

**Mexican American Policy Studies Seminar (MAS) 362
SPRING 2010**

Instructor

Victor B. Saenz, PhD

Assistant Professor

Department of Educational Administration

Office: SZB 310Q

(512) 475-8585

vsaez@mail.utexas.edu

Meeting Times: Mondays, 5pm to 8pm
 Class Location: Sanchez 416

Office Hours: Wednesdays, by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS

This course examines public policy and the policymaking process in the United States and Texas, specifically in relation to Mexican-American and other Latina/o communities. The course begins by examining the public policy process and providing an overview of policy theory, goals, actors, and research approaches. In terms of issues for this course, we will pay special attention to the public policy goals of access, equity, and diversity, especially within an educational context. With this context in mind, the course will primarily be devoted to public policy issues focused on Latina/o populations in the United States. We will cover academic and popular articles on Education policy issues, Affirmative Action, workers rights issues, the English Only movement, electoral politics, Immigration reform, and the growing importance of Latina/o participation in these public policy debates at the local, state, and national levels. The course will further examine both historical trends and comparisons with other racial/ethnic groups (White Americans, African Americans, and Asian Americans).

At the end of this course, you will have gained a thorough knowledge base on the public policy process at various levels of government, and you should also have enhanced your understanding of the pressing policy issues facing the U.S. Latina/o community. You will become more competent in writing brief policy memos on a variety of issues, and you will have increased your critical consciousness on current issues affecting the Latina/o community.

Finally, an underlying assumption to this course is a belief that college students can engage as agents of social change. This same view may be applied to how we think about knowledge and the role a college student plays in the construction of his/her own knowledge. As such, at the heart of this course is a desire to challenge students to be active participants in the construction of their own knowledge. Students must come to see themselves as capable of creating meaning from what they read, observe, and experience in their social worlds.

Professor's Note:

I reserve the right to alter, change, and delete the course materials in this course syllabus due to any unforeseen circumstances or to enhance the educational objectives of this course.

REQUIRED TEXTS (2) & OTHER READINGS

There are two (2) **required** texts for this course. Please purchase these books *no later* than the **second week** of classes. You can purchase them through the University Co-op or through other bookstores or online outlets (e.g., Amazon, Borders, etc.).

Author	Title	Publisher	Ed.	ISBN
Birkland, Thomas A.	An Introduction To The Policy Process: Theories, Concepts, And Models Of Public Policy Making	M.E. Sharpe	2nd	0765614898
Garcia, John A.	Latino Politics in America	Rowman & Littlefield	1st	0847691659

Additional articles and book chapters are from various sources. In an effort to minimize your expenses for the readings, I have made most required readings available to you in electronic form. These readings can be accessed via the course blackboard website, and they will be denoted with a “BB” in the course syllabus.

In addition to the assigned readings for the course, students are **strongly** urged to keep up to date with current events and policy issues through a daily reading of national or regional news outlets, including paper sources (e.g., New York Times, Washington Post, Dallas Morning News, or the Austin American Statesman) and online news sources (e.g., CNN.com, MSNBC.com, or FoxNews.com). Also, be sure to bookmark education websites such as The Chronicle of Higher Education (www.chronicle.com) and Education Weekly (www.edweek.org).

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING*Course Attendance/Participation (5%)*

This course requires insightful, respectful, and engaged discussion that demonstrates that you have a critical understanding of the readings. To help facilitate discussion, students will turn in, at the beginning of each class, one question about the readings for each week. Each student will be a discussion leader or co-leader for one class in the semester, which will make up part of your participation grade.

Weekly Discussion Leader (5%)

Each student will be required to choose a specific week in the semester to be the discussion leader for that week’s assigned topics. You will be expected to prepare notes or an outline of that week’s readings (to share with class) as well as offer some guiding questions throughout our discussion for your assigned week.

Professor’s Note:

I reserve the right to alter, change, and delete the course materials in this course syllabus due to any unforeseen circumstances or to enhance the educational objectives of this course.

Memos (3) (10% each)

The memo assignment is designed to be a concise and efficient write-up of a pressing policy issue of relevance to the course. The instructor will offer students suggestions on potential topics or prompts to employ as part of the assignment. Each memo is designed to be **three to four** (3-4) pages in length (5 pgs for MA students), and they should be written as a common memorandum.

