Cumbia in/ across America
The University of Texas at El Paso
MUSL 3325 Fall, 2020
ONLINE (asynchronous)

Instructor: Juan David Rubio Restrepo
Office hours: Tuesdays 11:00-1:00 pm (MT), via Zoom

Course description
Cumbia is one of the most transnational musics in the American continent. Though particular types of cumbia are found in most American countries these differ musically and contextually while keeping a similar genealogy. This class takes local types of cumbia from countries across the Americas and focuses on how the construction of race-class, gender, and nation relates to these music practices. Besides developing basic musical concepts and listening skills that allows understanding the aural-musical side of cumbia, the class also offers a quick overview of relevant sociopolitical issues in 20th and 21st century Latin America.

Course Objectives
At the end of this course, students will:
  o Have a holistic view of the wide range of musics that the genre cumbia encompasses
  o Develop basic listening skills in regards to these musics
  o Understand the sociopolitical dynamics that shape these music practices
  o Critically approach the role music practices play in processes of subjectivation, interpolation, and resistance
  o Think critically and inter-disciplinarily through expressive cultures
  o Be able to articulate these ideas in writing

Course materials
Reading and listening materials will be assigned for every week, these should be made before accessing the module from which they were assigned. All the materials are accessible online.

Readings: No text book is required for this course. Instead, we will read from different authors working from a wide range of disciplines. Academic literature and music examples constitute the backbone of the course materials. All the materials are accessible online. They are posted on the “File” and linked to each module. While most materials will be accessible on Blackboard, students are encouraged to set up a VPN connection. Instructions on how to do so can be found here. If you need technical assistance, email IT Service Desk. Do not email the instructor on tech-related questions.

Listening: The tracks are provided in the form of YouTube hyperlinks included in the Class Schedule section of this syllabus (below). If you find a link that is not working, email the instructor.
Online format and course assignments

**Weekly modules:** This course is designed using a modular format—that is, each week is “packaged” as a single module so that all the materials, lectures, tests, and discussion posts are in one area for a given week. Each module will become available each Monday, 8:00 pm of its respective week. Once a module is available, it will remain so until the end of the semester.

**Weekly quizzes:** Each weekly module finishes with a quiz. The week 1 quiz is aimed to troubleshoot any possible technological issues and will *not* count towards your final grade. Starting in week 2, each weekly quiz will count towards your final grade. Unlike the rest of materials of each module, quizzes will open Monday 8:00am and close Friday 5:00pm of each respective week. Take into account the following guidelines:

- The quizzes will cover the lectures of that particular module.
- They will also cover listening examples from the assigned listening examples for each week (hyperlinked below). You will be asked to listen to a short passage (30 sec. to 1 min. long), identify the performer/song, and some follow-up questions based on the track.
- Unlike lecture materials, listening question will be cumulative until week 7 (i.e., a listening question during week 6 may include tracks assigned between week 1 and 6). After the midterm week 8, listening questions will cover tracks assigned since that week (i.e., a listening question during week 14 may include tracks assigned between week 8 and 14).
- Failing to take the quiz within the indicated timeframe will result on a score of 0 (zero) for that particular assignment.
- Each quiz comes with a time limit that will be specified before it is launched.
- The quiz will auto-send once the time runs up.
- Procure a suitable working space and time slot as well as a stable machine and Internet connection.

**Reading quizzes:** Reading quizzes will be announced at the beginning each lecture and will cover the reading assigned for that particular week. Reading quizzes will open Monday 8:00am and close Friday 5:00pm on the week from which they are assigned. Note that, contrary to weekly quizzes, there will be only 6 reading quizzes. The specific readings these cover will *not* be announced beforehand. Students are encouraged to check the weekly module early each week and plan accordingly.

**Writing assignments:** A separate handout with guidelines regarding the paper proposal and final paper assignments will be available on Blackboard under the “Syllabus” folder.

