



RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

LATINO WORKERS IN THE UNITED STATES

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Course Description

This course examines the experience of Latino workers in the United States through a review of current scholarship in the field. We draw on literature from sociology, economics, geography, demography, labor studies, and related disciplines. Topics include labor migration, U.S. foreign and domestic policy, patterns of Latino settlement, labor-force participation and occupational concentration, social networks and ethnic economies, spatial and skills mismatch, guest workers and undocumented workers, immigrant competition and complementarity, workplace safety, and worker organizing. Throughout the course, students will use evidence to evaluate competing explanations and policy responses affecting Latino workers in the United States.

Core Curriculum Learning Goal

CCD-1. Analyze the degree to which forms of human differences and stratifications among social groups shape individual and group experiences of, and perspectives on, contemporary issues. Such differences and stratifications may include race, language, religion, ethnicity, country of origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic status, abilities, or other social distinctions and their intersections.

Labor Studies & Employment Relations Learning Goal

Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experience of work (6).

School of Management & Labor Relations Learning Goal

Evaluate the context of workplace issues, public policies, and management decisions. (V)



Instructor's Learning Goals

At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

- Understand, critically analyze, and synthesize academic, policy, and popular sources regarding the experiences of diverse groups of Latino workers in the United States labor market.
- Use course scholarship to evaluate competing explanations of labor-market outcomes and workplace inequality.
- Distinguish between plausible claims, evidence-supported conclusions, and questions that cannot be answered from available evidence.
- Evaluate when generative AI is useful, when it oversimplifies or misrepresents evidence, and how AI-generated claims should be verified.
- Express ideas clearly and concisely in evidence-based written and visual communication.

Generative AI in This Course

AI use varies by assignment because the course is designed to develop both independent disciplinary reasoning and responsible AI literacy. Each deliverable will be clearly labeled with one of the following designations:

- **AI-Free:** Generative AI may not be used to develop, draft, rewrite, or complete the assignment.
- **Limited AI Use:** AI may be used only for the specific purposes identified in the assignment instructions.
- **AI Required/Permitted:** AI is intentionally incorporated into the learning activity. Students remain responsible for verification, source use, analysis, and disclosure as directed.

AI-generated information is not scholarly evidence. Students are responsible for following the AI directions attached to each assignment and for accurately representing their own intellectual work.

Course Organization

Week 1: Course Orientation & Social Networks

as a Lens on Latino Labor



Familiarize yourself with the course requirements, course project, grading structure, and academic integrity expectations. Set up your Canvas profile and participate in the Introductory Forum.

Required scholarly readings:

Park, S. S., Lai, T., & Waldinger, R. D. (2022). Unequal ties: Immigrants' initial social capital and labor market stratification. *Social Forces*, 101(1), 473–505.

Mundra, K., & Rios-Avila, F. (2024). Education-occupation mismatch and social networks for Hispanics in the U.S.: Role of citizenship. *Education Economics*, 32(2), 185–209.

Chellman, C., Conger, D., & Turner, L. J. (2023). Race and nativity earnings gaps: The role of college networks. *Economics of Education Review*, 93, 102356.

Gërzhani, K., & Kosyakova, Y. (2022). The effect of co-ethnic social capital on immigrants' labor market integration: A natural experiment. *Comparative Migration Studies*, 10, Article 15.

Deliverable: Content Forum 1: The Same Network, Advantage or Trap?

AI designation: AI-Free

Week 2: Introduction to Course Content

Review Week 2 – Introduction learning materials.

Read “Latinos in the United States Labor Market” by Lisa Catanzarite and Lindsey Trimble. Focus on key concepts such as mobility, educational disadvantage, ethnic economies, spatial mismatch, and skills mismatch rather than on dated descriptive statistics.

Read Gutierrez, D., Historic Overview of Latino Immigration and Demographic Transformation in the U.S., American Latino Theme Study.

Read Dubina, K. (2022), Hispanics in the Labor Force: 5 Facts.

Form your project group and submit group-member names according to the course calendar.



Week 3: Immigration & Native-Born Latinos

Review Week 3 – Immigration and Native-Born Latinos learning materials.