A memo (or policy memo) is a document that provides analysis and/or recommendations for a particular audience regarding a particular issue or problem. A well-written memo reflects attention to purpose; it is well organized; and it has a clear, concise style, and it advocates for a particular course of action or policy stance. It is not simply a summary of a topic or issue. You should have an audience in mind for your policy memo (typically a policymaker), and you need to think carefully about the needs and expectations of your audience. For example, if your audience is an elected official seeking analysis on a highly technical matter, you should generally assume that the official lacks substantial technical expertise. You will need to define technical terms and provide enough background about the situation you are discussing that such a “lay” audience can grasp your arguments. On the other hand, if you are writing for a technically trained audience, you will waste time and energy providing background information that your readers already know.

Midterm Exam (25%)

A mid-term exam will be taken in-class during **Week 10**. The comprehensive exam will consist of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short- and long-essay questions, and it will cover all course readings, discussions, and handouts reviewed up to that point. The exam counts for 25% of the overall course grade. No make-up exams will be given, no exceptions. Please don't forget to bring your own BLUE BOOK for this mid-term exam. This is a closed book, closed note exam. I will allow you to use a laptop for the exam, although no one will be allowed to use the internet or other electronic files as a resource. SEE: UT Honor Code.

Final Policy Analysis Paper & Presentation (35%)

The final policy analysis paper will identify and discuss a policy problem relevant to the course content. Each student will select a policy issue from within the Latina/o policy discussions that we will have throughout the semester. A list of topics may also be provided by the instructor. This policy analysis paper should summarize the issue (the background, history, current status within policy world), highlight **at least 5** pieces of relevant sources (beyond the class readings) related to the issue (the sources may come from newspapers, magazines, journals, books, etc.), suggest strategies/recommendations for approaching the issue in the future, and discuss where you envision this particular policy issue headed in the future as it affects the Latina/o community. The paper should be between **8-10 pages in length** (double-spaced, 1” margins, 12 pt. font) and citations should be appropriately referenced both in the text and in an attached reference page (not part of your page count). No late papers will be accepted, no exceptions.

Professor's Note:

I reserve the right to alter, change, and delete the course materials in this course syllabus due to any unforeseen circumstances or to enhance the educational objectives of this course.

The paper must site resources using a recognized reference format such as APA or MLA. A 2-page paper abstract of your chosen policy issue is **due April 12th**. The final research paper is **due in class on May 3rd, 2010, the last class day (unless otherwise noted by instructor)**. Also, all students will be required to present their paper to the class in a 5-7 minute presentation using MS Powerpoint or any other presentation software. This paper and presentation constitute your final assignments for this class, as there is no final exam.

Grading Summary

Below is a table summary of all of the components of this course that will make up your final grade. Please note that the weights for these grading items are not negotiable.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Weight for Final Grade</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
Course Attendance/Participation	5%	Ongoing
Weekly Discussion Leader	5%	Ongoing
Memo #1	10%	02/08/10
Memo #2	10%	03/01/10
Midterm (Week 10)	25%	03/29/10
Memo #3	10%	04/19/10
Final Policy Paper		
Paper Abstract (2 pgs.)	5%	04/12/10
Final Paper (8-10 pgs.)	25%	05/03/10**
Presentation (in class)	5%	05/03/10**
TOTAL	100%	

** NOTE: Date may have to be postponed until 5/10/10 (based on my conference schedule). If the date is changed to the May 10th, then you will also have an extra week to complete your final policy analysis paper.

MAS 362 – COURSE POLICIES

By taking this course and accepting this syllabus, you agree to all the following course policies:

- A seminar requires **active and respectful participation** by each student in every class. This is **not** a lecture class. Students will read the assignments before class and be prepared to discuss and critique them. Please prepare for every week
- This seminar meets once per week. Attendance is therefore **required** at each meeting. Two unexcused absences will lower your final course grade by an entire grade.
- A sign-in sheet will be passed around at the beginning of each class and collected during the first break. **This will be your only opportunity to sign-in.**
- Missed classes can only be excused due to illness certified by a doctor, for family emergencies certified by the Dean, or for official university events or activities with a letter from the appropriate university authority.
- Students who require special provisions for exams or class because of a disability should notify the professor before the need arises. Students may request more information from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259.

