

The University of Texas at El Paso

Colonias on the U.S.–Mexico Border

CHIC 4306, CRN 26723, Spring 2015

8-Week Course: January 20, 2015 to March 21, 2015

100% Online Course: Computer Access Required

This course syllabus and reading list may be subject to changes as circumstances warrant. Any such changes will be announced in advance to the class and will be updated.

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Course Description: The U.S.-Mexico border offers a compelling location for understanding a wide range of transnational and trans-border social, political, and economic issues. This course is designed to develop an interdisciplinary awareness of communities such as colonias and other types of settlements and group affiliations as both a local and global phenomenon. With a focus on culture, politics, poverty, racism, gender, sexuality, health, and environmental injustice, this course provides an interdisciplinary analysis of urbanization and community formation processes. Students will analyze texts and films and engage in dialogue to demonstrate an awareness of the social, political, and economic realities of the people and spaces located on peripheries, and specifically on the U.S.-Mexico Border.

By the end of the class, students will

1. Develop the critical thinking and analytical skills necessary for effective communication both orally and written.
2. Identify, analyze, and articulate the central themes in Mexican American community and identity formation.
3. Develop their technology skills and learn to use software available for teaching and learning.
4. Understand theories of race, class, ethnicity, and gender in the shaping of both geo-political and metaphorical borders.
5. Connect the past to the present in an effort to better understand the world around them.
6. View themselves as global citizens.

Required Materials:

- Access to computer and internet
- All readings and videos posted on the Blackboard site and are located in the Learning Module for any particular week.

E-mail Account:

If you don't have a UTEP e-mail account, **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)

Relevant Websites:

All course content will be delivered via Blackboard. To access Blackboard go to <http://my.utep.edu/> and login **using your e-mail login and password**. You can access Blackboard by clicking on the link near the top of the my.utep webpage.

You can view the syllabus, assignments, discussion boards, your grades, and other supplemental material related to this course on Blackboard. You can also send e-mails to your fellow classmates or to me through Blackboard – always remember to include an appropriate subject line to prevent your email from going into the junk mail folder.

***** IMPORTANT: You must get into the habit of checking Blackboard EVERY DAY to make sure you do not miss any important announcements, which will be posted on the Homepage or Announcement area.**

Blackboard System:

Blackboard is our classroom! Any inappropriate behavior/comments online will not be tolerated. I reserve the right to drop you from this course if you use Blackboard to make inappropriate comments toward other students or the instructor.

All communication must be conducted through **Blackboard (BB) Email**. Please do not send emails to my UTEP address. When you email me on BB be sure to include as much information as possible to include your first and last name, title of class, and CRN number. I will respond to you within 24-48 hours.

NOTE: I WILL BE CHECKING BLACKBOARD AND MY EMAIL REGULARLY MONDAY-FRIDAY BETWEEN 8:00 AM – 5:00PM. I DO NOT CHECK EMAIL OR BLACKBOARD ON SATURDAYS OR SUNDAYS.

Required Software:

You will need the following software on your computer to efficiently work in this course. 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.**

Being Successful in an Online Class

Online learning is not a spectator sport. It is everyone's responsibility to participate fully so everyone can get the most from the experience. Here are some simple rules to follow to ensure participation and engagement in the learning process:

- **Ask Questions:** If you do not know the answer, someone else will. There is a Discussion Forum entitled **HELP BOARD** that is for asking questions related to content OR any problems you are having. Make sure that you have clearly indicated the subject of your message. If you are having **technical difficulties** you should first contact tech support at <http://issweb.utep.edu/techsupport/>
- **Reach Out to Others:** Offer a fact, article, link or other item that can help others learn something you can share.
- **Be Appropriate:** The online classroom is not the place for insulting or insensitive comments, attacks, or venting. Inappropriate behavior will BE subject to disciplinary action.
- **Be Diplomatic:** When sending messages on emotionally charged topics, make sure you write the message and then walk away for at least an hour before re-reading the message and then sending it. Re-reading emotionally charged messages ensures that they are constructive instead of destructive. Think of the person at the other end.
- **Stay Focused:** Stay on topic to increase the efficiency of your learning.

Communicating Effectively Online

When we converse, we expect other people to observe certain rules of behavior. The same is true online. Here are a few pointers to help you communicate more effectively.

