The University of Texas at El Paso

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Women’s and Gender Studies Program

Center for Inter-American and Border Studies

College of Liberal Arts

Mexican Sexualities
Summer 2023, Second Session

A cross-listed class taught online

ANTH 4370 CRN 33661
SOCI 3341 CRN 33667
WS 3390 CRN 36039
LABS 4301 CRN 33031

Dr. Patrick Timmons, M.Phil., Ph.D., LL.M.
Email: ptimmons2@utep.edu

Office Hours
Virtually via Zoom or Google Groups, by appointment.

Catalog Description
**Course Description and Professor**

When asked about his sexuality, why did Mexican singer Juan Gabriel respond, "Lo que se ve, no se pregunta" ("One doesn’t ask questions about what you can see").

But have you ever wondered why Juan Gabriel was so defensive about his identity? What does Juan Gabriel's inability to talk about his sexuality openly reveal about sexualities in Mexico? Did he respond as he did because of his generation? Or is it more to do with notions of masculinity, manliness, and femininity in Mexico? Or was it a product of all these things, and more?

Think, if you might, about singer Chavela Vargas. Why did it take her until she became an octogenarian to identify as lesbian in Mexico? What was the response to her LGBT identity in Mexico, a country she adopted as her home but where she was not born?

Then think, too, about *electrocumbre* Raymix, born in 1991, and generations apart from Vargas and Gabriel. Raymix came two years ago as gay. Raymix’s announcement barely warranted a mention beyond social media and his followers. Interestingly enough, President Lopez Obrador just said last week (July 2023) that young people would do better to listen to Raymix than to “narcocorridos.”

The examples of singers Juan Gabriel, Chavela Vargas, and Raymix are useful to introduce the study of sexualities in Mexico. In this class we will bring sexualities in Mexico into view, to ask many questions related to social theory about sexualities in Mexico, Latin America and on the U.S-Mexico border, as part of our scholarly inquiry.

Using a diversity of sources such as scholarly books, articles, film and music we will interrogate the violent, corrosive effects of heterosexism and machismo in Mexico from the perspective of the country’s nonconforming same-sex communities.

We will chart Mexico’s uneasy trajectory and grudging acceptance of same-sex desire during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries: from discrimination and repression to activism, acceptance, the ongoing fight for marriage equality, and a life free from the violence of machismo.

The professor, Dr. Patrick Timmons, is an out journalist, human rights lawyer and scholar-practitioner with a PhD from the University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Timmons lives in Mexico City with his partner, an actor and director, and their two dogs, Melisa and Pepillo. He has taught at UTEP since 2015.

**Office Hours**
These are helf virtually via Zoom. Please send me an email to ptimmons2@utep.edu and we will establish a time for a virtual meeting.

Learning Outcomes

After the completion of this course, students should have the following skills or knowledge:

**UTEP EDGE ADVANTAGE**

You can learn about UTEP Edge, here: [https://www.utep.edu/edge/about/index.html](https://www.utep.edu/edge/about/index.html)

This class fulfills the following targeted UTEP Edge Advantage skills:

- **Communication:** Mostly written (discussion boards per module, several writing assignments), but with opportunities for online interaction with the professor and other students.

- **Confidence:** Periodic tests to give you a deeper command of the materials presented in the class before you begin a subject board.

- **Critical thinking:** scrutinizing materials about heteronormativity, masculinity, femininity, patriarchy, matriarchy, the centrality of the family, and *machismo* in order to build a rational, evidence-based understanding of a controversial topic.

- **Entrepreneurship:** going beyond facile stereotypes about a complex, controversial issue: the dismantling of heteronormative patriarchy.

- **Global awareness:** Examining how people understand homosexuality in a comparative perspective, in the Americas, within Latin America, and in Europe.

- **Problem solving:** Tests, book reviews, film review, midterm and final.

