

Fall 2019: Aug 26, 2019 - Dec 05, 2019
American Cinema of the US-Mexico Border
CHIC 3347 001 Syllabus
3 credits

Class 1:30 pm - 2:50 pm MW Education Building 114

The University of Texas At El Paso
Chicano Studies Program
500 W. University Ave.
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Course Instructor: Elvira Carrizal-Dukes, MFA
Office Hours: Contact via Blackboard Course Messages
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Content Introduction

This course is designed to provide students with an overview of film and television productions situated in U.S.-Mexico borderlands and the skills necessary to critically analyze these visual representations. Students will learn about cinematic theory, aesthetics, genres, and basic cinema criticism. Students will analyze cinema through an examination of the U.S.-Mexico border to view cinema critically, to develop a systematic and convincing interpretation of the films they watch, and to acquire the ability to analyze cinema in well-constructed and persuasive essays.

Course Objective

This course is designed to assist you in learning the aesthetic and technical fundamentals of cinema arts and border rhetorics through lectures, readings, screenings, discussions and assignments. This class provides opportunities for you to develop your skills in writing about and discussing films through semiotics.

Course Description

This course will examine the U.S.-Mexico border as a critical space of inquiry by focusing on the cinematic and televisual representations of the border in Hollywood, independent, and Chicana/o/x cinema. We will discuss how the border is constructed cinematically and examine the historical, social, and cultural representations of the border. We will view these depictions through

various genres to ground our discussion in order to critically analyze how these visual rhetorics shape the way we think about the border, borderland culture, and the people who inhabit it.

Course Rationale

This course is part of the interdisciplinary major in Chicano Studies (30 semester hours of core courses) and of the minor (18 hours): Social Science Option, Humanities Option, Fine Arts Option, and Interdisciplinary Option.

Prerequisites

- None

Learning Outcomes

At the successful completion of this course, you will understand

- the past and present depiction of the U.S.-Mexico border in the American film industry;
- the concepts of race, culture, class and gender via the analysis of contemporary societal issues within U.S.-Mexico border films;
- filmmaking techniques that account for various cinema genres and styles;
- the stories, characters, and themes in U.S.-Mexico border films;
- the goals, implications, and characteristics of films about the U.S.-Mexico border.

At the successful completion of this course, you will be able to

- discuss the various styles of filmmaking;
- read cinema as a text and decipher its messages;
- write and develop usable film essays;
- employ story formula characteristics for making a short film; create short video projects that demonstrate an understanding of border rhetorics.

Important dates

Aug 26 th	Fall classes begin
Sept 2 nd	Labor Day Holiday- University Closed
Sept 11 th	Fall Census Day
Nov 1 st	Fall Drop/Withdrawal Deadline
Nov 28-29 th	Thanksgiving Holiday - University Closed
Dec 5 th	Fall - last day of classes
Dec 6 th	Dead Day
Dec 9-13 th	Fall Final Exams
Dec 19 th	Grades are posted to student records; students are notified of grades and academic standing

Course Policies and Procedures

Blackboard

This is a face-to-face web-enhanced course. Some course material will be placed on Blackboard such as this syllabus. Some assignment submissions must be submitted through Blackboard.

Blackboard is a tool that allows faculty to add resources for students to access online. Powerpoint, Captivate, video, audio, animation, and other applications are created outside of Blackboard and added into Blackboard courses for students to enhance teaching and learning efforts. Assignment and schedule details as well as assignment grading can be found on Blackboard. If you need a hard copy of this syllabus, print it.

Uploading and downloading assignments, syllabus and readings will be on **Blackboard**.

How to Login to Blackboard

Blackboard is tied to my.utep.edu. If you are properly registered for the class, you are enrolled in Blackboard as well.

Go to: <https://my.utep.edu>

Log in with your UTEP Username and password. If you have trouble, email me as soon as possible. Blackboard Student Services provides 24/7 help desk and technical support to faculty and students in online courses.

Contacting Blackboard Student Services 24/7 Support
Toll free 1-877-382-0491

You should check Blackboard every day to make sure you do not miss any important announcements, which will be posted in the Announcement area.

Required Materials

- Access to computer and internet;
- All readings are posted on the Blackboard site located in the Learning Module for any particular week;
- A Youtube.com or Vimeo.com account (for Final Project); both are free;
- A UTEP e-mail account; If you don't have one, GET ONE IMMEDIATELY.
 - Go to <http://getmail.utep.edu>
 - You may also call the HELP desk at (915) 747-4357 (on campus) or (915) 747-5257 (off-campus)

Required Software

You will need the following software on your computer in order to download some course material such as readings and assignment rubrics. If you are using a lab on campus, they already have the necessary software. All the needed programs are free downloads and can be downloaded from the URLs I have provided here and on Blackboard, which are located in the Getting Started tab.