Review assigned materials on push-pull factors, Latino attitudes toward immigration policy, and demographic change.

Deliverable: Latino Groups Matrix: What Gets Lost in the Average?

AI designation: AI Required for the designated AI-analysis portion; students independently research, verify, analyze, and write the remainder of the assignment.

Week 4: Labor Force Participation & Occupations

Review Week 5 – Labor Force Participation learning materials and assigned readings/data on Latino labor-force characteristics, occupational concentration, workplace injury, brown-collar occupations, restaurant work, day labor, domestic labor, and related topics.

Submit the Course Project Topic and Contract according to the course calendar.

Deliverable: Content Forum 2: AI Explains Occupational Inequality. Should We Believe It?

AI designation: AI Required as an object of analysis. Students evaluate the instructor-provided AI response using assigned course evidence; students should not generate a substitute response.

Week 5: Spatial & Skills Mismatch

Review Week 6 – Spatial and Skills Mismatch learning materials.



Read assigned materials on spatial mismatch, job accessibility, commuting, immigrant networks, and employment opportunity.

Deliverable: Content Forum 3: You Have \$10 Million. What Would You Do?

AI designation: AI-Free

Weeks 6–7: Guest Workers & Undocumented Workers

Review Guest Workers and Undocumented Workers learning materials.

Read assigned materials on day labor, guest-worker programs, undocumented employment, taxes, workplace protections, and labor-market participation.

Complete Quiz 1 according to the course calendar.

Deliverable: Writing Assignment 2: Claim, Evidence, Verdict

AI designation: Limited AI Use. AI may be used only to identify commonly encountered public claims when permitted by the assignment. AI may not determine verdicts, analyze course readings, or write the submission.

Week 8: Integrating Labor-Market Explanations

Use the scholarship from Weeks 1–7 to compare human-capital, social-network/ethnic-economy, and structural/spatial/occupational explanations of Latino labor-market outcomes.

Continue development of the Latino Labor Policy Challenge with your group.

Deliverable: Writing Assignment 1: One Labor Market, Three Explanations



AI designation: AI-Free

Weeks 9–10: Latino Labor Policy Challenge

Work Period

These weeks are reserved for research, analysis, project development, and group collaboration.

Groups should evaluate the problem, affected populations, competing explanations, alternative policy solutions, evidence, implementation concerns, counterarguments, and possible unintended consequences.

Consult the Course Group Project Information area in Canvas for milestone and due-date information.

Week 11: Immigrant Competition vs.

Complementarity

Review Week 11 – Immigrant Competition vs. Complementarity learning materials.

Read assigned materials addressing whether immigrant labor competes with, complements, or otherwise affects native-born employment and wages.

Apply course evidence to distinguish empirical claims from assumptions or political rhetoric.

Weeks 12–13: Organizing Latino Workers

Review Organizing Latino Workers learning materials.



Review assigned materials on worker centers, labor organizing, community-based worker advocacy, the César Chávez Foundation, New Labor, and Farmingville.

Deliverable: Content Forum 4: You Are the Worker Center

AI designation: AI-Free. Students develop an initial strategy and then reassess it after the instructor releases a new development in the case.

Week 14: Synthesis & Final Assessments

Complete Quiz 2 according to the course calendar.

Submit the Latino Labor Policy Challenge group presentation, speaker notes, AI Methods Appendix, and individual contribution statement according to the course calendar.

Course Requirements

Reading, Audio, and Video Assignments

Students will read book chapters, peer-reviewed journal articles, policy reports, government data, and reputable journalism. Required readings will be posted or linked in the course shell. There is no required textbook. Students may also be assigned instructor-generated presentations, videos, documentaries, or audio material.

Latino Groups Matrix: What Gets Lost in the

Average? — 70 points

Students compare four Latino national-origin groups across educational attainment and at least three additional labor-market or demographic characteristics. Students first analyze a generative-AI description of Latino workers, then use current credible data to identify at least three generalizations, assumptions, inaccuracies, or omissions. The final



analysis uses course readings to explain observed differences and addresses what becomes invisible when diverse Latino populations are treated as a single category.

