.

Week Five: February 21 & 23—Planning & Latina/o Communities

Readings:

Pardo, Mary-article and book chapter
Diaz, D. from **Barrio Urbanism** (2005)
Molotch, H.
Applebaum, R.
Capek, S.

Week Six: February 28 & March 1—Poverty is more than Alienation

Readings:

Wilson, J.W.
Saenz, R.
De Anda, R.
Calderon, H.

★ **February 28: Research Statement and Partial Bibliography Due**

Week Seven: March 6 & 8 –Race, Conflicts & Coalitions

Readings:

Mindiola, T.
Flores-Neiman, Y.
Hagan, J.
Rodriguez, N.
Zlolinski, Chapter 3-4
Gonzalez, Juan

Week Eight March 13 & 15—*Research Week*

We will not hold class this week. Instead you may use this week to work on your research projects, finalizing your bibliography, etc.

I will be attending the annual meetings of the National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies so there will be no office hours either. However, you may contact me by email during this week.

Week Nine: March 20 & 22—Educational Disinvestment and Disenfranchisement

Readings:

Martin, C.
Garcia, E.
Hurtado, A.
Bowles and Gintis, “Scholing in Capitalist America Revisited”
Apple, M. *The State and politics of education*. New York: Routledge, 2003. (selections)
Apple, M. Education and power. 2nd edition. New York: Routledge, 1995. (selections)

★ **Reading Response #2 Due**

Week Ten --SPRING BREAK ---March 26-31

Week Eleven: April 3 & 5--Immigration Policies

Whether as a historical or contemporary examination, immigration is an important aspect of Chicana/o communities. Economic and Social Cultural issues are important considerations.

Readings:

Zloniski, Introduction & Chapter 1-2
Cardenas, G.
Bustamante, J.
Johnson, K.
Olivas, M.

Week Twelve: April 10 & 12—Financial Institutions: Redlining and Obstruction**Readings:**

Campoamor, D.
De la Torre, A.
De los Angeles Crummett
De Anda, R.
Rochin, R.
Saenz, R.

★ Paper Draft Due: Tuesday, April 10**Week Thirteen: April 17 & 19— Policy Scenarios of Affirmation and Isolation****Readings:**

Swalwell, Kathy and Michael Apple. Reviewing Policy: Starting the Wrong Conversations--The Public School Crisis and "Waiting for Superman" Educational Policy, v25 n2 p368-382 Mar 2011
Johnson, Kevin
Hayes-Bautista, D.
Garcia, F. C.
De la Garza, R.
Sosa-Riddell, A.
Flores, W.

Week Fourteen: April 24 & 26—The Media Socializes Ineptness, Inequality and self-loathing**Readings:**

Berumen, Javier Garcia
Castañeda, M.
Davila, A.
Fregoso, R.L.
Pardo, M.
Guerrero, L. "There's no Chicanos on TV"

Week Fifteen: May 1 & 3—Wages Poverty and Social Mobility

Discussion of the occupational distribution and promotion. Are Chicana/os "at risk" of not meeting their expectations? What barriers and opportunities exist? Are official mentoring and promotion tools evident in all fields?

Readings: No new readings—but prepare some issues to address based on your assigned readings.

Week Sixteen: May 8 & 10—Health, Food and Housing Insecurity**Readings:**

Zloniski, Chapters 5 through Epilogue.
Tienda, Marta
Telles, Eddie
Yinger, J. American Economic Review 1986

Diaz, David, from Barrio Urbanism.
Mondragon, D.
Guendelman, S.

Week Seventeen: May 15—The Political Economy Approach to Marginality and affirmation
– Examining Structures moves us away from the oft used explanation that Chicana/os do not have ambition, are shiftless, locality-bound and therefore engage in “self-sabotage” when it comes to “success”.

Conclusions/Beginnings: Reflections

- Course Evaluation
- Last day of class--Course Wrap-up
- **Final Paper Due In Class.**
- Study Questions for final exam distributed.

Final Exam: Monday, May 21 9:45-12:00 noon.

My promise to you: I will make every effort to help you complete the assignments required for this class. I invite you to come to my office hours, send me e-mail inquiries, or speak to me at individualized appointment times. I expect you to do your part as well. Read, do the assignments, ask questions, and whenever possible prepare a draft of any assignment (early enough to get feedback). Come to class for every session.

To assist us with communication I will set up a group mail for our class members. I invite you to join the group posting questions, opportunities, and furthering discussion. We will have access to class files, a class calendar, and a discussion space only for our group. I will attempt to set up a virtual communication page for us...just be patient I was great with Yahoo and Google Groups-but they now have many limitations.

Note: This semester I will be organizing two Saturday Symposia which may be of interest to you. April 21 and 28—I have not finalized which date will be used for which Symposia, but here is the plan. We will have an AB540 Resources & Allies focusing on new policy directions. I serve as the faculty adviser for SAHE-Student Advocates for Higher Education and have been working on making SJSU accountable to AB540 Students (aka “Dream” and “Dream Eligible Students”) since 2002. The second Symposium is the Third Annual for Mexican American Studies-we will have two speakers addressing pressing issues pertaining to the state of Ethnic Studies (focusing on Chicana & Chicano Studies). Tentative Speakers are: Rhonda Rios-Kravitz-Dean, Los Rios Community College, Rudy Acuña-CSUN, Horacio Roque Ramirez, Professor, UCSB Chicano Studies Department. Please block these dates on your calendars April 21 & April 28.