

PSY 493 “Latinx Psychology”
Spring 2025

Instructor:	Dr. Aldo Barrita	Time:	MW 12:40-2:00 PM
E-mail:	barrita1@msu.edu	Classroom:	Berkey Hall 319
Office:	Psychology 125C	Office Hours:	Wed 10:30-12:30 or Zoom

Land Acknowledgement:

Michigan State University occupies the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary Lands of the Anishinaabeg – Three Fires Confederacy of Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi peoples. In particular, the University resides on Land ceded in the 1819 Treaty of Saginaw. We recognize, support, and advocate for the sovereignty of Michigan’s twelve federally recognized Indian nations, for historic Indigenous communities in Michigan, for Indigenous individuals and communities who live here now, and for those who were forcibly removed from their Homelands. By offering this Land Acknowledgement, we affirm Indigenous sovereignty and will work to hold Michigan State University more accountable to the needs of American Indian and Indigenous peoples.

Course Description:

As of July 2023, Latinx people comprise 19.5% of the population in the United States and 6% of Michigan. This course provides a general overview of Latinx mental health concerns in the United States using a strength-based empowerment approach (as a contrast to a deficit approach). Specifically, this course will examine the strengths and resilience of Latinx people and critically examine structural and societal barriers in the United States that result in psychological distress for members of this group. Students in this course will become familiar with different aspects relevant to Latinx people in the United States, including the personal, cultural, institutional, and political, and how these different aspects affect the well-being of Latinx people. Latinx people will be presented in context with attention to circumstances of immigration, United States relations with Latin America, discrimination (both within and from outside the Latinx group), cultural values, intersectionality, and ethnic and racial identity development. The concepts introduced in this course will be examined from a critical, decolonial perspective that focuses on how societal structures (e.g., education, politics, justice system) serve to either facilitate or hinder social justice.

Class Objectives:

At the end of the course, students will demonstrate:

1. General knowledge of the history of U.S. Latinx people, including immigration history, generational status, relationship with Latin America and the Caribbean, traditional settlement areas, and other relevant demographic information.
2. Awareness of the relevant research, practice, and training literature concerning Latinx mental health
3. Critical awareness of the limitations of Latinx-focused research and training, as well as future directions.
4. Understanding of strengths of Latinx people and Latinx culture
5. Awareness of societal and systemic barriers (e.g., education, immigration, mental health infrastructure) that negatively impact U.S. Latinx people

Required Text and Class Materials

We will primarily use book written by Adames, H. Y., & Chaves-Dueñas, N.Y. (2017). *Cultural Foundations and Interventions in Latino/a Mental Health: History, Theory and within Group Differences* (Explorations in Mental Health). Routledge. **Library has informed me that E-book is available.**

Additional readings will include various peer-reviewed journal articles, all will be posted online.

D2L: I will regularly update class information on the website for the class at d2l.msu.edu. This syllabus will be posted there, as well as links to some assignments and other course material..

Collective Knowledge:

This course has been built and influenced by different mentors and scholars who teach Latinx psychology and related courses at other universities across the United States. Their collective knowledge, wisdom, and *consejos* (advice) have helped build and strengthen this course. As part of our collective knowledge, students should bring and share their ideas and cultural experiences throughout the semester. It is my hope that we will learn and grow as a collective throughout this course! Please share topics and resources that may expand our discussion in areas you believe our class needs to be strengthened.

Creating a safe space:

I believe it is critical to develop a safe learning space in which sensitive issues and aspect of race and intersectionality can be addressed. Thus, it is important for us to explore our reactions (both cognitive and affective) to the readings and class discussions. Creating space involves providing a safe, nonthreatening environment. To accomplish this, I am encouraging you to respect one another's contributions. This does not mean you have to agree with all positions or that you cannot voice opposition; it simply means letting others voice their opinions without interruptions or without fear of being attacked personally.