- **Clearly summarize** the contents of your message in the subject line of your e-mail **AND** your discussion board postings.
- **Avoid** using all capital letters. USING ALL CAPS MAKES IT LOOK LIKE YOU'RE SHOUTING! IT'S ALSO MORE DIFFICULT TO READ.
- **Avoid** using sarcasm in your postings and e-mail messages. Sarcasm does not translate well in the online world.
- The following is **very important** for maintaining a well-organized board. If you are going to reply to a posting, then click on the **Reply** button. If you are going to change the direction of the discussion, then click on the **Create Message** button. DO NOT start a new thread every time you post! Either reply to an existing post or start a new topic of conversation.

Course Policies:

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. **Cheating** may involve copying from or providing information to another student, processing 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. **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 disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from the University for such actions.

Students with Disabilities:

I will make any reasonable accommodations for students with limitations due to disabilities, including learning disabilities. Please see me personally in the first two weeks or make an appointment, to discuss any special needs you might have. If you have a documented disability and require specific accommodations you will need to contact the **Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS)** at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106 within the first two weeks for classes. For additional information please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass

Attendance Policy:

This is an online class so there is no real attendance policy. Attendance is taken by measuring your work online. You are responsible for doing all the work and reviewing the online lectures every week.

Deadline Policy:

Deadline for most assignments is **11:59 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.**

Exams:

There will be no formal exams, but there will be individual projects, group projects, and group discussion boards, the quality of which will determine your grade.

Groups:

You will work in groups of five to six. Random groups will be generated after the first week of class. These are permanent groups and no changes will be permitted.

Learning Modules:

The class consists of five (5) Learning Modules. In each Learning Module you will find a Table of Contents on the left hand side of the module that contains: the Lecture, your Readings and Videos, Quiz links, Assignment links, Discussion Board links, and any other pertinent information.

With the exception of **Week 1: Intro and Getting Started** and **Week 8: Final Group Project**, all Learning Modules last a duration of **TWO WEEKS**. The first week you will do the readings and view the videos and then take a quiz at the end of the week. **Quizzes are available on Thursdays at 5pm (MST) and are accessible through Fridays at 11:59pm (MST)**. The second week you will submit an individual assignment/photo essay and post that same assignment/essay to your Group Discussion Board, both are due **Mondays by 11:59pm (MST)**. Once you post to your Group Discussion Board you must maintain **ONGOING** discussion with your group members through Friday of that week (see the explanations below so that you will know how to maximize your Quiz, Assignment, and Discussion Board grades). **New Learning Modules will open on Saturdays at 8am (MST) to allow a head start on your reading and viewing.** See Course Calendar for Learning Module dates.

Quizzes:

There will be quizzes every other week. Quizzes will be available on **Thursdays at 5:00pm to Friday at 11:59pm (MST)**. Check course calendar for scheduled quizzes.

Individual Response Assignment:

You will submit two (2) Individual Critical Analyses, **Weeks 3 and 5**, in response to the readings and videos. You will need to do the readings, view the videos, and go over the lecture pieces to be effective in your responses. I will provide a detailed explanation of how to prepare a critical response paper on the Home Page of the course shell. Check course calendar for assignment due dates and deadlines.

See the **Class Policies and Procedures** for a detailed explanation on how to submit your response papers and for an explanation of how they will be graded.

*******Very Important!!!!** After you write your critical response (which should be saved as a word document) you will copy and paste this same individual response assignment into your group discussion board as a new message **This constitutes your initial discussion post and the beginning your ongoing participation in the board.**

DO NOT POST YOUR RESPONSES TO THE DISCUSSION BOARD AS ATTACHMENTS!

This creates a problem for everyone who needs to read your responses. **COPY AND PASTE THE TEXT INTO THE DISCUSSION BOARDS.**

Photo Essay:

In Week 5 you will submit a Photo Essay of your community. This essay will consist of photos taken by you that reflect and symbolize your community. I have provided an article that week that serves as an example of how to construct your essay. I will also provide a detailed assignment sheet inside of the Learning Module entitled "Communities and Gendered and Racial Spaces." I will provide an assignment link in the Learning Module for you to submit your photo essay **AND** you will also copy/paste your essay to your Group Discussion Board where you will then discuss each other's essays throughout the week

Group Discussion Boards:

Every other week you will discuss each other's Individual Critical Response papers (2 ea.) and each other's Photo Essay as a group in your group discussion board. The **Group Discussion Board Links** are located under **My Groups** below the Course Content on the left hand side of the Home Page. Click on your group then on Discussion Boards and locate the appropriate Discussion Board. Once you locate the appropriate discussion board, click on it and post your responses.