Professor's Note:

I reserve the right to alter, change, and delete the course materials in this course syllabus due to any unforeseen circumstances or to enhance the educational objectives of this course.

- Late assignments will not be accepted and make-up exams will not be allowed except for verified illness or documented family emergency as noted above.
- This syllabus is subject to change by the instructor at any time to enhance the educational objectives of the course.

UT Honor Code

The core values of the University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

WEEKLY TOPICS, READINGS, and ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1 01/18/10 NO CLASS (MLK Holiday)

Week 2 (01/25/10): Intros, The Policy Process, & Class Activity

Handout:

John A. Garcia, *Latino Politics in America*. Chapter 1, "An Intro to Latino Politics", read pgs. 1-6.

Week 3 (02/01/10): Latina/o Demographics, Subgroups, & Leadership

READ: John A. Garcia, *Latino Politics in America*

--Chapter 3, "Culture and Demographics" (31-51)

--Chapter 4, "Latino Subgroups in the US" (52-72)

--Chapter 8, "Latino Organizations & Leadership" (146-165)

--Tienda, M. (2009, March). Hispanicity and educational inequality: Risks, opportunities and the nation's future. (BB)

--Hernandez v. Texas, Handbook of Texas online abstract (BB)

--Latino film maker recognized by state lawmakers for new PBS documentary. Rio Grande Guardian. Aguilar, J. (2009, February 11). (BB)

--Website, Pew Hispanic Center: "A Statistical Portrait of Hispanics at Mid Decade"

<http://pewhispanic.org/reports/middecade/>

*Possible Guest Speaker: Juan Garcia

Professor's Note:

I reserve the right to alter, change, and delete the course materials in this course syllabus due to any unforeseen circumstances or to enhance the educational objectives of this course.

Week 4 (02/08/10): The Public Policy Process, Part I

DUE: Memo #1 & Presentation, "Adopt" a Latino Organization

READ:

--Birkland, Chapters 1, 2, 3, & 4

--Sanchez, G. R. (2006). The role of group consciousness in political participation among Latinos in the United States. *American politics research*, 34(4), 427-450. (BB)

Week 5 (02/15/10): The Public Policy Process, Part II

READ: Birkland, Chapters 6 & 9

*Film: A Class Apart

Week 6 (02/22/10): Immigration Policy

Guest Lecturer – Patricia Lopez (UT doctoral student)

READ: John A. Garcia, *Latino Politics in America*

--Chapter 9, "Immigration and Latino Immigrants" (166-186)

READ (BB):

-- Pew Research Center, America's Immigration Quandary

--Samuel P. Huntington, "The Hispanic Challenge."

--Raul Yzaguirre & Roberto Suro, "Responses to Huntington"

--MALDEF and LULAC, "Responses to Huntington"

--Taking Hate out of Immigration Debate, New American Media

-- Tovar, H. (2009, September 7). E-mails on illegal immigration are eye-opening. *LA Times*.

-- Editorial. (2009, February 1). The nativists are restless. *The New York Times*.

* Possible Guest Speaker: Dr. Angela Valenzuela, UT-Austin

Week 7 (03/01/10): Immigration Policy in Texas (continued)

DUE: Memo #2, Write to an Elected Official

READ (BB)

--Shapleigh, "Lifting the Lamp Besides Texas' Door"

--Cortez, "Educating America's Immigrant Children: Policies, Challenges and Answers"

Guest Speaker: Immigration Law Clinic students

Professor's Note:

I reserve the right to alter, change, and delete the course materials in this course syllabus due to any unforeseen circumstances or to enhance the educational objectives of this course.

Week 8 (03/08/10): Education & Language Policy

READ (BB)

--Richard Valencia. "The Plight of Chicano Students: An Overview of Schooling Conditions and Outcomes."

--Latinos and Early Childhood – Fact Sheet

--Latinos and Elementary Education – Fact Sheet

--Pew Hispanic Center: "Hispanic Attitudes Toward Learning English"

<http://pewhispanic.org/files/factsheets/20.pdf>

--Institute for Language and Education Policy, English only movement

-- Ludwig, M. (2009, July 14). Local marketers plotting campaign to change Hispanics' education beliefs. *San Antonio Express News*.