- **Social responsibility:** examining in depth the way members of the LGBT+ community want to live their lives free from violence and repression.
Source materials:

*I have indicated here which texts are required. The other texts are suggested and I hope you will read some of them.*

*These books are not listed in any order in particular.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>ISBN</th>
<th>Access Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russo Garrido, Anahi.</td>
<td><em>Tortilleras Negotiating Intimacy: Love, Friendship and Sex in Queer Mexico City.</em> Rutgers University Press, 2020.</td>
<td>9781978807532</td>
<td>The UTEP Library has multiple digital copies of this e-book available at no cost to you, <a href="#">here</a>. You need your UTEP Library credential to access. It is also available in print and in Amazon Kindle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fillingham, Lydia Alix.</td>
<td><em>Foucault for Beginners.</em> Steerforth Press, 2007.</td>
<td>9781934389126</td>
<td>This title is also available for Amazon’s Kindle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macías-González, Victor and Anne Rubenstein, editors.</td>
<td><em>Masculinity and Sexuality in Modern Mexico.</em> University of New Mexico Press, 2012.</td>
<td>9780826329059</td>
<td>The UTEP library has multiple copies of this title digitally at no cost to you, available, <a href="#">here</a>. You need your UTEP Library credential to access.</td>
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</table>
Required films and Statement About Explicit Content

Any films we watch in this class are available through UTEP’s Library Subscription to Kanopy or Swank or Films on Demand, or other providers, and these will be available to you at no charge but you will have to log into the library through your UTEP account.

It is important that you bear in mind that the content of the media for this class is often sexually explicit. The class bears the name “Mexican Sexualities.” It is not possible to avoid materials that have explicit sexual content for this class. Should this be a problem for you, it may be advisable to withdraw from the class.

It may be the case that a film may only be available via Amazon.com. If that is the case, then you will have to rent or purchase it via Amazon.com. Or it may be available via Netflix. This is the case with the *Baile de los 41 (Dance of the 41).*

It is the case that there are a great many LGBT+ films from Mexico, Latin America, and the world, on FilmInLatino.mx. The subscription to the streaming service is not costly (around $4 a month but... the films are almost always in Spanish, and there are no subtitles, which makes accessibility issues an insurmountable obstacle for me to share them with the class.) I mention this to let you know of the service’s existence. It would be useful for you to watch the films of queer Mexican film director Julián Hernández, whose work has sometimes been streamed on Netflix in the US and Mexico. (Netflix offerings vary according to national location for rights and subscription reasons.)
Grading Scheme

To receive a C or better in this class, all work is required. Unless you hand in all work required for this class, your grade is in jeopardy.

Tests
x 4 @ 50 points each test 200 points

Discussion boards
x 4 @ 50 points each discussion board 200 points

Midterm
150 points

Final
150 points

Book Review
150 points
x1 about any of the books used in this class.

Film Review
150 points
x1 about any of the films for this class

Total: 1,000 points

The total point score is then divided by 10 to provide a percentage. The letter grades break down in the following way:

<table>
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<th>%</th>
<th>Letter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≥ 89.50</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>79.50-89.49</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>69.50-79.49</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>59.50-69.49</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>≤ 59.49.</td>
<td>F</td>
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**Descriptions of graded work**

**Late work is unacceptable. You must contact the instructor before the due date if, for any reason, you are going to submit late work.**

**TESTS**

There are four tests in this class. The tests are designed to ensure you do the reading, and that you are comprehending what you read. You should submit your answers to the tests by Sunday, 11:00pm (MT) each week. The tests are open book.

**EXAMS**

There are two exams for the course (the mid-term exam, the final exam). Questions are based on the readings and/or viewings.

The exams will be “open book” so that you will be able to have all support materials you think are necessary to answer the exam questions.

The exams will be administered via Blackboard. You will have from Monday through Friday of two specific weeks to complete the exam upon activation. The exams are to be taken individually—**it is not allowed to discuss the exam questions with the classmates or anyone else.** Please refer to the section on “Academic Integrity” below to review the university and instructor policies on cheating, collusion, and plagiarism.

**Make-up exams**

Make-up exams will be given only in the case of a documented emergency (see “excused absences” below). Note that make-up exams may be in a different format than the original exam and may require more intensive preparation. If you miss a test and your absence is not considered excused, you will receive a zero on the test. This policy will be strictly enforced.