Learning Process and Teaching Philosophy:

I believe that learning occurs when students can make meaningful connections to the material presented. I believe that the meaning-making process occurs through relationships with 1) the instructor, 2) the course content, 3) peers, and 4) self. The assignments, expectations, tasks, and goals of this course are created to facilitate one or more of these relationships. If students are to benefit and learn from this course, then it will take a collaborative effort in which each student and the instructor is fully engaged in a collaborative effort to understand and make relevant the material that is to be learned. This includes challenging each other! I will practice clarity, transparency, authenticity, humility, and genuineness to the course and our relationship. My hope is that you will afford me the same and that you will engage meaningfully in all aspects of the course.

Attendance Requirements:

Attendance will be recorded each class and will be part of your grade. Given the nature of this course, active class participation by everyone is essential; and punctual class attendance is mandatory. I expect that you will have completed the readings for each week prior to class to be ready to participate in class discussions. With that said, I understand LIFE HAPPENS, and so students will get full credit for attendance so long as this was 80% or more for the entire semester. Therefore, please do not hesitate to reach out if you need accommodations. You do not need to let me know you are not coming to class,

except for Exam Days, Presentation Days or if you will be missing more than 2 continuous class. I do not need details other than “life happens”. It is your responsibility to get missing notes and covered material from your classmates. Special and approved circumstances approved by the college will not count against attendance policy, it is your responsibility to begin this process with the college.

Email Communication:

I will respond regularly to email between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm Monday –Friday. If I have not responded to your email after two (2) business days, please resend the email. I will communicate all course-related materials and announcements using the email address you have listed in for D2L. You are encouraged to either check your email at least once a day or forward your account email to your preferred email provider. When emailing, please add to subject line “PSY 493” so I can quickly identify your email.

In-Person Class Expectations:

This class format is in-person, as such I will not record my classes nor provide hybrid options. However, given some academic commitments, I will give a few lectures live via Zoom, I have marked this on the course calendar (below). Attendance for either format as schedule remains required based on attendance policy for the class. Slides for class will be posted the day of class, but will not include additional notes covered during class.

Disability Access:

MSU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at www.rcpd.msu.edu. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a Verified Individual Services Accommodation (“VISA”) form. Please present this form to the professor at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). All requests for accommodation should go through the RCPD office.

Mandatory Reporting:

Essays, journals, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University's student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees, including instructors, may not be able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues to protect the health and safety of MSU community members and others. As the instructor, I must report the following information to other University offices (including the Department of Police and Public Safety) if you share it with me:

- Suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this maltreatment happened when you were a child,
- Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment when they involve MSU students, faculty, or staff, and
- Credible threats of harm to oneself or to others.

These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In almost all cases, it will be your decision whether you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting you are encouraged to make an appointment with the MSU Counseling Center.

Academic Honesty:

Academic dishonesty is defined as conduct that violates these principles: (a) supplying or using work or answers that are not one's own; (b) providing or accepting assistance with completing assignments or examinations; or (c) interfering through any means with another's academic work. Please note: if you study together, be sure that you do not submit verbatim or near-verbatim answers to assignments. To do so violates both the spirit and the letter of academic integrity. It is imperative that the work you turn in is your own work – even if you study together and jointly prepare assignments. The penalties for dishonesty will vary from getting 0 points on an individual assignment up to getting a 0.0 grade for the entire semester. Consistent with MSU's policy regarding penalty grades, all instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of the Registrar and your college.

Artificial Intelligence Policy:

This class is defined as intensive-writing, as such course assignments include various short-essay responses and term-paper. The use of ChatGPT or any similar AI platform or tool that generates written content for any of the class assignments are fully prohibited in this course. The only exception will be using AI support for grammar and spelling detection, which programs like Word already have included. Please note there is a clear difference between you writing something that then is corrected for grammar vs. having an AI tool generate the content. When in doubt, you can check with me.

