

The University of Texas at El Paso

## Chicana/o Studies: Societal Issues

CHIC 3311, CRN 21413, Spring 2015  
TR 10:30-11:50am Quinn Hall 206

Dr. Irma V. Montelongo

Office Hours: TR 12:00-1:30 and W 12:00-1:30

Office: Graham Hall 110B

Ph: (915) 747-7612

Email: [imontelo@utep.edu](mailto:imontelo@utep.edu)

### **Course Description:**

This course is designed to provide the student with a general overview of past and present Mexican American culture and society. Using an interdisciplinary framework, this course examines ethnic Mexican identity formation from contact and conquest to the present. The course uses race, ethnicity, class, and gender as categories of analyses to interpret how and why ethnic Mexicans create distinct cultures and identities in the United States. The readings and videos explore a number of topics to include immigration, education, labor, politics, and pop culture for a better understanding of how ethnic Mexicans negotiate, resist, and redefine their place in the U.S.

### **Course Objectives and Goals:**

**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 Texts:**

Gregory Rodriguez, *Mongrels, Bastards, Orphans, and Vagabonds: Mexican Immigration and the Future of Race in America* (New York: Vintage Books, 2007).

Alejandro Morales, *River of Angels* (Houston: Arte Publico Press, 2014).

Stephanie Elizondo Griest, *Mexican Enough: My Life Between the Borderlines* (New York: Washington Square Press, 2008).

Additional readings located on Blackboard.

## Course Requirements:

**Attendance and Discussion:** You are expected to attend class. Completion of the course depends on your attendance. If you miss a class period, it is your responsibility to obtain handouts (from the instructor) and notes (from a fellow student).

It is equally important that you **arrive to class on time!** If you are more than 10 minutes late to class **DO NOT bother entering the classroom!** Tardiness is disruptive; therefore, classroom door(s) will be closed 10 minutes after class starts.

There are a few ground rules for discussion. You will regularly work in small groups discussing the assigned readings related to the class. Whether you are discussing in a group or as a class, please remember that the appeal of higher learning is that we can think and talk, maturely and responsibly, about topics like race, class, gender, and sexuality. ***Please make an effort to treat each other, and each other's contributions to class discussions, with respect.***

**Reading Quizzes (20%):** There will be short reading quizzes throughout the semester to ensure that you are engaging all class materials. Therefore, you must attend class, arrive on time, and keep up with your readings. There are absolutely no make-ups for quizzes.

**Midterm Exam (25%):** There will be a midterm exam tentatively scheduled for **October 16, 2014**. The midterm will cover Parts I of the course calendar. There are no make-ups for exams.

**Short Writing Assignments (20%):** There will be two short writing assignments. 1.) *Quien Soy Yo? Who Am I?* 2.) *The Photo Essay* For **one** of these assignments students must submit a 2-3 minute digital story (video) that accompanies the writing assignment. These assignments will be used to frame your final reflection paper. I will provide a detailed assignment sheet and detailed in-class explanation for these assignments.

**Final Reflection Paper (35%):** The semester will end with a book-length reading that will anchor your final reflection paper. The final paper is due on **May 12, 2015** and will be based on your reading of Alejandro Morales's novel *River of Angels*. The paper will analyze the reading but will also incorporate your two short writing assignments. I will provide a detailed assignment sheet and detailed in-class explanation.

**Grading Scale:** Final grades will be given according to the student's demonstrated level of mastery of the subject matter as determined by his/her assignments, class discussion, and attendance. The assignments for this course are based on a scale of 100 points. Letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Score</u>
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

**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.

## Class Policies:

- 1. Attendance:** Attendance and participation in class are required. Should you miss a class, you are still responsible for everything that is covered in that class. Missing class or being late is no excuse for missing a due date or misunderstanding an assignment. Therefore, you will want to make contact with a classmate, not the instructor, to find out what you missed. **There are no make-ups for in-class assignments or quizzes.**
- 2. Dropping the Class:** Students may drop the class and receive a “W” any time prior to **April 6, 2015.**
- 3. Format of Written Work:** All written assignments done outside of class must be typed using **black ink, Times New Roman 12 pt. font, 1.25 inch margins, double-spaced, on white paper.** Notes and in-class work must be legible.
- 4. Deadlines:** Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Work handed in after the due date will be penalized 5pts. **per day** (not class period) that it is late. I will not accept work that is more than two (2) days, **not class periods**, late. Any assignment may be handed in early.
- 5. 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.
- 6. Students with Disabilities:** I will make any reasonable accommodations for students with limitations due to disabilities, including learning disabilities. Please see me personally before or after class 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](mailto: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](http://www.sa.utep.edu/cass)
- 7. Student Conduct:** [From the Handbook of Operating Procedures: Student Affairs]: Each student is responsible for notice of and compliance with the provisions of the Regents **Rules and Regulations**, which are available for inspection electronically at <http://www.utsystem.edu/bor/rules/homepage.htm>.

