ETHN 116: The U.S.-Mexico Border in Comparative Perspective
Spring Quarter, 2015
MWF, 10:00-10:50am, Mandeville B-150

Instructor: José I. Fusté, Ph.D.
Office Hours: Mondays, 2:00-3:00pm @ Perks Coffee (Price Ctr.), or by appointment
Email: jfuste@ucsd.edu

This course examines the dynamic interaction between the (re)production of discourses of citizenship and sovereignty in the United States vis-à-vis Mexico and the histories of immigration, settlement, and boundary demarcation and militarization in the border regions between these two countries. We will pay close attention to how U.S. border policies legitimize the violent disciplining of those deemed to belong outside the homeland by virtue of their racial/gender/class/sexual identities. We will also consider how the physical border casts shadows inward into both countries, creating less visible but equally powerful boundaries that further criminalize and contain those deemed to be “alien” to each respective nation-state.

Required Readings: The following text will be available for purchase in the Price Center Bookstore:

Nevins, Joseph. Operation Gatekeeper and Beyond: The War on “Illegals” and the Remaking of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary. Taylor & Francis, 2010. (If you decide to buy it online: make sure that you get the 2010 edition and not the older edition from 2002 that doesn’t have “and Beyond” in the title.)
All other readings or videos for this class will be available for download or online viewing via our course’s TED Blackboard website which can be accessed at http://ted.ucsd.edu.

*Readings and assignments are subject to change. This syllabus is not a contract, so make sure you stay up to date on any possible changes to the readings or the schedules. If I do make changes, I will mention it in class and will email you a proper notification.***

**Projects, Assessment, and Grade Distribution**

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation and attendance</td>
<td>10% e/a = 20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Essay #1 (5 pp.)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Essay #2 (5 pp.)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Quizzes (2 of them)</td>
<td>5% e/a = 10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>20%</td>
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**For due dates, please see schedule below**

**Attendance and Participation**

I expect you to attend all class meetings and participate actively. I will take points off for every absence (I only make exceptions if you bring me a valid medical or written excuse). I will also take points off if you don’t participate in class and show me that you’re keeping up to date with the reading and the discussion. If you are a shy person and do not feel as comfortable as others speaking in class, please try to make up for this by stopping by my office hours for a chat, which also counts toward participation or by emailing me your questions or observations about the readings or lectures.

**Critical Essays (2 of them)**

You will have to complete two 5pp. long “critical essays” over the course of the quarter. I will send you writing prompts for these. You can choose to come up with an original argument (as long as you clear it with me at least a week in advance before the paper is due). For paper deadlines, please see weekly schedule below. All paper assignments will be uploaded to Turnitin.com (via our TED Blackboard). That means you don’t have to turn in a paper copy.

**TED Blackboard Reading Quizzes**

You will also have to complete 2 online quizzes on the readings. I will actually give you three of these and count the best two completed quizzes. They will usually consist of five multiple choice questions on the readings/videos assigned for that day or for readings/videos comprising each thematic unit (see “Unit I,” “Unit II,” etc. in reading schedule below). Whenever there is a quiz due, I will announce it in lecture and I will send an email reminder after class, then the quiz will be due that evening. You may not have time to cram all the readings or video watching that you will need to do to get a good score in half a day. These quizzes are meant to incentivize reading and the watching of assigned videos so make sure you stay up to date with the schedule provided below.
Final Project

The final project is due on Wednesday, June 10 at 11:59pm via the TED Blackboard. Please choose one of the following three options:

1. **Research paper (7pp. long):** This paper should present a well-researched paper (i.e., with a thesis/argument) about one or several cases that illustrate how race, space, segregation, and power intersect in the U.S./Mexico Border. In order to make your case, you may use lecture materials, course readings, and at least three outside (academic or activist) sources. Your paper should not only convey the who, what, when, and where of the case, but also how it connects the course themes and theoretical frameworks.