AI designation: AI Required for the designated AI-analysis portion.

Writing Assignment 1: One Labor Market, Three Explanations — 100 points

Students analyze the disproportionate representation of Latino workers in physically demanding, lower-paying, and/or dangerous occupations through three competing explanations: human capital/skills; social networks/ethnic economies; and structural/spatial/occupational segmentation. Students must evaluate what each explanation does and does not explain, compare their explanatory power, use multiple assigned readings, and identify evidence that could cause them to reconsider their conclusion.

AI designation: AI-Free.

Writing Assignment 2: Claim, Evidence, Verdict — 100 points

Students select and evaluate three commonly encountered claims concerning undocumented workers. For each claim, students identify the available evidence, determine what information is missing, and assign a verdict of Supported, Partially Supported, Unsupported, or Cannot Determine From Available Evidence. The assignment emphasizes evidence calibration, uncertainty, and the difference between plausible claims and evidence-supported conclusions.



AI designation: Limited AI Use as specified in the assignment instructions.

Content Discussion Forums – 60 points each

There are four content-related discussion forums. Forums are designed to apply and synthesize course scholarship rather than simply summarize readings or state opinions. Each forum uses a different problem-solving format, but all require substantive engagement with assigned readings, evidence-based reasoning, critical analysis, and meaningful interaction with classmates.

A reading is substantively integrated when a student uses a specific concept, argument, research finding, evidence, or conclusion from that source to develop reasoning. Simply mentioning an author, inserting a quotation, summarizing an article, or attaching a citation to a general statement does not constitute substantive engagement.

Peer responses must advance the discussion by challenging an assumption, introducing evidence, considering an alternative explanation, identifying missing information, reconsidering a conclusion, or responding to new information as directed by the forum. Responses that primarily agree, compliment, repeat, or summarize will not earn full credit.

Common Discussion Forum Rubric	Points
Initial Response & Completion of Forum Requirements	10
Integration and Application of Course Readings	15
Critical Thinking & Analysis	15
Use of Evidence & Support for Conclusions	8
Peer Response & Advancement of Discussion	7



Common Discussion Forum Rubric	Points
Mechanics, APA Formatting & Source Attribution	5
Total	60

Latino Labor Policy Challenge – 200 points

The group project has been redesigned as an evidence-based policy challenge. Each group acts as a Latino Labor Policy Advisory Team investigating a current issue affecting Latino workers in the United States. The project must answer: What should be done, by whom, and why does the available evidence support the recommendation?

Groups must:

- Define a focused contemporary labor problem and identify who is affected, avoiding treatment of Latino workers as a homogeneous population when evidence permits greater specificity.
- Use at least 10 credible sources, including at least five assigned course readings representing at least four course units.
- Develop and evaluate at least two credible explanations for why the problem exists.
- Identify and compare at least three plausible policy or organizational responses, including benefits, limitations, feasibility, stakeholder effects, costs, and unintended consequences.
- Make a specific, evidence-based recommendation identifying who should act, what should be done, and how implementation could occur.
- Present the strongest reasonable counterargument to the recommendation and explain why the group maintains, modifies, or qualifies its position.
- Identify specific evidence that would cause the group to reconsider its recommendation.
- Submit approximately 15–20 substantive slides, references, speaker notes, an AI Methods Appendix, and an individual contribution statement.



AI designation: AI Permitted With Required Disclosure. AI may support brainstorming, search-term development, organization, question generation, or feedback on clarity. AI-generated information is not evidence, and every factual claim must be traceable to an appropriate source. The AI Methods Appendix must document tool use, strengths, limitations, verification, and intellectual work retained by group members.

The project is graded using the following 200-point rubric:

Project Criterion	Points
Problem Definition & Population Analysis	20
Course Scholarship Integration	25
Research & Quality of Evidence	20
Competing Explanations	20
Alternative Policy Solutions	20
Recommendation & Implementation	20
Counterargument & Intellectual Challenge	15
AI Methods & Critical AI Literacy	10
Presentation Design & Communication	15
Group Collaboration & Individual Accountability	15
Mechanics & APA Formatting	10



Project Criterion	Points
Total	200

Online Quizzes

There are two quizzes during the term. Each quiz is worth 120 points and may include multiple-choice and true/false questions. Quiz dates are listed in the course calendar.