Discussion boards begin once your Individual Response and Photo Essay are posted. Boards run through Friday of that week, and close at midnight.

This process, though cumbersome, has been created to ensure that no one can just read posted responses and develop a response before reading.

******You must submit your Individual Response Assignment and Photo Essay under the Assignment Link provided BEFORE you post to the Discussion Boards and everything is time stamped.**

See the **Class Policies and Procedures** for a detailed explanation of how the Discussion Boards will be graded.

Final Group Project:

Each group will submit a final project that consists of a 10-page, double-spaced paper based on a topic associated with community formation on the U.S.-Mexico border with a specific emphasis on, but not limited to colonias. The paper can focus on health issues, environmental concerns, youth, elderly residents, land title issues, entrepreneurship, and other community development issues. **Paper should cite and incorporate eight (8) primary and secondary sources** consisting of books, scholarly articles, websites, newspapers articles, maps, interviews, etc. I will provide a detailed assignment sheet in the Learning Module entitled ***Final Group Project***.

The Learning Module entitled: **Final Group Project** will be available on **Monday February 16, 2015 at 8:00am (MST)**. In this module you will find the Final Group Project Assignment Sheet, the Assignment Link for submitting the project, and the Peer Evaluation.

I will also provide a **Final Group Discussion Board** on **February 16, 2015 at 8:00am (MST)** for you to collaborate with you fellow members on your final group project. Limit all discussion pertaining to your project to this specific Discussion

Board! Part of your Final Group Project grade is based on the collaboration that takes place in the Final Group Project Discussion Board.

Along with the paper each group must submit a PowerPoint presentation that compliments the group paper project. You **MUST** have a Work Cited page in your paper **and** in your PowerPoint presentation. **Group Project is due on Friday March 20, 2015 by 11:59pm (MST).**

There will be no physical meeting of group members outside of the Blackboard classroom because some of our classmates are outside of the El Paso region and this puts them at a disadvantage. However, you can meet via Skype or Facetime if possible.

Only one member of each group needs to submit the paper and the PowerPoint presentation.

Peer Evaluations:

Each team will evaluate the contributions of their team members for the Final Group Project. The **Peer Evaluation** will be available **March 19, 2015 at 8:00am (MST)**. You will find the link to the Peer Evaluation in the Table of Contents of the Learning Module entitled Final Group Project. Peer evaluations are due by **Monday March 23, 2015 at 5:00pm (MST)**. **Note:** The Peer Evaluation **IS** required and constitutes 10% (up to 10 points) of your Final Group Project Grade. Not submitting the evaluation can significantly lower your Final Group Project Grade.

Grading:

To get an "A" you must participate throughout the semester in all the activities AND participate well in critical thought exercises. You must make sure that you double-check all your work for accuracy of content and language (spelling, punctuation, grammar etc.).

The grades will be divided as follows:

Quizzes (4 each)	15%
Individual Response Assignments (2 each)	20%
Photo Essay	20%
Discussion Boards (3 each)	20%
Final Group Project and Peer Evaluations	25%

Grading Scale:

A	100-90
B	89-80
C	79-70
D	69-60
F	59 and less

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.

Course Calendar

Introduction

Blackboard and Syllabus Orientation and Walkthrough

This week is your opportunity to study the long and detailed syllabus and to familiarize yourself with the Blackboard System. This is the week to ask me any questions you have regarding the class content.

Post an introduction to yourself in *The Fair Trade Internet Café* by **Wednesday January 21, 2015 11:59pm (MST)**.

Week 1

1-20-2015 to
1-23-2015

Internet Café and Help Board are located under the **General Discussion Links** on the Home Page. After Week 1 you will be placed into groups. Your **Group Discussion Board** Links are located under **My Groups** below the Course Content on the left hand side of the Home Page. Click on your group then on Group Discussion Boards and locate the appropriate Discussion Board. All Group Discussion Boards will be located in this manner. The boards are already created for you do not start new threads.