2. **Ethnographic paper (7pp. long):** An ethnographic study consists of a research project that uses qualitative research methods to provide a detailed, in-depth description of everyday life and practice. Normally, an ethnographer conducts interviews, takes notes of these and/or records them, and both observes whatever she is studying (e.g., a particular case of racial segregation). If you choose this option, you will write a short ethnographic paper on something related to the San Diego/Tijuana border. Like the research paper, it too must have an “angle” or a thesis that guides its analysis (NOTE: I have some good handouts with advice on how to write ethnography papers so if you decide to go down this route, email me and I’ll send them to you).

3. **Creative Project (due: project + 3pp. “process essay”):** Possible formats include video documentaries, “radio documentaries” (ask me what this is), original songs or compositions, a video-recorded spoken word performance, a visual arts project or series, a recorded dance or performance art piece, a photo essay, a comic book, a mock website, any form of graphic design, a series of t-shirts or fashion, other kinds of material objects of your creation, or pretty much any format that might suit your talents (including mixed media formats that combine these). The “catch” with this option is that you have to clear your ideas with me first by June 1st. Also, you will have to submit a 3 pp. “process essay” that reflects on how your creative project relates to the themes we will be discussing in our class meetings (see instructions for that below). NOTE: songs should be 2-5 min max., dance and performance pieces should be 5-10 minutes, films should be 2-5 min max., photo essays must include at least 10 substantially different photos, analysis of art / art criticism should include at least 5 works you will be comparing, comics should be at least 4 pages (could be four separate flyers or one 4 page story) with all text/dialogue printed out on an additional word document.

Late Work Policy

All papers will be uploaded to Turnitin.com via our course’s blackboard website (i.e., ted.ucsd.edu). Late submission of assignments will be accepted only in verifiable emergencies, and only by arrangement with me prior to 2:00 p.m. on the due date. Assignments turned in late without prior approval will be graded down 3 points (one “step” of a grade) for each 24-hour period past the due date (no exceptions).

Academic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty is any act by a student that misrepresents the student’s own academic work or that compromises the academic work of another. Examples include cheating on assignments or exams, unauthorized collaboration on assignments or exams, sabotaging another student’s work and plagiarizing. Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s work as your
own, intentionally or not, by failing to put quotation marks around passages taken from a text or failing to properly cite quoted material. The University guideline for penalizing academic misconduct is determined by the professor of the course. Any act of academic dishonesty may result in one's failing the course.

My Email Policy

Please email me with questions and/or concerns about the course. I will respond within the next 24 hours. If you have an important personal question such as inquiring about a grade or class discussion, please visit me during office hours or schedule an appointment with me.

A Note About Reading Volume

Research indicates that the average U.S. college student reads about 20 pages per hour. As you will notice below, I've assigned roughly between 90-110 pages of reading per week (i.e., 4.5-5.5 hours of reading per week). Please make sure that you stay on top of the readings.

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**Majoring or Minoring in Ethnic Studies at UC San Diego**

Many students take an Ethnic Studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a social science, non-contiguous, or other college requirement. Often students have taken three or four classes out of “interest” yet have no information about the major or minor and don't realize how close they are to a major, a minor, or even a double major. An Ethnic Studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, public policy, government and politics, journalism, education, public health, social work, international relations, and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor at UCSD, please contact Daisy Rodriguez, our Ethnic Studies Undergraduate Advisor, at 858-534-3277 or d1rodriguez@ucsd.edu.

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<tr>
<td><strong>Critical Essay #1 Due Date</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sunday, May 3 at 11:59 pm;</strong> due on the TED Blackboard (<em>I will send you the paper prompt two weeks before</em>)</td>
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<td><strong>Critical Essay #2 Due Date</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sunday, May 31 at 11:59 pm;</strong> due on the TED Blackboard (<em>I will send you the paper prompt two weeks before</em>)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Final Project Due</strong></td>
<td><strong>Wednesday, June 10 at 11:59 pm;</strong> due on the TED Blackboard,</td>
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Weekly Schedule