All written assignments will be turn-in virtually using D2L, which will include Turnitin AI detectors. At my discretion, I will also use other AI detector platforms. Any work submitted that shows evidence for AI generated content will receive 0.0 graded and will be reported to the college as part of academic dishonesty. I will not provide a second opportunity to submit any assignment that failed to follow this policy. This class is designed to help you improve your writing skills, particularly for academic content, as such, there will be zero tolerance if failing to comply with this policy.

Use of APA style

All papers and written assignments must use APA formatting and style, including references, citations, use of non-biased language, etc. Students must refer to the APA Publication Manual, 7th edition, for all questions related to APA style.

Changes to Syllabus:

This syllabus is a contract and agreement between the student and the instructor. The included schedule, policies, and assignments are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances or by mutual agreement between the instructor and class participants.

Assignment Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

All assignments will be submitted via Canvas on the date indicated by each assignment, not through email or hard copies. Course assignments and grades are as follow:

1. **Midterms (3) (100 points for each exam; total of 300 points).** The exams will be in-person in class time. Exams will consist of multiple-choice items. Exam and scantrons will be provided. Please make sure to bring a pencil. See class schedule for specific content that will cover each exam. Exams will cover and include questions for all covered material, including class lectures, exercises, activities, readings, discussions, presentations, and video information. The specific date and time for each exam is specified in the course schedule provided in this syllabus.

- a. **To avoid make-up exams and because LIFE HAPPENS, I will replace your lower exam score with your next higher score by the end of the semester.** Only one exam score will be replaced. Make-up exams will be given only in extreme circumstances and only with advance notice to the instructor. If you miss more than one exam, only one of them will be replaced but for the second one, you will receive a zero for that exam, which will put your chances of passing the class at risk. Each exam should take 45-1hr on average to be completed, additional time will be provided for those that need it based on requested special accommodations.
 - b. You will be allowed to bring notes for exam in the form of ONE 4x6 inches Index card. Both sides allowed. I will collect them at the end of the exam and will add 1-3 extra points based on effort.
2. **Weekly readings, attendance and Participation (25 points attendance & 25 points participation).** Each student will be responsible for completing the assigned readings before class time for the chapter/section. Class readings will come from the assigned textbook and assigned articles (detailed in the reader section). See the course Reader below course schedule. Students might get randomly called for participation based on covered material and assigned readings.
3. **Current Issues Class Group Presentation (100 points).** Students will set up 10 teams (2-3 people max) and prepare a power-point presentation on a current issue(s)/topic(s) related to Latinx people in the United States and their well-being. Topics will overlap with areas covered in class (e.g., immigration, gender norms, LGBTQ issues, family). Because the assigned readings only provide an overview of the topic at hand, this assignment provides an opportunity for students to dive-in and thoroughly explore an area related to Latinx psychology they are most interested. Students' presentation will go deeper than the readings provided in class to provide a more nuanced picture about the topic at hand. **The presentation must cover 12-15 minutes.** In preparing for their presentation, students will make sure to keep in mind the following:
- a. See the course schedule for the weekly issues presentation topic, on Monday of Week 2 I will provide a sign-up list for the topic/week you'd like to present.
 - b. **(Teamwork, flow and content 30 points)** Each member must actively participate in the presentation, slides must show a flow and effort to summarize topics. Do not read from your slides (ok to have notes)
 - c. **(Sources 30 points)** Your presentation must include at least **four** current resources (e.g., book chapters, journal articles) about the topics at hand, not including the readings already assigned by the instructor.
 - d. **(Creativity and audience engagement 20 points)** When presenting the material, you must be engaging and involve members of the class, including but not limited to asking open-ended questions, showing a video relevant to your topic
 - e. When video material are less than 2 mins, your presentation can be 12 mins. If it is longer than 2mins, you will need to present for 15 mins. Video/audio materials cannot be more than 5 mins in total out of entire presentation.
 - f. Consider any additional background information your colleagues will need to help understand the information you are covering.
 - g. You can be as creative as would like with this assignment. For example, you may create a game about the information you are sharing, etc. There is no minimum or maximum number of slides as long as you cover the information in a creative, organized, and comprehensive manner. For example, you may use a poem to highlight a specific concept or include samples of artwork from Latinx artists and activists that showcases the topic you are covering.