- **Adobe Acrobat Reader:** You can get the program by going to <http://www.adobe.com> and then clicking on the icon on the left side of the

screen which says “Get Adobe Reader. Follow instructions to install the reader.

- **Macromedia Flash Player:** You can get the player by going to <http://www.macromedia.com> and then clicking on “Download Flash Player.” Follow instructions to install the player.
- **Apple QuickTime Player:** You can get this player by going to <http://www.apple.com>. Once there, click on the “QuickTime” tab on the top of the page and then click on “QuickTime Player FREE premier multimedia player,” and follow instructions.
- **Microsoft Office:** I recommend buying this if you do not have any word processing software or presentation software. It is available at the UTEP bookstore to students at a discounted price. If you cannot purchase it you can access it at any of the computer labs on campus. All assignment documents must be submitted as Word (.doc) files. You can save the files as .doc files from most word processing programs. If I cannot open your documents, they WILL NOT be graded.

Blackboard Course Messages

You may send course messages through Blackboard any time

1. Click on **Course Messages** area in the **Control Panel** then click **Create Message**
2. Click on **To:** then Select my name: Elvira Carrizal-Dukes (Instructor)
3. Type in a **Subject** and **Message** (You must include your first and last name. I will respond to you within 24 hours.)
4. Click **Submit**

Grading policy and evaluation procedures

Credit hours: 3

- Grading scale: SEE BELOW
- Requirements and assignments: SEE BELOW
- Standards and proportions used: SEE BELOW

GRADUATE CREDIT FOR THIS COURSE: In order to obtain graduate credit for this course, you must satisfactorily complete a graduate level project with a topic and parameters approved beforehand by the course instructor.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Please note: absolutely no grades of “I” (incomplete) will be given. Your final grade will be based on work completed during the semester, unless plagiarism is an issue with work submitted and evaluation is pending from the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.

Class Attendance

<http://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=54418>

The student is expected to maintain a consistent presence for this face-to-face web-enhanced course. The student is expected to participate in all class and

group discussions and activities. It is the responsibility of the student to inform each instructor of extended absences. When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor may drop the student from the class with a grade of "W" before the course drop deadline and with a grade of "F" after the course drop deadline. The instructor may drop the student after 3 absences.

Class Requirements

In order to pass this course, you must:

1. complete all assignments;
2. maintain satisfactory attendance as described above;
3. participate actively in forums and critiques,
4. upload all assignments to Blackboard on time.

Assignment Procedures

Grading rubrics will be provided on Blackboard for assignments. It is the student's responsibility to read them. They will provide details on how assignments should be submitted and how they will be graded. **All assignments must be submitted through Blackboard by 11 PM (see course calendar for specific deadline dates).**

Deadline Policy

Deadline for most assignments is 11:00 PM (MST) on the due date; CHECK COURSE CALENDAR for all due dates and deadlines as late submissions will not be graded. Please ensure that you carefully read all instructions. Reading the instructions is your responsibility and you should not assume due dates or times. Work can be submitted before the deadline time/date.

Reading Quizzes / Group Quizzes

Reading quizzes will be based on readings and films and will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and/or short essay. It may be a combination of all three and is intended to assess your ability to keep up with the course materials.

Group quizzes will be at the beginning of the class. A quiz question will be given and team groups must discuss and respond. Responses will be shared in class.

Quizzes will be completed in class. Attendance is required.

Film Essays

You will submit (3) film essays with critical analysis in response to the readings and films. You will need to do the readings, view the films and videos, and go over the lecture notes to be effective in your responses. I will give you an essay question for the analysis.

Upload Instructions

Upload essay as either a **DOC** or **PDF** file. **Do not upload Text files.** Name

them as follows: your last name_essay1(no spaces)_date(mmddyy)

example: lopez_essay1_091219

Final Project

The Final Project consists of a Short Film Proposal with (3) annotated references, Short Film Video Project, and Peer Reviews. Grading Rubrics with specific instructions for each component will be provided in class and on Blackboard.

Note: It is understood that students registered for this course may not have any prior experience making a video. In this course, you will be required to **try to the best of your ability** to create one (even if it's the only time you'll ever do this in your life).

Grades

Your final grade will reflect the instructor's evaluation of

1. the consistency of your effort and dedication to the learning process;
2. your contributions to discussions and critiques;
3. your ongoing presence in discussions and critiques;
4. your active participation in the learning process;
5. the quality of and approach to your work on all assignments;
6. how well assignments identify and incorporate the formal elements of filmmaking.

Blackboard may give you a ballpark score, however, the final grade is given by the instructor and reflects some of the non-tangible items listed above.