**BOOK REVIEW**

You will write one three-page book review of any of the required or recommended readings: see above in “Source Materials” for the books you can review. Do not review Fillingham, *Foucault for Beginners*.

You must focus on how the book ties into the themes of the class: Mexican sexualities.

The book review is not a summary. The book review will be three pages in length, double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 points. Do not use a cover sheet. Do use the fourth page for citations.

Your identifying details, plus the title of the work you are reviewing should appear on one line. (Please take note of this formatting issue. We do not waste space on banal details.)
FILM REVIEW

You will write one three-page film review about any of the films we watch for the class.

You must focus on how the film you choose shapes understandings of Mexican sexualities.

The film review is not a summary. The film review will be three pages in length, double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 points. Do not use a cover sheet. Do use the fourth page for citations.

Your identifying details, plus the title of the work you are reviewing should appear on one line. (Please take note of this formatting issue. We do not waste space on banal details.)

DISCUSSION BOARDS

There are four opportunities in this class to discuss the material for a particular module in a written format. A discussion board requires the following from you:

(1) a discussion post in response to a guided question (minimum of 250 words and maximum of 500 words); and,

(2) respond to at least one of your classmates’ post (minimum of 100 words and maximum of 500 words).

Be sure to submit your discussion post and response to your peers in a week when a discussion board is due by Sunday, 11:00pm (MT) of that week to receive credit for your participation.

Some suggestions for successful posts:

Write with the curiosity of university students.

The instructor is more interested in doubts and the questions you raise rather than providing concrete answers. The expression of doubt and uncertainty is a skill and something to be practiced and developed.

You are strongly encouraged to use the UTEP Writing Center for assistance in drafting all written work, including discussion boards, book and film reviews.

I expect everyone to actively participate in class and do so in a positive and appropriate way (see the “Online Etiquette and Effective Communication” section below). Keep in mind that class participation is more than just completing the scheduled assignments and
taking exams—you should be willing to ask and answer questions and contribute intellectually to class debates via online discussion posts.

Before posting a discussion, you should complete the assigned readings and go over your notes of those readings. Exams will cover material from the readings, and our online discussions, so doing just one or the other will leave you at a disadvantage.

Full credit for a discussion post is reserved only for those that follow the online etiquette and effective communication rules below.
COURSE/INSTRUCTOR POLICIES

E-Mail Protocol

UTEP e-mail is the best way to contact me. I will make every attempt to respond to your e-mail within 24-48 hours of receipt during weekdays. I will respond to weekend messages by Monday at the latest.

Follow the following format when you write me an email. (Unfortunately, due to the large number of students I serve every semester, I will not be able to respond to any email that does not follow these crucial instructions.)

1. When e-mailing me, please put the course number in the subject line.

2. Address me, please, as Dr. Timmons. (Beware: I do not respond to the title, Mr.) Thank you for your consideration in this matter).

3. In the body of your e-mail, clearly state your question. Unless you ask me a specific question, it is unlikely I will respond.

4. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name, and your university identification number.
Online Etiquette and Effective Communication

It is essential that the utmost respect and professionalism be adhered in all exchanges between class members. This is a political science course and we will be discussing at times sensitive and controversial topics. Avoid any unnecessary arguments with other class members, such as political polemical arguments (e.g., negative partisan talking points targeting those of opposing ideological perspectives or particular political figures) or, even worse, personal attacks on others for having different views.

*No inappropriate behavior will be tolerated.*

Unprofessional conduct will be dealt with swiftly through the University and it is at the professor’s full discretion to have a student dropped from the course for any inappropriate behavior.

Please carefully read the following rules for online etiquette and effective communication:

**Online Etiquette and Effective Communication Policy**

**Language:** Given the absence of face-to-face clues, written text can easily be misinterpreted. Avoid the use of strong or offensive language, all capital letters, and the excessive use of exclamation points. If you feel particularly strongly about a point, it may be best to write it first as a draft and then to review it, before posting it, in order to remove any strong language.

**Respect:** A web-based classroom is still a classroom, and comments that would be inappropriate in a regular classroom are likely to be inappropriate in a web-based course as well. Treat your professor and your fellow students with respect. Remember that members of the class and I will be reading any postings.