**Assessment (3 credits)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly quizzes (14)</td>
<td>42% (3% each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading quizzes (6)</td>
<td>21% (3.5% each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remix assignment</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper proposal</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Grading scale

- 90-100: A
- 80-89: B
- 70-79: C
- 60-69: D
- 59-below: F

Course policies

**Academic integrity:** Academic dishonesty in the form of plagiarizing, cheating, etc. won’t be tolerated. UTEP takes these violations seriously and they could lead to academic and administrative sanctions. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more, please visit HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline.

**Contact and communication:** Email and regular office hours, both included at the top of the syllabus, will be our main point of one-on-one communication. A separate Zoom link for the office hours will be circulated. Feel free to reach out to me with questions or suggestions. I do my best to respond to emails in a timely fashion. Note that I don’t check my work email during non-working hours. If you email me Friday night, I won’t see it until next Monday.

**Late assignments:** Assignments should be handed-in on time. 5% of the grade will be deducted for each day late. Note that late Blackboard assignments will only be accepted under extenuating circumstances.

Student resources

**Academic sources:** UTEP’s Library is your primary source of information. Get familiar with its website and search engine. The website has several tutorial videos on how to find materials as well as contact information for staff that can advise/help you. Through the library site, you can access a wide range of data bases. Be sure to be connected via VPN if you are doing so off-campus.

**Writing Center:** The University Writing Center is a great resource that is fully operational online. Students can submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help, and explore other writing resources.

**Students with disabilities:** Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, or email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal. Students are advised to take care of this as soon as possible.

**COVID-19:** Although this course is fully online and does not have a face-to-face component, students are advised to practice safety measures at all times. Regular updates and resources can be found at UTEP’s Responding to COVID-19 webpage. Each student must complete a short COVID-19 training accessible here.
UTEP Food Pantry: [Click here.]
UTEP Counseling and Psychological Services: [Click here.]

CLASS SCHEDULE
(subject to change)

Week 1 (August 24-28)
Syllabus review, introduction to the course
Race-class construction in colonial Latin America; a very brief overview

Read:

Week 2 (August 31-September 4)
“Traditional” cumbia: The Colombian Atlantic coast

Read:

Listen:
- Pedro “Ramayá” Beltran: “Lucy Abucheibe”
- Los Gaiteros de San Jacinto: “Viene amaneciendo”
- Totó La Momposina: “El Pescador”
- Andrés Landero: “La Pava Congona”

Additional listening:
- Andrés Landero: “El Nacimiento de la Cumbia”
- Andrés Landero: “Virgen de la Candelaria”
- Carmelo Torres: “Amanezco Bailando”
- Aguacero e’ Mayo: “Totó la Momposina”
- Los Gaiteros de San Jacinto: “Fuego de Cumbia”

Week 3 (September 8-11)
Orchestral cumbia, race, and class: From the Colombian coast to the interior

Read:
Listen:
- Lucho Bermúdez: “La Pollera Colorá”
- Climaco Sarmiento: “Cumbia Sabrosa”
- Pacho Galán: “Boquita Salá”
- Pedro Laza: “Cumbia del Monte”

Additional Listening:
- Lucho Bermúdez: “Tolú”
- Edmundo Arias: “El Mecánico”

Week 4 (September 14-28)

Made in Medellín: The recording industry and chucu-chucu

Read:

Listening:
- Los Golden Boys: “Rubiela”
- Los Corraleros de Majagual: “Festival en Guararé”; (studio version)
- La Sonora Dinamita: “Se Me Perdió La Cadenita”
- Los Graduados: “Macondo”

Additional Listening:
- Los Black Stars: “Se Acabó Quien te Quería”
- Los Corraleros de Majagual: “La Burrita”
- Los Corraleros de Majagual: “Los Sabanales”
- Los Hispanos: “Adonay”
- Los Hispanos: “Cariñito”

Week 5 (September 21-25)