You will be required to take the **Syllabus/Plagiarism Quiz**, which will be available **Thursday January 22, 2015 at 5:00pm (MST) until Friday January 23, 2015 at 11:59pm (MST)**. The quiz is based on your reading of the Syllabus, Class Policies and Procedures, and the Plagiarism video. The video is located in the Table of Contents of the Learning Module entitled "Intro – Getting Started."

NOTE: The instructor **cannot** provide technical support. For questions concerning the site and **any technical questions or support** you must contact Blackboard Tech Support at 1-877-382-0491 and they are available 24/7.

Historical Meanings of Community

Week 2

1-26-15 to
1-30-15

Monday: Read – Martinez, "The U.S.-Mexico Border Economy," 15-29; and Wood, "Anticipating the Colonias," 31-42; and Mukhija, "What's In a Name," 475-488

Video(s) – "Between Two Worlds" and "Life in Las Colonias"

All videos listed in this course calendar are required viewing.

Reading Quiz due: available from **Thursday at 5:00pm to Friday at 11:59pm (MST)**. All quizzes are located under the **Table of Contents** of each **Learning Module**.

Historical Meanings of Community

Week 3
2-2-15 to
2-6-15

Individual Response Paper and Group Discussion Post due Monday by 11:59pm (MST): Type a 500 word response to **Week 2** readings and videos then copy/paste that same response to your **Group Discussion Board**

Group Discussion Boards are in effect from the moment you post your first response until Friday evening.

Communities as Gendered and Racial Spaces

Week 4
2-9-15 to
2-13-15

Monday: Read – Pilcher, “Tex-Mex, Cal-Mex, New Mex, or Whose Mex?” 199-219; and Ojeda, “Abortion in a Transborder Context,” 53-69; and Weber, “The Oaxacan Enclaves in Los Angeles: A Photo Essay,” 269-285

Video(s): “City of Dead Women”

Reading Quiz due: available from **Thursday at 5:00pm to Friday at 11:59pm (MST)**. All quizzes are located under the **Table of Contents** of each **Learning Module**.

Communities as Gendered and Racial Spaces

Week 5
2-16-15 to
2-20-15

Individual Photo Essay and Group Discussion Post due Monday by 11:59pm (MST): The Photo Essay will consist of photos taken by you that reflect and symbolize your community. I provided a detailed assignment sheet inside of the Learning Module. After you submit your Photo Essay then copy/paste the essay to your **Group Discussion Board**

Group Discussion Boards are in effect from the moment you post your essay until Friday evening. Your grade is dependent on your participation throughout the week as well as on the quality of your post.

Community Formation and Globalization

Week 6
2-23-15 to
2-27-15

Monday: Read – Smith, “*Questioning Consolidation*,” 76-90; and Castro, “The Tijuana Two-Step,” 53-58; and Nuñez-Mchiri, “Housing, Colonias, and Social Justice,” 109-125

Video(s) – “Maquilopolis”

Reading Quiz due: available from **Thursday at 5:00pm to Friday at 11:59pm (MST)**. All quizzes are located under the **Table of Contents** of each **Learning Module**

Course Drop Deadline is Wednesday February 25, 2015

Community Formation and Globalization

Week 7
3-2-15 to
3-6-15

Individual Response Paper and Group Discussion Post due Monday by 11:59pm (MST): Type a 500 word response to **Week 6** readings and videos then copy/paste that same response to your **Group Discussion Board**

Group Discussion Boards are in effect from the moment you post your first response until Friday evening. Your grade is dependent on your participation throughout the week as well as on the quality of your post.

Spring Break: March 9-13, 2015

Final Group Project

Week 9
3-16-15 to
3-20-15

This week is provided for you to complete your Final Group Project. Your paper and PPT presentation are **due on Friday March 20, 2015 by 11:59 pm (MST)**. Note: I will not accept late projects so please take advantage of the time provided. Upload your **Final Group Project** to the **Final Group Assignment Link** provided in the Learning Module entitled **Final Group Project**. Upload your **Peer Evaluation** to the **Peer Evaluation Assignment Link** provided in the same Learning Module. Only one group member is required to submit the final project, but **EVERYONE** is required to submit a Peer Evaluation by **Monday March 23, 2015 by 5:00pm (MST)**. Good Luck!