Letter grade scale

100—90 points = A

89—80 points = B

79—70 points = C

69—60 points = D

59—0 points = F

Assignment Category Percentages AmerCinema of the US-Mex Bord

Reading Quizzes	25%
Reading Quiz 1 (5 points)	
Reading Quiz 2 (5 points)	
Reading Quiz 3 (5 points)	
Reading Quiz 4 (5 points)	
Reading Quiz 5 (5 points)	
Group Quizzes	25%
Group Quiz 1 (5 points)	
Group Quiz 2 (5 points)	
Group Quiz 3 (5 points)	

Group Quiz 4 (5 points)	
Group Quiz 5 (5 points)	
Essays	30%
Essay 1 (10 points)	
Essay 2 (10 points)	
Essay 3 (10 points)	
Final Project	20%
Short Film Proposal and three annotated references (5 points)	
Short Film Video Project (10 points)	
Peer Reviews (5 points)	

Modules

AmerCinema of the US-Mex Bord is set up in modules with new content, discussions, and major assignments. The modular structure is meant to "package" the week(s) so that students know exactly what is expected for that time period. Weekly Modules will open by Monday.

COURSE CALENDAR

Readings will be provided in class. Films will be screened during class.

Group Quizzes due on Mondays in class.

Reading Quizzes due on Wednesdays in class.

Week 1: Aug 26, 28 Introduction

Reading: Interview with Prof. Patrick Timmons; Irwin, Megan, "Flushing Them Out"; Christensen, Martinez "Troublesome Border"; Alvarez, "The Mexico-U.S. Border: The Making of an Anthropology of Borderlands";

Film: Wetback: The Undocumented Documentary

Assignment: Group Quiz 1

Week 2 and 3: Sept 2, 4, 9, and 11 *No class on Sept 2 – University Holiday Film Noir

Reading: Fregoso, Rosa Linda, "From Il(l)egal to Legal Subject"; Nevins "Operation Gatekeeper. The Rise of the "Illegal Alien" and the Making of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary."; Sadowski-Smith, "Globalization on the Line"; Lugo "Theorizing Border Inspections"; Chavez "Spectacle in the Desert: The Minutemen Project on the US-Mexico Border";

Film: Touch of Evil (1958)

Assignment: Reading Quiz 1

Week 4: Sept 16, 18
Western

Reading: Paredes, Americo, "The Problem of Identity in a Changing Culture"; Saldívar "The Borderlands of Culture. Americo Paredes and the Transnational Imaginary." Andreas "Border Games: Policing the U.S.-Mexico Divide"; Paredes "With His Pistol in His Hand: A Border Ballad and Its Hero"; Truett "Fugitive Landscapes";
Film: Border Patrol (1942); The Wild Bunch (1969); The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez (1982)

Assignment: Group Quiz 2

Week 5: Sept 23, 25
Comedy

Reading: Fox, Claire F., "U.S.-Mexico Border Conflict in U.S. Popular Culture"; Wilson and Donnan "Border Identities. Nation and State at International Frontiers"
Film: Born in East L.A. (1987); Coyote (2007);

Assignment: Reading Quiz 2

Week 6: Sept 30, Oct 2
Drama

Reading: Groody, Daniel, "The Drama of Immigration and the Cry of the Poor"; Nazario, Sonia, "The Boy Left Behind";
Film: Under the Same Moon (2007); Babel (2006); A Better Life (2011);

Assignment: Group Quiz 3

Week 7: Oct 7, 9
Sci-Fi

Reading: Carrillo, Teresa, "Watching Over Greater Mexico"
Film: Sleep Dealer (2008);

Assignment: Reading Quiz 3

Week 8: Oct 16
***Oct 14 – we will not meet face-to-face; Submit assignment on Blackboard**
Thriller

Reading: Chavez, Leo, "Suburban Shantytown and Refuge" and "Green Valley's

Final Days"
Film: Disierto (2015);

Assignment: Essay 1 due Oct 14

Week 9: Oct 21, 23
Romance

Reading: Rivera, Tomas, ...and the earth did not devour him;
Film: Bordertown (2006)

Assignment: Reading Quiz 4

Week 10: Oct 28, 30
Crime

Reading: Smith, Robert Courtney, "Transnational Life in Ethnographic Perspective" ; Edberg "El Narcotraficante";
Film: The Border (1982); No Country For Old Men (2007);

Assignment: Group Quiz 4

Week 11: Nov 4, 6
Adventure

Reading: Martinez "Border People"; Velez-Ibanez "Border Visions"
Film: The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada (2005)

Assignment: Reading Quiz 5

Week 12: Nov 11, 13
Juarez

Reading: Arriola and Curtis "The Mexican Border Cities"; Ortiz "El Paso: Local Frontiers at a Global Crossroads."
Film: Backyard (2009); Illegal (2010); Sicario (2015);

Assignment: Group Quiz 5

Week 13: Nov 18
***Nov 20 – we will not meet face-to-face; Submit assignment on Blackboard**
South America

Reading: Grimson and Vila, "Forgotten Border Actors: The Border Reinforcers. A Comparison of the U.S. Mexico-Border and South American Borders."