Mexico: Race and the media industry

Reading:

Listen:
- Luis Carlos Meyer: “Micaela”
- Carmen Rivero y su Conjunto: “Cumbia Cumbiamba”
- Linda Vera: “Navidad Negra”
- Mike Laure y Sus Cometas: “Quiero Amanecer”
Additional Listening:
- Luis Carlos Meyer: “Cumbia Cienaguera”
- Mike Laure y Sus Cometas: “039”
- Mike Laure y Sus Cometas: “Tiburón”

Week 6 (September 28-October 2)
Cumbia across the border: The Mexican Northeast I

Read:

Listen:
- Rigo Tovar: “Cómo será la Mujer”; (studio version)
- Los Bukis: “La Cumbia Michoacana”
- Bronco: “Cumbia Triste”
- Selena: “Baila Esta Cumbia”; (studio version)

Additional Listening
- Rigo Tovar: “Mi Matamoros Querido”; (studio version)
- Selena: “Como la Flor”; (studio version)
- Selena: “Amor Prohibido”

Week 7 (October 5-9)
Cumbia across the border: The Mexican Northeast II

Read:

Required Listen:
- Beto Villa y Los Populares de Nueva Rosita: “Cabellos Largos”
- Ramón Ayala: “Pero Yo no la Conozco”
- Celso Piña y su Ronda Bogotá: “La Piragua”
- La Tropa Colombiana: “La Cumbia de la Vaca”

Additional Listening:
- Celso Piña y su Ronda Bogotá: “Reina de Cumbias”
- Celso Piña: “Cumbia Sampuesana”
- Los Vallenatos de la Cumbia: “Mentiras”
Week 8 (October 12-16)

Sonideros: Cumbia Sonidera and Cumbia Rebajada

Read:

Listen:
- Andrés Landero: “Mara del Carmen” (rebajada)
- Celso Piña: “La Piragua” (rebajada)
- Sonido Condor: “La Cumbia del Piropo” (sonidera)
- Sonido Sonoramico: “Medley” (sonidera)

Week 9 (October 19-23)

Race, migration, and indigeneity: Cumbia in Peru

Read:

Listen:
- Los Demonios de Mantaro: “La Chichera”
- Los Destellos: “Caminito Serrano”
- Los Ecos: “Dame tu Amor”
- Chacalón y la Nueva Crema: “Soy Provinciano”; (live version)
- Los Shapis: “Ambulante Soy”
- Los Mirlos: “Sonido Amazónico”
- Rossy War: “Nunca Pensé Llorar”

Additional Listening:
- Los Destellos: “A Patricia”
- Los Destellos: “Valicha”
- Chacalón y La Nueva Crema: “Por Ella”
- Chacalón y la Nueva Crema: “Por Maldad”
- Juaneco y Su Combo: “Vacilando con Ayahuasca”
- Los Shapis: “El Aguajal”
- Los Shapis: “Chofercito Carretero”
- Los Mirlos: “La Danza de Los Mirlos”
- Rossy War: “Que te Perdone Dios”
- Euforia: “Alegria de Bailar”
Week 10 (October 26-30)

Transnationalisms and tropicalisms: Cumbia in Venezuela and Ecuador

Read:

Listen:
- *Billo’s Caracas Boys*: “Tres Perlas”
- *Los Melódicos*: “Chipi chipi”
- *Hugo Blanco*: “Cumbia con arpa”
- *Pastor López*: “El Ausente”
- *Polibio Mayorga*: “Bien Bailadito”
- *Ángel Guaraca*: “El Migrante”
- *Azucena Aymara*: “Llanto por llanto”
- *Sharon*: “Ámame suavecito”

Additional Listening:
- *Billo’s Caracas Boys*: “Cumbia Caletera”
- *Pastor López*: “Traicionera”
- *Polibio Mayorga*: “Cumbia Triste”
- *Rock Star*: “Collar de Lágrimas”
- *Bayronn Caicedo*: “Pila Pila”