**Be Forgiving:** If someone states something that you find offensive, mention this directly to the professor in an email. Remember that the person contributing to the discussion is also new to this form of communication. What you find offensive may quite possibly have been unintended and can best be cleared up by the professor.

**This is Permanent:** Think carefully about the content of your message before contributing it. Once sent, there is no taking it back. When reacting to someone else’s message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.

**Edit Your Work:** The grammar, spelling, and punctuation of a message are part of the grading criteria – you should not expect your professor and peers to decode misspelled words or poorly constructed sentences. It is a good
practice to compose and check your comments in a word-processor before posting them.

**Test for Clarity:** Messages may often appear perfectly clear to you as you compose them, but turn out to be perfectly obtuse to your reader. One way to test for clarity is to read your message aloud to see if it flows smoothly and if you can read it to another person before posting it, even better.

**Follow the Parameters/Stick to the Point:** Follow the posting requirements and parameters set up by your professor. Contributions to a discussion should have a clear subject header, and you need to stick to the subject. Don’t waste others’ time by going off on irrelevant tangents. Also keep in mind that no credit will be received for yes/no answers. Posts should justify positions and provide specific examples. Students must demonstrate that they have read the assignment and their classmates’ comments carefully and thoughtfully.

**Read First, Write Later:** Don’t add your comments to a discussion before reading the comments of other students unless the assignment specifically asks you to. Doing so is tantamount to ignoring your fellow students and is rude. Comments related to the content of previous messages should be posted under them to keep related topics organized, and you should specify the person and the particular point you are following up on.
**Excused Absences and Excuse for Late Work**

I will excuse absences and late work only when a student participates in an official university-recognized activity, observes a recognized religious holiday of her/his faith that happens to coincide with a class session or due date for an assignment, is called to and participates in active military service for a reasonably brief period, or confronts a medical emergency.

**To be excused, you must notify me in writing prior to the date of absence.**

That said, in cases where advance notification is not feasible (e.g. a medical emergency), you must provide notification as soon as possible following your absence. Such notification must include an explanation of why notice could not be sent in advance.

You must also provide satisfactory documentation verifying the reason for the absence. In case of an illness, a doctor’s note is the proper documentation required.

For my records, you should e-mail me a scanned copy of the documentation that verifies the reason for your absence (if you don’t have access to a scanner, you can take a photo of the documentation). Documentation that is not provided in a timely manner will not be accepted.

Please do not ask me to excuse absences for minor illnesses or scheduling conflicts (e.g. sports practices, play rehearsals, meetings, conferences, appointments with other professors or advisors, student teaching, having your cable installed, having a bad headache, etc.). I am aware that students have other interests and obligations, but you should nevertheless make this class a priority. If you are likely to have recurring conflicts, please take another course that better fits your schedule.

See academic regulations in UTEP Undergraduate Catalogue for a list of excused absences: [http://catalog.utep.edu/undergrad/academic-regulations/curriculum-and-classroom-policies/](http://catalog.utep.edu/undergrad/academic-regulations/curriculum-and-classroom-policies/). According to UTEP Curriculum and Classroom Policies, “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.”

**Academic Integrity**

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to cheating, collusion, and plagiarism.

*Cheating* may involve copying from or providing information to another student and possessing unauthorized materials during a test.

*Collusion* involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. One example of collusion is preparing a discussion entry for another person or having someone prepare a discussion entry for you. I encourage students to study together and
work collectively; however, working together to write any part of a written assignment, research paper, and/or exam is collusion.

*Plagiarism* is commonly defined as passing off the ideas, works, writing, etc., of another person as your own. Accordingly, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own work, even if you have the permission of that person. Be aware, just as the Internet has made it easier to find material, it has also made it easier to trace the source of any written work. If you are unsure whether a citation is required, err on the side of caution and provide one.

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. Refer to the Office for Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution at [https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/osccr/index.html](https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/osccr/index.html).

