

ETHN 116: The United States–Mexico Border in Comparative Perspective (Winter 2019)

MWF 3:00-3:50 PM, HSS 2150

Instructor: Crystal R. Pérez, PhD

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Office: SSB 243

Office Hours: Fridays 12:30-2:30PM & by appointment

Course Description:

This course focuses on the study of the U.S.-Mexico border through a comparative and interdisciplinary lens. We will begin with readings and films that situate our critical understanding of the history that drastically shifted the U.S.-Mexico border in the 19th century. The course has a strong focus on 20th century history, laws, texts, and films. More specifically, the course aims to re-think the U.S.-Mexico border beyond the geographical localized region along the international border and instead positions the U.S.-Mexico border in a global/hemispheric setting. Thus, we will pay close attention to the refugee/immigrant experience from Guatemala during the 1980s-90s and to U.S. foreign policy in Latin America during the mid-20th century. Secondly, the course explores how a “moral crisis” around protection of the border produces more policing in places far-removed from the U.S.-Mexico border region. Attention will also be placed on how this policing is not mapped equally, but rather, it deploys race, gender and sexuality to enforce ideas of belonging/un-belonging. Lastly, we will explore how visual artists and filmmakers have interrupted and narrativized the border in oppositional ways.

Course Materials & Tools

Novel: Hector Tobar, *The Tattooed Soldier* (hard copy please; available on Amazon.com)

Film: Gregory Nava’s *El Norte* (1983). Available at Geisel or stream through UCSD’s Kanopy. All other required readings for this class will be available for download via TritonED.

Kanopy: <https://ucsd.kanopy.com> (if streaming from off-campus, sign-on to UCSD VPN).

TritonEd <https://triton.ed.ucsd.edu> Login: UC San Diego Active Directory credentials

Course Format & Requirements

Given the size of this course our class meetings will be a combination of lecture, discussion, and in-class activities. Fridays will be especially student-centered as groups will be presenting and facilitating class conversations.

Attendance and Participation (20%). For this grade component, it is essential that students attend class consistently, arrive on time, and are prepared to participate:

- Full participation means being in class having read and **printed all required readings**. Reading from cellphones constitutes not being prepared to participate.
- Engaging your full attention in lecture, group work, in-class writing or film-watching assignments, and by participating in class discussion.

- For meaningful discussions to take place, observe respectful written, verbal, and nonverbal communication. Also see: [Principles of Community](#).
- Claims or arguments should reflect consideration of course texts.

Group Presentation + news piece (10%). Small groups (3 max) will find and post one relevant news article/piece to TritonED Discussion Board by Wednesday at 5:00pm and on that Friday the group(s) will present the news piece **in relation** to our week's readings and prepare 2 discussion questions. Non-presenters should read/watch the selected item by that Friday to be best prepared to engage presenters. Presentation + facilitation should be 15-20 minutes.

Quizzes (15%). There will be three unannounced quizzes that will focus on required readings for the week/day of the quiz. These cannot be made up.

Mid-point Essay (20%). This mid-quarter assignment will allow you to capitalize on your knowledge of readings week 1-5. Prompt and rubric will be circulated Week 5 (5 pages max). More details TBD.

Final Proposal (5%). Submit a two-page proposal (double-spaced) of your final project for instructor approval. In it explain your choice of final project, scope, and readings that will inform your final project by Monday of week 9.

Final Project (25%). You will have a choice between a traditional research paper or a creative piece + process essay. Rubrics and prompts will be circulated via TritonEd.

Option A, Research Paper (7pp): research one of our class topics further and make a claim using evidence from class and also 3 additional outside sources.

Option B, Creative Project + Process Essay (3 pages): possible formats include video documentaries, creative literary pieces (poems, songs, plays, spoken word, etc.), photo essay, comic book, children's book, etc.

Draft of Final (5%). A draft of the final will be due Wed of Week 10 for peer-review. Actual Final will be due during finals week. Draft will be for credit only (0% or 5%); no letter grade.

Grade Breakdown

Attendance/Participation	20%
Group Presentation + news article	10%
Pop Quizzes (3 at 5%)	15%
Mid-point Essay	20%
Final Proposal	5%
Draft of Final	5%
Final Project	25%

Total	100%
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Email Policy. Please observe standard email etiquette and formatting. Send all email from your UCSD account. I will typically respond to your questions within 24 hours during Mon-Friday. I am less responsive over the weekend. Email is a good way to ask short and/or logistical questions or set up office appointments. If you have questions that require an in-depth answer, please see me during office hours.

Late Work is only accepted only in the case of verifiable emergencies or by making arrangements with me 72 hours before due date. Any other cases of late work will be penalized -5% for every 24-hour period late.

Academic Integrity: Each student is expected to abide by UCSD's Code of Academic Integrity. When submitting work, please use your own ideas or to credit/cite your sources when borrowing from others. If you have any doubts or questions about what counts as plagiarism, please consult UCSD's Academic Integrity Office (<http://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu>) or see me in office hours.