Week 11 (November 2-6),

Read
Whiteness and whitening: Cumbia in the Argentinian city

Listen:
- *Cuarteto Imperial*: “La Lora”; (live version, medley)
- *Los Wuawancó*: “El Cuartetazo”
- *Gilda*: “No me Arrepiento de este Amor”
- *Commanche*: “Tonta”; (video clip)

Additional Listening
- *Los Caú*: “Salten Todos”
- *Los 5 del Ritmo*: “Los Domingos”
- *Ricky Maravilla*: “Qué Tendrá el Petiso”; (video clip)
- *Los Cartageneros*: “El Superman”
- **Gilda:** “Fuiste”

**Week 12 (November 9-13)**

*Race, class, gender, and marginalization in Buenos Aires: Cumbia Villera*

**Read:**

**Listen:**
- **Damas Gratis:** “Quiero Vitamina”
- **Meta Guacha:** “Ollas Vacías”
- **Yerba Brava:** “María Rosa”
- **La Piba:** “La Transa”

**Additional listening**
- **Lía Crucet:** “Yo no soy Abusadora”
- **Commanche:** “Cómo te lo Digo”
- **La Piba:** “La Sandra”
- **Meta Guacha:** “Alta Gata”
- **Damas Gratis:** “Laura, Se Te Ve la Tanga”

**Week 13 (November 16-20)**

*Cumbia revival: National identity in the neoliberal world*

**Read:**

**Listen:**
- **Bloque de Búsqueda:** “Hay un Daño en el Baño”
- **Carlos Vives:** “La Tierra del Olvido”
- **Sidestepper:** “Deja”
- **Fanny Lu:** “No Te Pido Flores”; (video clip)
- **Antonio Arnedo:** “El Pescador”
- **Curupira:** “La Guachafita”
- **Puerto Candelaria:** “Cumbia Rebelde”
- **Carmelo Torres y Los Toscos feat. Edson Velandia:** “La Antropología”
- **Los Pirañas:** “Monstruo Prometedor”
- **Meridian Brothers:** “Cumbia, Eres La Cumbia”
Additional Listening:
- Carlos Vives: “Fruta Fresca”; (live version)
- Carlos Vives feat. Shakira: “La Bicicleta”
- Carlos Vives: “Pa Mayte”
- Jerau: “Estás Conmigo”
- Carmelo Torres y Los Toscos: “Teófilo el Gaitero”
- Los Pirañas: “Salvemos Nuestro Folclor”
- Meridian Brothers: “El Gran Pájaro de Los Andes”

Week 14 (November 23-25)

DJisms: Of drums and sequences

Read

Listen:
- Nor-tec Collective: “Don Loope”
- Systema Solar: “Bienvenidos”
- Bomba Estéreo: “Fuego”
- Toy Selectah: “Half Colombian Half Mexican Bandit”
- Frente Cumbiero feat. Mad Professor: “CumbiaEtiope (dub)”

Additional Listening:
- Nor-tec Collective: “Synthakon”
- Systema Solar: “Yo Voy Ganao”
- Bomba Estéreo: “Soy Yo”

Week 15 (November 30-December 3)

Aural cosmopolitanisms in the “post-racial” world: Cumbia’s re-signification

Read:
- NPR Podcast. Kumbia Queers: Cumbia Is More Punk Than Punk

Listen:
- Kumbia Queers: “La Isla con Chikas”
- Dick el Demasiado: “Uno Llamado Negrito”
- Chancha Vía Circuito: “Cumbia Murguera”
- Los Wachiturros: “Tirate un Paso”
- La Delio Valdez: “Cumbia Cineaguera”
Additional listening:

- *El Gran Silencio: “Chúntaro Style”*
- *Ondatrópica: “Cumbia Espacial”*
- *Dick El Demasiado: “Ayer me Bebi”*