**Copyright Statement for Course Materials**
All materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further disseminated.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you require specific accommodations and support services, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Please keep in mind that accommodations need to be requested at least two weeks (or a month if advance planning, such as the acquisition of books-on-tape, is required) prior to the beginning of the semester. Here is the contact information for CASS: web: [http://sa.utep.edu/cass/](http://sa.utep.edu/cass/); phone: (915) 747-5148; fax: (915) 747-8712; e-mail: cass@utep.edu; location: UTEP Union Building East Room 106.

**SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS**
You will need the following software on your computer to efficiently work in this course (your computer may already have some of these programs installed):


Microsoft Office. If you do not have a word-processing software, go to 
https://my.apps.utep.edu. Using MyApps interface, UTEP students can access most
software offered in student computer labs (including Microsoft Office) from their
personal computing devices. Students can use any laptop, tablet, or smartphone
with an Internet connection and use the software from anywhere at any time. For
more information, go to http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=73740 and
follow the instructions.

UTEP TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The University of Texas at El Paso offers complete technical information and Help Desk
support at: http://issweb.utep.edu/techsupport/.

ALTERNATE MEANS OF SUBMITTING WORK IN CASE OF TECHNICAL ISSUES

I strongly suggest that you save all your work in a separate Word document as a back-up in
case there is a technical issue with the course website, network, and/or your computer.
This way, you will have evidence that you completed the work and will not lose credit. If
you are experiencing difficulties submitting your work through the course website, you can
always email me (ptimmons2@utep.edu) your back-up document. You will be asked to
submit via Blackboard once you have resolved the issue.
COVID-19 ACCOMMODATIONS

For those of us (I include myself in this comment) who might confront difficulties because of COVID-19, I want to reassure you that I will be flexible and understanding.

There are policies and procedures in place for the possibility that you might go to UTEP's campus.

You are required to follow these policies and procedures for the safety of our UTEP community, and residents of Ciudad Juárez/El Paso/Las Cruces.

Even though this class is 100 percent online, you may decide to go to campus to use the library or other facilities.

You can find the most up to date policies and procedures related to COVID, here: https://www.utep.edu/resuming-campus-operations/news/index.html
COURSE SCHEDULE AND TASKS – WEEKS AT A GLANCE*

This course is taught in a modular format, and in four modules. There is one module per week.

It is very important to understand that we are using scholarly, and creative, intellectual published works about Mexican sexualities.

* The materials listed here for viewing and reading will be augmented with other materials made available to you via Blackboard. Make sure you are familiar with the Blackboard module for each week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Module Number &amp; Title</th>
<th>Reading/Viewing</th>
<th>Assignment(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>07/18 to 07/24</td>
<td>2: The Diversity of Mexican Sexualities: Creating new norms, subjectivities, and cultural forms.</td>
<td>Reading:</td>
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<td><em>Caricia</em>, 2017, directed by David Montes Bernal</td>
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<td><strong>REQUIRED</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>07/25 to 07/31</td>
<td>Femininities and masculinities: in Mexico City and on/across the Border.</td>
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**Readings:**

**REQUIRED**


**REQUIRED**


**REQUIRED**


**RECOMMENDED**


**Viewing:**

**REQUIRED**

*Chavela*, 2014, directed by Catherine Gund and Daresha Kyi. Available for free via Tubi. (NB: If you are watching this film...)

Third discussion board, third open test.
outside the United States you will have to use a VPN.

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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>08/01 to 08/07</td>
<td>Chasing Same-sex Desire</td>
<td>Readings:</td>
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<td>Viewing:</td>
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<td><strong>REQUIRED</strong></td>
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<td><em>Yo soy la felicidad en este mundo.</em> (I am Happiness on Earth), 2014, directed by Julián Hernández.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>08/07 to 08/09</td>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>Materials: all.</td>
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<td>The objective of the final exam is to review what you consider the three most important source materials that have helped you learn about Mexican Sexualities.</td>
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<td>The exam will be a three-page essay, Times New Roman, 12 points, double spaced, with a fourth page for citations.</td>
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</table>

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU SUBMIT YOUR EVALUATION OF THIS CLASS! There are very few classes at UTEP available concerning sexuality. Your evaluation is EXTREMELY important to the professor, to UTEP, and to the Departments sponsoring this class!