***Remember, all these readings will be posted as PDF files on our blackboard homepage***

Unit I. The U-S/Mexico Border in Historical and Theoretical Perspective

**Week 1 work volume: 56pp. of reading (approx. 2.8 hrs. of reading)**

**Session 1A- 3/30-
No readings; first class.**

**Session 1B- 4/1-

**Session 1C- 4/3-

Unit II. The U-S/Mexico Border as Nation-State Boundary and Militarized Zone

**Week 2 work volume: 90pp. of reading (approx. 4.5 hrs. of reading)**

**Session 2A- 4/6-


**Session 2B- 4/8-


**Session 2C- 4/10-

**Week 3 work volume: 102pp. of reading (approx. 5 hrs. of reading)**
Session 3A- 4/13-

Session 3B- 4/15-

Session 3C- 4/17-

Unit III. Border Foundations: Racialization and Gendering in Border Vigilance

Week 4 work volume: 87pp. of reading (approx. 5.5 hrs. of reading) + 25 mins. of video watching

Session 4A- 4/20-

Session 4B- 4/22-


Session 4C- 4/24-
Oliviero, Katie E. “Sensational Nation and the Minutemen: Gendered Citizenship and Moral Vulnerabilities” Signs 36, No. 3 (Spring 2011): 679-706 (27pp.)

Watch: “Rights on the Line: Vigilantes at the Border” (2005, 25 mins.) - - I will provide a link that will allow you to stream the movie from your computer

Unit IV. Border Vigilance and the Social Construction of (the) Disease(d)
**Session 5A- 4/27**

**Session 5B- 4/29**

**Unit V. The Border and Settler Colonialism**

**Session 5C- 5/1**

**INTERLUDE: The Border as Purgatory**

**Watch: “The Border Crossed Us” (2005, 26 mins., directed by Rachael J. Nez Dine’) - I will provide a link that will allow you to stream the movie from your computer**

**Session 6A- 5/4**

**Watch: “Purgatorio: A Journey into the Heart of the Border” (2015, 80 mins. directed by Rodrigo Reyes) - I will provide a link that will allow you to stream the movie from your computer**

**Session 6B- 5/6**

**Watch: “Sleep Dealer” (2009, 90 mins. directed by Alex Rivera) - I will provide a link that will allow you to stream the movie from your computer**

**Unit VI: The Border as a “Membrane” of Neoliberal Globalization**

**Session 6C- 5/8**

**Week 7 work volume: 63pp. of reading (approx. 5.5 hrs. of reading) + 68 mins. of video watching**
Session 7A- 5/11-

Watch: “Maquilapolis: City of Factories” (2006, 68 mins., directed by Vicky Funari) - I will provide a link that will allow you to stream the movie from your computer

Session 7B- 5/13-

Session 7C- 5/15-

Unit VII: The Border and the Outsourcing of Environmental Injustice

Session 7D- 5/20-

Unit VIII. Narco-Culture and Border Violence

Week 8 work volume: approx. 110pp. of reading (approx. 5.5 hrs. of reading)

Session 8A- 5/18-


Unit IX. Refugees and Border Fears

Session 8B- 5/20-
Turkewitz, Julie. “Fear Is Driving Young Men Across the U.S. Border.” The Atlantic (June, 2014): (online)


Session 8C- 5/22-

**Unit X. The Border as a Space of Gendered Labor Exploitation, Sexual Violence, and Femicide**

**Week 9 work volume: 83pp. of reading (approx. 5.5 hrs. of reading) + 2 hrs. of video watching**

**Session 9A- 5/25 - Memorial Day - No Class**

*Watch: “Performing the Border” (1999, 42 mins., directed by Ursula Biemann) - I will provide a link that will allow you to stream the movie from your computer*


**Session 9B- 5/27**


*Watch: “Señorita Extraviada” (1993, 76 mins., directed by Lourdes Portillo) - I will provide a link that will allow you to stream the movie from your computer*

**Unit XI. Organizing for Social Justice at the Border**

**Session 9C- 5/29**


**Unit XII. Reimagining the Border through Writing, Art, and Artivism**

**Week 10 work volume: 63pp. of reading (approx. 3 hrs. of reading)**

**Session 10A- 6/1**


**Session 10B- 6/3**


cardenas, micha, and Carroll, Amy Sara, and Stalbaum, Brett. “The Transborder Immigrant Tool: Violence, Solidarity and Hope in Post-NAFTA Circuits of Bodies Electr(on)/ic” (9pp.)
Session 10C- 6/5-

No Readings Assigned/ Time to Catch up and review!