

Professor E. Chávez

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Office Hours: M 3-4:30 p.m., T 10 a.m. -12 p.m., or by appointment.

History 6374/5374: Seminar in Borderlands History

This seminar's objective is to train graduate students to conduct historical research and produce a 20-35-page-essay based on primary sources that explores some aspect of the Borderlands past(s).

You are responsible for attending all class meetings. If you are ill or have a family emergency and cannot make it to class, I will understand. In that case, you need to send me a message explaining your absence. This class, as does graduate school in general, requires your full attention.

Required Texts

Mario García, *Desert Immigrants: The Mexicans of El Paso, 1880-1920*.

Zachary Schrag, *The Princeton Guide to Historical Research*

Kevin Waite, *West of Slavery: The Southern Dream of a Transcontinental Empire*.

Zaragoza Vargas, *Crucible of Struggle: A History of Mexican Americans from Colonial Times to the Present*.

Grade Distribution

Research Paper: 20 %; First Draft: 10 %; Research Prospectus: 5%; Schrag 1: 5%; Schrag 2: 5%; Vargas paper: 5% García paper: 5%; Waite paper: 5%; Scholarly Article/Primary Source Paper: 10 %; Summary & Bibliography: 5%; One-page description of paper: 5%; Outline: 5%; Primary Sources Paper: 5%; Class Participation (including peer reviewing and individual meetings): 10%.

Plagiarism

I must remind you that academic dishonesty, including **plagiarism** of any form, meaning presenting someone else's ideas as your own, will not be tolerated. Cutting and pasting information from a website without citing the data constitutes plagiarism. If anybody is caught committing this egregious offense, she/he will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR). To prevent you from committing plagiarism, your papers will be submitted to Safe Assign on Blackboard.

AI Prohibited

Use of AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as ChatGPT or DALL-E, is not allowed for assignments in this class. Each student is expected to use critical and creative thinking skills to complete tasks and not rely on computer-generated ideas. Any direct use of AI-generated materials submitted as your own work will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

Schedule

August 26:

Introduction. In *The Princeton Guide to Historical Research*, Zachary M. Schrag offers good insight and advice on “doing” history. Read the first two chapters and write a **500-word-essay** discussing what you found to be the most helpful suggestions, advice, caveats for studying history. We will base part of our class discussion on these paragraphs.

September 2:

Labor Day. No class.

September 9:

1. Read Chapters 3-5 of Schrag, *The Princeton Guide to Historical Research*.

Write a **500-word-essay** that discusses and engages Schrag’s ideas about asking questions, articulating a research design, and finding and reading sources. What aspects of these chapters do you find most helpful for doing your own research?

2. Read the preface and any three chapters from Zaragosa Vargas’s, *Crucible of Struggle: A History of Mexican Americans from Colonial Times to the Present Era*. In **250 words** identify three important themes in Borderlands/Mexican American/Chicanx history, as discussed in the book.

Supplemental Reading: Ernesto Chávez, “Chicano/a History: It’s Origins, Purpose, and Future.” *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 82, no. 4 (2013): 505-519.

September 16:

Mario Garcia’s *Desert Immigrants: The Mexicans of El Paso, 1880-1920* was the first historical monograph to focus on ethnic Mexicans in El Paso and remains the only such book. Read *Desert Immigrants* and (1) write a **500-word essay** that identifies five topics in the study that could be further explored; (2) look at the notes for one of those topics and locate the source. After reading it, write a **250-word essay** that summarizes the document, evaluates its usefulness for our understanding history, and discusses what it does not reveal.

Tour of the UTEP Library’s C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department (tentative).

September 23:

Read Kevin Waite’s *West of Slavery: The Southern Dream of a Transcontinental Empire* and **500-word essay** that pinpoints its thesis, summarizes its content, and evaluates its sources. In addition, discuss how the book’s approach of studying western history and the geopolitics of history helps your understanding of borderlands history. You can also be critical of its approach.

September 30:

Choose an aspect of Borderlands history or concentrate on your identified research topic and find three sources (one secondary and two primary) that all relate to that topic. List those sources, with full bibliographical details using Chicago style format (and input into Zotero, more on this soon if you are not familiar with the site). Write a **500-1,000-word- essay** that describes how one of might use these sources to write a research paper.

October 7:

Students will present on their topics by assigning a scholarly journal article (or book chapter) about their research, which has informed their understanding of, or has been influential in their thinking about, the topic. Students will also provide a primary source on the topic. **Write a 500-1,000-word-essay** that discusses how the article and the primary source have influenced your knowledge and approach to the topic.

October 14:

No class meeting, instead we will have individual meetings to discuss your research progress. Bring a **one-page summary** of at least one research topic and the primary sources you would use to explore that topic. Also bring a one-page bibliography (using proper format) of key secondary sources (books and scholarly articles) that relate to the topic.

October 21:

Your **research paper prospectus** is due. Based on our individual meetings a week ago, you will compose a prospectus—or proposal—for your paper. I will give you a guide that will provide you with the information needed to write this assignment. On this day you will also meet in small groups to discuss your prospectus.

October 28:

No class meetings. You can set up individual meetings with me if you wish.

November 4:

No class session, instead we will have individual meetings. Bring a **1-2-page description** of your research, its progress to date, and what remains to be done.

November 11:

Submit outline of paper. Meet with the class to discuss your progress and your outlines.

November 18:

Continue Writing—No class meeting. I will be available for consultation.

November 25:

First draft of paper due. Small group meetings

December 2:

Paper Presentations to Class. The presentation should convey the questions guiding the research, the sources being used, and your conclusions.

December 9:

Final Paper Due