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- h. (Handout 20 points)** You need to create a **1-page handout** that describes the main concepts of your presentation. **Please email this handout to your class the day you are presenting so that your classmates have access to it.** (10 points)
- 4. Final Term Paper (150 points).** For your term paper, you will write a literature review paper of 8 full double-spaced pages of content (not including covers or references, which should be part of the paper), that addresses a research question connected to Latinx community and mental health/psychology. You are welcome to use materials from class, but at minimum, 15 references (creditable sources) are required.
- a. **(Initial Consultation 10 points)** Because I want to make sure you do well in this assignment, I will ask you meet with me at least once during the first three weeks of classes to present your idea/research question.
 - b. **(Outline 20 point)** Submit a 1-page outline of your term paper (What is your research question, how would you break down your paper)
 - c. **(Draft 20 points)** Using your outline, you will send me a 3pg initial draft with at least 10 references you will use using APA format for references.
 - d. Full Content of **Final Term Paper will be 100 points.** More details and rubric will be provided.

Points Breakdown

Exams (3 x 100 each)	300 points
Attendance & Participation	50 points
Team Presentation	100 points
Final Term Paper	150 points
TOTAL	600 points

Grading Breakdown

4.0 = 541-600 points
3.5 = 522-540 points
3.0 = 498-521 points
2.5 = 462-497 points
2.0 = 438-461 points
1.5 = 402-437 points
1.0 = 378-401 points
0.0 = 0 -377 points

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
1	1/13/25	Introduction to Latinx Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Syllabus Introduction to class 	
1	1/15/25	Who are Latinx People in America?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 1 	Teams List and Sign-ups
2	1/20/25	NO CLASS	NO CLASS MLK Day	
2	1/22/25	Coloniality, Post-coloniality,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 5 Maldonado-Torres (2007) 	

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		Expulsion, Migration, and Adaption		
3	1/27/25	Latinx Critical Race Theory (LatCrit) Presentation Team 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aoki & Johnson (2008) • Montoya (1999) 	
3	1/29/25	NO CLASS		
4	2/3/25	Latinx Cultural Values	Chapter 8	
4	2/5/25 ZOOM	Latinx Cultural Values Presentation Team 2 ZOOM		
5	2/10/25 ZOOM	ZOOM Ethnic and Racial Ideologies and Skin Color Differences continuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch 2 • Adames et al., (2020) Chavez-Dueñas et al., (2014) 	
5	2/12/25 ZOOM	ZOOM Ethnic and Racial Ideologies and Skin Color Differences continuation And EXAM 1 Recap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for Exam 1 	Submit Outline
6	2/17/25	EXAM 1	Ch 1, 2, 5 & 8	
6	2/19/25	Gender Ideologies and Sexuality Presentation Team 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4 • Abreu et al., 2020a • Barrita et al 2024ab 	Meet w Me for Paper Ideas
7	2/24/29	Gender Ideologies and Sexuality		
7	2/26/29	Immigration Presentation Team 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3 (pp. 63-73) • Cadenas et al., (2018) • Barrita et al. (2024) 	
8	March 3-7	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK
9	3/10/25	Immigration continuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramos-Sánchez (2020) 	
9	3/12/25	Latinx Multidimensional Identity Presentation Team 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 Cerezo et al., (2020) 	
10	3/17/25	Latinx Multidimensional & Review for Exam 2 Presentation Team 6		