-- Rodriguez, R. D. C. (2009, October 23). Leticia X is human

-- Russell, A. (2007, August). *In-state tuition for undocumented immigrants: States' rights and educational opportunity*.

*Possible Guest Speaker: Dr. Julian Vasquez Heilig

SPRING BREAK: (03/15/10 – 03/19/10)

Week 9 (03/22/10): Education Policy, Part II (Higher Education Issues)

READ (BB)

-- Santiago, D. A., & Reindl, T. (2009). *Taking stock: Higher education and Latinos*.

-- *The changing pathways of hispanic youths into adulthood*. Fry, R. (2009, October 7), Pew Hispanic Center

--Latinos and Secondary Education – Fact Sheet

--Latinos and Undergraduate Education – Fact Sheet

--Leaks in the Chicana/o Education Pipeline

--Saenz, "Latina/o Freshman Trends"

-- Gonzales, R. G. (2009, April). Young lives on hold: The college dreams of undocumented students. College Board.

--Johnson, J., & Rochkind, J. (2009). *With their whole lives ahead of them: Myths and realities about why so many students fail to finish college*.

*Guest Speakers, ENCORE team

Week 10 (03/29/10): MIDTERM EXAM (in class, closed book)

Professor's Note:

I reserve the right to alter, change, and delete the course materials in this course syllabus due to any unforeseen circumstances or to enhance the educational objectives of this course.

Week 11 (04/05/10): Health Policy

READ (BB)

- Sinn, J. (2009, December 7). Paradox Lost. Study on Latino health.
- David Hayes-Bautista. 2003. "Illness and Wellness: The Latino Paradox." In *Latinos and Public Policy in California*.
- Fact sheet on Latino youth and health care access
- National Council of La Raza: "Critical Disparities in Latino Mental Health"
- LCHC: "Mexican Immigrants are Generally Healthier, but Have Less Access to Needed Health Care." <http://www.lchc.org/documents/MexicanImmigrantsGenerallyHealthier.pdf>

*Possible Guest Speaker: Dr. Octavio Martinez, Hogg Foundation

Week 12 (04/12/10): Federal Policy Issues Affecting Latinos

DUE: Final Policy Analysis Paper Abstract

READ (BB)

- Rodolfo de la Garza and Jerónimo Cortina. 2005. "Latinos as Foreign Policy Actors: Myth or Reality?" *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy*.
- "Latinos in the Military" Pew Hispanic Center, <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/17.pdf>
- U.S. DOD: "DoD Aims to Attract More Hispanics to Its Work Force" http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Oct2004/n10122004_2004101208.html

*Film: *Mun2 Latinos in the Military*

Week 13 (04/19/10): State (Texas) Policy Issues Affecting Latinos

DUE: Memo #3, Write memo for a State Agency Head or Director

READ (BB)

- Orrenius, P., Zavodny, M., & Kerr, E. (2009, Summer/Fall). *Getting to the bottom of Texas' Latino pay gap*.
- LIF Policy Agenda
- TAMACC Legislative Agenda
- Taylor, S. (2008, November 17). Peña: Like the mesquite tree, South Texas lawmakers thrive in adverse conditions. *Rio Grande Guardian*.
- FILM: "Mexican American Legislative Caucus: The Texas Struggle for Equality & Opportunity", Texas State University – San Marcos

* Possible Guest Speaker: Ms. Brie Franco

Professor's Note:

I reserve the right to alter, change, and delete the course materials in this course syllabus due to any unforeseen circumstances or to enhance the educational objectives of this course.

Week 14 (04/26/10): Local/Urban Policy Issues Affecting Latinos

READ (BB)

--Report on Austin Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life
Announcement (AAS article)
Editorial (AAS)

--Hispanic study tries to paint bigger picture against the backdrop of a changing city. *Austin American Statesman*.

* Possible Guest Speaker: Mr. Bobby Garza

Week 15 (05/03/10): Final Presentations

** NOTE: Date may have to be postponed until 5/10/10 (based on my conference schedule). If the date is changed to the May 10th, then you will also have an extra week to complete your final policy analysis paper.

DUE: Final Policy Analysis Paper & Presentations

Professor's Note:

I reserve the right to alter, change, and delete the course materials in this course syllabus due to any unforeseen circumstances or to enhance the educational objectives of this course.