Course Grading

The final grade is based on a 1,000-point system. Each assignment is worth a specific number of points; total points accumulated determine the final course grade.

Grade	Points
A	900–1000
B+	870–899
B	800–869
C	700–799
D	600–699
F	599 and below

Assessment	Points	% of Course
Introductory Forum	50	5%



Assessment	Points	% of Course
Content Discussion Forums (4 × 60)	240	24%
Latino Groups Matrix	70	7%
Writing Assignment 1	100	10%
Writing Assignment 2	100	10%
Latino Labor Policy Challenge	200	20%
Quizzes (2 × 120)	240	24%
TOTAL	1000	100%

Policies and Procedures

Class Sessions and Engagement

The success of this course depends on active engagement and dialogue. You must be fully prepared to discuss, apply, and debate issues raised in assigned materials. The course week begins on Wednesday. You are expected to enter the course on the first day of the semester and remain engaged through the end of the course.

A weekly message will be posted in Canvas each Wednesday under Announcements. Each unit will introduce the topic, key concepts, learning materials, and required readings. Keeping current with course materials and assignments is vital to your success. Quiz material will draw heavily from lectures, assigned readings, writing assignments, and forum discussions.

Due Dates



This is not a self-paced class. All assignments must be completed by the dates listed in the course calendar and within Canvas. Forums lock at 11:59 p.m. on the Tuesday following the week in which they are assigned. Missed forums cannot be made up except where required by university policy or approved accommodation.

Academic Integrity and Source Use

Students are expected to comply with Rutgers University academic integrity requirements. All submitted work must accurately represent the student's own intellectual contributions and appropriately acknowledge the work of others. Requirements governing generative AI are assignment-specific and are part of the academic integrity expectations for this course. When AI use is permitted or required, students remain responsible for factual accuracy, source verification, citation, and required disclosure.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, Google Gemini, Claude, and similar technologies are increasingly part of education and the workplace. Learning to use these tools responsibly includes knowing both **when AI can be useful and when independent thinking is necessary**.

In this course, AI is not treated simply as either "allowed" or "prohibited." Instead, assignments are designed to help you develop your own critical thinking, research, and writing skills while also learning how to critically evaluate and appropriately use emerging technologies.

AI Expectations Vary by Assignment

Each major assignment or discussion will identify the level of AI use permitted. You are responsible for following the AI expectations stated in the individual assignment instructions.

AI-Free



For assignments identified as **AI-Free**, you may not use generative AI to brainstorm, outline, summarize readings, develop arguments, generate examples, compose responses, revise writing, or otherwise assist with completing the assignment.

These activities are intentionally designed to assess your independent understanding of course concepts, assigned readings, and ability to reason with evidence.

Limited AI Use

For assignments identified as **Limited AI Use**, AI may be used only for the specific purposes identified in the assignment instructions. For example, an assignment may permit AI to help identify possible topics or commonly encountered claims while requiring you to independently conduct the research, analyze course readings, evaluate evidence, reach conclusions, and write the final submission.

Using AI beyond the specifically permitted purposes does not meet the assignment requirements.

AI Required or Permitted

Some assignments will intentionally ask you to work with generative AI. You may be asked to generate an AI response and then investigate it, compare it with scholarly evidence, identify inaccuracies or oversimplifications, determine what information is missing, or improve upon the AI-generated explanation.

In these assignments, **using AI is not the learning objective by itself**. Your grade will be based primarily on what *you* do with the AI output: your verification, analysis, application of course scholarship, critical thinking, and conclusions.

AI Is Not a Course Source

Unless an assignment specifically states otherwise, generative AI should **not be used as a scholarly source or as evidence supporting a claim**.

AI-generated information can sound authoritative while being incomplete, inaccurate, overly generalized, outdated, or entirely fabricated. AI tools may also invent quotations, statistics, authors, article titles, publication information, or references.

You are responsible for verifying information obtained through AI before using it in any course activity.