Learning Resources: [Writing Hub](#); [Supplemental Instruction](#) ; [Tutoring](#); [Mental Health Services](#)

Community Centers: Learn about the different community centers on campus (Raza Resource Centro, Black Resource Center, LGBT Resource Center, etc.)
<https://students.ucsd.edu/student-life/diversity/index.html>

Accessibility: Students requesting accommodations for this course due to a disability must provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) which is located in University Center 202 behind Center Hall. Students are required to present their AFA letters to Faculty (please make arrangements to contact me privately) and to the OSD Liaison in the department in advance so that accommodations may be arranged. Contact the OSD for further information:
<https://disabilities.ucsd.edu/> | osd@ucsd.edu | 858. 534.4382

Majoring or Minor in Ethnic Studies

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 do not 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, education, medicine, public health, social work, counseling, journalism, government and politics, international relations, and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor, please contact: 858-534-3277 or ethnicstudies@ucsd.edu or visit www.ethnicstudies.ucsd.edu

Syllabus Subject to Change. The syllabus is a living document and changes may happen. If changes are made, you will be notified in a timely manner via TritonEd and/or in class.

Course Schedule

UNIT 1. FOUNDATIONS: BORDER THEORIES, CONSTRUCTIONS, AND HISTORIES

Week 1 Topics, Assignments and Due Dates

M 1/7 Introduction to Course & Syllabus Review

W 1/9 Shifting Borders: Beyond the International Border Crossings
 READ: 1) Mary Pat Brady “The Fungibility of Borders” 2) ACLU “The Constitution in the 100-mile border zone.”

F 1/11 U.S Southwest as War Zone and Homeland
 READ: 1) Gloria Anzaldúa, Ch. 1 “The Homeland, Aztlán” from *Borderlands/La Frontera*
 In-Class: Screening of *Foreigners in Their Own Land*

Week 2 Re-thinking the U.S.-Mexico Border

M 1/14 READ: Joseph Nevins, Ch. 1 “On Gate Keeping and Boundary Making”

Sign-up for Group Presentations

W 1/16 READ: Joseph Nevins, Ch. 2 “Nation Building in the Borderlands: Constructing the U.S.–Mexico Boundary”

F 1/18 READ: Student-provided news articles and be ready to discuss
 In-Class: Group Presentations

Week 3

M 1/21 **No Class Meeting- Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday**

W 1/23 READ: Joseph Nevins, Ch. 3 “Generating Difference in San Diego–Tijuana”

F 1/25 **No Class Meeting**

1) READ: Nevins, Ch. 4 “Sharpening the Divide: from Border to Boundary”

2) WATCH: Gregory Nava, *El Norte* (free streaming via UCSD-Kanopy)

UNIT 2. A HEMISPHERIC APPROACH TO THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER

Week 4 Beyond the U.S.-Mexico Territory: U.S. Militarism in Latin America

M 1/28 READ: 1) Susanne Jonas, “Guatemalan Migration in Times of Civil War and Post-War Challenges.” 2) Camila Fojas, “Schizopolis: Border Cinema and the Global City (of Angels)”

W 1/30 READ: Lesley Gill “Introduction: The Military, Political Violence, and Impunity” from *The School of the Americas*

F 2/1 READ: Lesley Gill, Ch. 1 "Georgia Not on Their Minds" from *The School of the Americas*.
In-Class: Group Presentations

Week 5
M 2/4 Internal borders: Displaced Bodies and Policing
READ: 1) Part I of Hector Tobar, *The Tattooed Soldier*;
2) Mike Davis, "Fortress City" from *City of Quartz*

W 2/6 READ: Part II of *The Tattooed Soldier*

F 2/8 READ: Part III of *The Tattooed Soldier*
Assign: Mid-Point Essay
In-Class: Group Presentations

Week 6
M 2/11 The Discursive and Legal Construction of Immigrant Criminality
READ: Garcia, Ruben J., "Critical Race Theory and Proposition 187: The Racial Politics of Immigration Law"

W 2/13 READ: Joseph Nevins, "The Ideological Roots of the Illegal as Threat and the Boundary as Protector" (pp. 118-154)

F 2/15 READ: ACLU IRP Issue Brief: "Criminalizing Undocumented Immigrants"
In-Class: Group Presentations

Unit III: Protecting the Body Politic? Policing Race, Gender, and Sexuality at the Border
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Week 7
M 2/18 The Body Politic: Setting Borders for the Undocumented Reproductive Body
No Class - Presidents' Day Holiday

W 2/20 READ: Tamar Diana Wilson, "Anti-Immigrant Sentiment and the Problem of Reproduction." In-Class Screening: "No Mas Bebés" (selection)

F 2/22 "No Mas Bebés" (selection) In-Class: Group Presentations
Assign: Final Proposal

Week 8
M 2/25 READ: Dorothy E. Roberts "Who May Give Birth to Citizens? Reproduction, Eugenics, and Immigration."

W 2/27 READ: Luibheid, Eithne Ch. 4 "Looking Like a Lesbian: Sexual Monitoring at the U.S.-Mexican Border"

F 3/1 Finish: READ: Luibheid, Eithne Ch. 4 "Looking Like a Lesbian: Sexual Monitoring at the U.S.-Mexican Border"
In-Class: Group Presentations

Unit IV. Mobilizing Border Art, Photo, & Film: Counter-Mapping the Borderlands

Week 9

- M 3/4 READ: Anne-Laure Amilhat Szary "Walls and Border Art: The Politics of Art Display"
DUE: Final Proposal
- W 3/6 READ: Jo-Anne Berelowitz "Marcos Ramirez Erre: Border Art 'From This Side'"
- F 3/8 In-Class: Group Presentations

Week 10

- M 3/11 READ: Hans-Maximo Musielik, "Haitijuana," In-class screening: Ebony Bailey's "Life Between Borders: Black migrants in Mexico."
- W 3/13 Draft of Final: Peer-Feedback Exchange
Due: Draft of Final
- F 3/15 Course Reflection & Wrap-Up: In-Class: Group Presentations

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