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10	3/19/25	EXAM 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CH 3,4 & 6 and all covered material 	
11	3/24/25	Health Service Utilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 7 	
11	3/26/25	Health Service Utilization Presentation Team 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 7 	
12	3/31/25	Education and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CH 10 Krogstad & Lopez (2020) Following Their Dreams in an Inequitable System: Latino Students Share Their College Experience (2020) Noe-Bustamante (2020) 	Submit Draft+ Sources
12	4/2/25	Education and Employment cont.... Presentation Team 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
13	4/7/25	Mental Health Outcomes and Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perez et al., (2011) Piedra et al., (2011) 	
13	4/9/25	Mental Health Outcomes and Needs Presentation Team 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aldarondo & Becker (2011) 	
14	4/14/25	Ethical Practice with Latinx Populations & Culturally Informed Responses for Latinx Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domenech Rodríguez (2020) CH 9 	
14	4/16/25	Review Exam 3 Presentation Team 10		
15	4/21/25	EXAM 3	Chapter 7, 9 and 10 and all covered materials	
15	4/24/24	(Tentative)		Term Paper Due Friday 4/26/25 @12 noon EST
16	4/28/24 12:45-2:45	FINAL EXAM DAY	No Exams but I will be present for any questions or approved make-up activities.	

Late Assignments

Unless officially approved, I will not accept late assignments, please stay on top of due dates and times marked in the syllabus.

Viewing Grades

I will aim to have the grades for each of the assignments or exams a week from the day they are completed/submitted. In the event this takes longer, I will inform you. After exams are graded, I will email the average scores for the class. Any questions that were missed by more than 50% of the class will be counted as correct. I will post your grades in D2L.

Concerns with Grades

While I will provide a rubric for most graded assignments, I recognize there is still a level of subjectivity. As such, you can challenge any grade for any assignment if you feel this should be reviewed again. The process to do so: 1) Write a one-page document where you express your concern (which assignment and or question you feel was not graded correctly), 2) Provide some explanation or evidence on why you think the grade was incorrect (give the answer or response you think was correct, reference lecture or class materials etc.), 3) Make sure to send this request within ONE week from the day grade was posted. If you follow these directions, I will review the score/grade. Note this can then mean your entire assignment will be re-evaluated which can move your score UP or DOWN or stay the same. Filing a request for re-evaluation of a graded assignment does not mean your grade will be changed, if not evidence for this is found. I will always follow up with an email after 2 weeks from the request and the option to meet and chat if you need additional information.

Academic Honesty as a Spartan:

The Spartan Code of Honor states, "As a Spartan, I will strive to uphold values of the highest ethical standard. I will practice honesty in my work, foster honesty in my peers, and take pride in knowing that honor is worth more than grades. I will carry these values beyond my time as a student at Michigan State University, continuing the endeavor to build personal integrity in all that I do." In addition, Article 2.III.B.2 of the Student Rights and Responsibilities (SRR) states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." The Psychology Department adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades. Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, papers and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Students who violate MSU academic integrity rules may receive a penalty grade, including a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also the Academic Integrity webpage.)

Inclusive Environment.

MSU is committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive community in which students, faculty, and staff can work together in an atmosphere free from all forms of discrimination. The Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) reviews concerns related to discrimination and harassment based on sex, gender, gender identity, race, national origin, religion, disability status, and any other protected categories under the University Anti-Discrimination Policy (https://www.hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/university-wide/ADP_policy.html) and Policy on Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct (<https://civilrights.msu.edu/policies/rvsm.html>). If you experience or witness acts of bias, discrimination, or harassment, please report these to OIE: <http://oie.msu.edu/>.

Disruptive Behavior:

Article 2.III.B.4 of [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) for students at Michigan State University states: "The student's behavior in the classroom shall be conducive to the teaching and learning process for all concerned." Article 2.III.B.10 states that "The student and the faculty share the responsibility for maintaining professional relationships based on mutual trust and civility." [General Student Regulation 5.02](#) states: "No student shall . . . obstruct, disrupt, or interfere with the functions, services, or directives of the University, its offices, or its employees (e.g., classes, social, cultural, and athletic events, computing services, registration, housing and food services, governance meetings, and hearings)." Students whose conduct adversely affects the learning environment may be subject to disciplinary action through the Student Judicial Affairs office.