Do not cite or reference a source that you have not personally located and reviewed. If AI provides a quotation, statistic, research finding, or reference, you must verify it against the original source before relying on it.

Your Course Readings Cannot Be Replaced by AI

Assigned readings are a central part of this course. When an assignment requires you to substantively incorporate course readings, asking AI to summarize those readings does not substitute for reading and analyzing them yourself.

Substantive engagement means using specific concepts, arguments, findings, evidence, or conclusions from assigned materials to develop your reasoning.

Your work should demonstrate what **you learned from engaging with the course scholarship**, not what an AI system says the scholarship contains.

AI May Assist Your Thinking, But It Should Not Replace It

When AI use is permitted, think of AI as a tool that can assist part of your learning process rather than as a substitute for intellectual work.

Unless an assignment specifically directs you to do so, you should not ask AI to:

- write your discussion post, paper, analysis, or presentation content;
- determine your argument or conclusion for you;
- analyze course readings in place of your own reading;
- generate evidence that you present without verification;
- create citations or references that you have not verified;
- complete an AI-Free assignment; or
- rewrite AI-generated material merely to make it appear to be your own work.

Changing a few words in AI-generated writing does not make the intellectual work your own.

Disclosure of AI Use

Whenever you use generative AI on an assignment for which AI use is permitted or required, you must include a brief **AI Use Disclosure** at the end of your submission.

Your disclosure should identify:

1. the AI tool(s) you used;



2. what you used the tool to do; and
3. how you evaluated, verified, revised, or otherwise used the resulting information.

If you did not use AI, state that you did not use generative AI for the assignment.

Example: AI Used

AI Use Disclosure: I used ChatGPT to generate several possible public claims about undocumented workers. I selected three claims for further investigation. I independently reviewed the assigned course readings and other permitted sources, evaluated the evidence, determined my verdicts, and wrote the final analysis myself.

Example: AI Required by the Assignment

AI Use Disclosure: I used Microsoft Copilot to generate the response required in Part 1 of this assignment. I compared the AI response with the assigned readings and demographic data, identified several unsupported generalizations, and independently completed the critique and analysis.

Example: No AI Used

AI Use Disclosure: I did not use generative AI to complete this assignment.

For **AI-Free assignments**, you may simply include:

AI Use Disclosure: I completed this assignment without the use of generative AI.

Course Project and Group Work

Generative AI may be used for the **Latino Labor Policy Challenge** as described in the project instructions. Because this project requires more extensive research and collaboration, groups must complete the required **AI Methods Appendix** identifying the tools used, how they were used, what the group found AI did well or poorly, how AI-generated information was verified, and which intellectual work remained the responsibility of group members.

AI-generated material does not count toward the project's required scholarly or course sources.

Responsibility for Submitted Work



You are responsible for everything you submit, regardless of whether AI contributed to the process.

The fact that an AI tool generated inaccurate information, fabricated a citation, misrepresented a reading, or produced inappropriate language does not remove your responsibility for including that material in your work.

Failure to follow an assignment's stated AI requirements, including using AI on an AI-Free assignment, exceeding the permitted level of AI assistance, presenting AI-generated work as your own, fabricating or failing to verify sources, or failing to disclose required AI use, may be treated as a failure to meet assignment requirements and/or an academic integrity concern consistent with Rutgers University policy.

The Guiding Principle

The purpose of this policy is not to avoid AI. It is to learn when and how to use it responsibly while protecting the intellectual work that is essential to your learning.

Throughout this course, ask yourself:

Is AI helping me think more critically, or is it doing the thinking I am supposed to be learning how to do?

When AI use is permitted, the first can be valuable. The second does not meet the expectations of this course.

Communication

You should inform the professor of personal emergencies that may prevent you from participating in the course. Email is the preferred method of communication, and messages are generally answered as promptly as possible. Please communicate early when you have questions or concerns; communication is crucial to your success in the course.

Accommodation Requests



Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. To receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, students should contact the appropriate disability services office, complete the intake and documentation process, and provide the instructor with the resulting Letter of Accommodations. Additional information is available through Rutgers Office of Disability Services at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>.

**The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus, assignments, course content, or course schedule as appropriate to enhance the learning experience.*