Film: El Norte (1984); Sin Nombre (2009)

Assignment: Essay 2 due Nov 20

Week 14: Nov 27

***Nov 25 – we will not meet face-to-face; Submit assignment on Blackboard Documentary**

Reading: Fernandez-Kelly “For We Are Sold, I and My People. Women and Industry in Mexico’s Frontier.”

Film: Missing Young Women (2001); Mojados: Through the Night (2004); The Ballad of Esequiel Hernandez (2007); Those Who Remain (2008); Cartel Land (2015);

Assignment: Essay 3 due Nov 25

Week 15: Dec 2, 4 Television

Reading: Heyman and Campbell “Recent Work on the U.S. Mexico Border.”

TV: The Bridge (2013-2014); Borderline (2015); Bordertown (2016)

Assignment: Final Project Proposal and three annotated references due Dec 2

Final Exam: Wednesday, December 11th 4:00 pm – 6:45 pm Final Project

Final Projects Due

Peer Reviews Due

Additional Comments/Notices

Disclaimer Statement

This syllabus may be amended as the course proceeds. You will be notified of all changes.

The Center for Accommodations and Support Services

If you have or believe you have a disability, you may wish to self-identify. You can do so by providing documentation to The Center for Accommodations and Support Services located at Union Building East Room 106 by phone (915) 747-5148 or email cass@utep.edu. If you have a condition that may affect your ability to exit safely from the premises in an emergency or that may cause an emergency during class, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of The Center for Accommodations and Support Services.

University Writing Center

The University Writing Center offers synchronous, which means tutoring in real time, for online students. They also offer tutoring face-to-face for students on campus. Visit this link for an explanation of how the UWC can assist you to succeed in this course: <https://www.utep.edu/uwc/>

Academic Integrity Statement

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP). It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person's as ones' own. And, collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions. Please consult the Handbook of Operating Procedures at <http://hoop.utep.edu> for the complete University policy on academic dishonesty. You may also consult with the Assistant Dean of Students at the Student Union Building West, Room 102, or by calling (915) 747-5648.

Student Agreements

Student agrees to treat fellow students, UTEP faculty and staff, with respect and collaborate with all class members in a professional manner.

Student understands that copyright laws protect the film media and printed material used in this class. Unless Student is credited as a member of the crew for an original creative work; and unless Student has written permission from the copyright holder, Student will refrain from any public or private distribution of the films, footage, images, audio recordings, or readings.

Student understands that any superimposed copyright on media may not be “letterboxed” or covered over in any way. Student will not upload the aforementioned media to Internet sites, whether public or private, such as YouTube, FaceBook, or any other Web Publishing System, and Student will not exhibit any of the films, footage, audio, readings, or assignments in any public venue, at any film festival or include the footage in any compilation or “demo reel” of Student’s work without express and written permission of the copyright holder.

Student responsibility

You are responsible for seeing that all of your equipment and software are up to date or that you get yourself to a lab, library, etc. where you can meet the requirements of the class.

Blackboard works best with Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, and Safari. Stay away from Internet Explorer! For some reason Blackboard does not communicate well with

Internet Explorer so avoid it. Additionally, it is very important that your Adobe Reader and Java software be up to date. All of your readings, lectures, and assignment sheets are (.pdf) files and require the latest version of Adobe Reader.

It is very important that you follow directions carefully. You must submit all of your work correctly. If you fail to properly submit your work you will not receive credit for the assignment. Here is an example of improperly submitting work: Student opens assignment link, copies/pastes their critical response then fails to click the submit button. They then move into another part of Blackboard and the assignment is never submitted. Simple human error, but it will cost you a grade.

You must check Blackboard daily for announcements and emails. If you fail to check Blackboard and you miss an important announcement or email you are responsible for the consequences.

You are provided with a course calendar that clearly defines all due dates and deadlines. You must be responsible enough to submit all work on time. I will not accept late work.

Your work schedule, military deployment, athletic events, travel, vacations, sick children, broken computer, lack of access to internet, employment at UTEP, etc. are not valid excuses for missing any work in this class. If you are sick and unable to submit an assignment you will be required to provide a doctor's note in order to submit a late assignment.

You will be penalized for poor writing skills. If you submit work that is riddled with spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors you will lose a significant number of points for that assignment. This could be the difference between a passing and failing grade so I strongly suggest that you utilize the spell check that is provided in all of your Blackboard links.