We will have frequent discussions and students are expected to tolerate and respect the opinions of others. All students are expected to behave as responsible adults.

**Please SILENCE cell phones before class and NO TEXT MESSAGING and/or FACEBOOKING during class!!!**

**Course Calendar:** The following is subject to change with reasonable notice to students. Any changes will be announced in class. If you miss a class meeting it is your responsibility to ask about any changes.

## **Part 1: Historical Perspectives**

Week 1: Jan. 20 – Introductions

Jan. 22 – Understanding Terminology

Week 2: **Colliding Empires, Colliding Cultures**

Jan. 27 – *Rodriguez*, “Preface” ix-xvii and “The Birth of the People” 3-32

Jan. 29 – *Rodriguez*, “The Rise and Fall of the Spanish Colonial Racial System” 33-54

Week 3: **Race and Class in the Spanish and Mexican Borderlands**

Feb. 3 – *Rodriguez*, “The Spaniards Venture North” 55-79

Feb. 5 – *Rodriguez*, “Mexicans and the Limits of Slavery” 80-97

Week 4: **Strangers in Their Own Land**

Feb. 10 – *Rodriguez*, “The Anglos Move West” 98-121

*Film: Latino Americans: Foreigner in their Own Land*

Feb. 12 – *Rodriguez*, “Caught Between North and South” 122-158

Week 5: **Identity Formation in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

Feb. 17 – *Rodriguez*, “Becoming Mexican American” 159-200

*Film: César Chávez*

Feb. 19 – *Rodriguez*, “The Chicana/o Movement” 201-223

**Assignment #1: *Quien Soy Yo/Who Am I?***

Week 6: **Multiculturalism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Feb. 24 – *Rodriguez*, “Mongrel American and the New Assimilation” 224-261

Feb. 26 – *Film: Stolen Education*

**Assignment #1 Due**

## **Part 2: Chicana/o Society and Culture**

Week 7: **Midterm Assessment**

Mar. 3 – Guest Speaker: TBA

Mar. 5 – **Midterm Exam**

**Week 8: Spring Break**

Mar. 10 – No class

Mar. 12 – No class

**Week 9: The Sounds of the Chicana/o Communities**

Mar. 17 – *Elizondo Griest*, 1-66

Mar. 19 – *Film: Latin Music U.S.A. – The Chicano Wave*  
*Elizondo Griest*, 67-137

**Week 10: Understanding Cultural Differences**

Mar. 24 – *Film: Latino Americans – Perils and Promise*  
*Elizondo Griest*, 138-189

Mar. 26 – *Weber*, “The Oaxacan Enclaves in Los Angeles: A Photo Essay  
*Elizondo Griest*, 190-245  
**Assignment #2: The Photo Essay**

**Last Day to Withdraw From Class is April 6, 2015**

**Week 11: Chicana/o Education Under Siege**

Mar. 31 – *Holiday: César Chávez Day*

Apr. 2 – (BB) *Cabrera*, “The Fight For Mexican American Studies,” 345-350 and (BB)  
*Beltran*, “The Librotraficante Behind the Movement,” 351-352 and *Elizondo*  
*Griest*, 246-288  
**Assignment #2 Due**

**Part 3: The Chicana/o Novel**

**Week 12: Understanding the Written Word**

Apr. 7 – *Film: Precious Knowledge*

Apr. 9 – *Morales*, vii-40

**Week 13: Understanding the Written Word**

Apr. 14 – *Morales*, 41-75

**Assign Final Reflection Paper**

Apr. 16 – *Morales*, 76-109

**Week 14: Chicana/o Literature Comes to Life**

Apr. 21 – *Morales*, 110-147

*Film: Bless Me Ultima*

Apr. 23 – *Morales*, 148-184

**Week 15: Chicana/o Literature Comes to Life**

Apr. 28 – *Morales*, 185-220

*Film: The Milagro Beanfield War*

Apr. 30 – *Morales*, 221-267

**Week 16: Wrapping up**

May 5 – Work on Paper

May 7 – Work on Paper

**May 12, 2015: Final Paper Due** in my office, Graham Hall 100B, between **9am and 4pm.**