



Seminar in Communication Theory: *Critical LatinX Studies*

COMM 5343
CRN: 26599

Wed. 6:00 pm – 8:50 pm

CRBL #C202

Spring Semester – 2020

Instructor: Roberto Avant-Mier, Ph.D.
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Required Texts:

- *Talking #BrownTV: Latinas & Latinos On the Screen*, by authors F.L. Aldama & W.A. Nericcio
Year: 2019 Publisher: The Ohio State University Press
- Other assigned (required) readings are available on Blackboard system as .pdf documents.
- Finally, some other books are listed at the end of this syllabus, but are listed as “Recommended” readings for the purposes of in-class presentations and discussion (*i.e.*, options for class presentations).

Course Description:

The goal of this course is to explore “Critical LatinX Studies” as an emerging (inter-disciplinary) area of research, but also emphasizing communication and media studies & research. This course engages theory and research in Latino/a studies, Chicano/a studies, “LatinX” concerns, and popular culture, and will help you apply this knowledge in better understanding communication, rhetoric, and media studies. It will also improve your understanding of communication beyond traditional views of (mass) communication and/or mainstream rhetorical theory, and assume ritual/symbolic and critical/cultural perspectives on communication. Thus, in addition to communication scholarship the course will also focus on social, societal, cultural, structural and historical dimensions of popular culture & media analysis, and also, on interdisciplinary (Latino/a, Chicano/a, or LatinX) research related to popular culture & media studies.

Course Objectives: After taking this course, you should be able to:

- Understand the basics of terms like “Latino/a,” “Chicano/a,” “Hispanic,” and more recently, “LatinX”... and be able to discuss the similarities and differences of these terms, as well as what the terms both enable and constrain.
- Develop a working vocabulary of terms and concepts that relate to Latino/a & LatinX studies, theory and criticism – in addition to communication/media studies research in this area.
- Become aware of the developments in “Latino/a” and “LatinX” studies as well as some major trends in this emerging area of research.
- Analyze media or popular culture texts/artifacts using different critical and theoretical approaches.
- Express (write) your own ideas about “LatinX” studies in relation to meaning, signification, and representation.

Course Policies:

1. ATTENDANCE:

First, in accordance with the Dept. of Communication Attendance Policy, **ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED** as a condition of successful completion of all courses in the department. Second, after missing any class session, students are responsible for finding out about assignments, due dates, announcements, handouts, and so forth that were covered during the missed session, and for making up any missed work. The student is also responsible for obtaining class notes from a classmate for the session, and for learning the material from that session for any relevant exams or quizzes.

Third, the equivalent of 1 week of absence from any course will reduce a student's course grade by percentage points on their eventual "Attendance & Participation" grade. However, absence from a combined total of 3 weeks of class meetings will result in automatic failure of the course. Thus, if the class meets once a week, 3 missed sessions equals automatic failure. If a course meets twice a week, 8 missed sessions will result in failure of the course, and a combined total of 9 missed class sessions will result in automatic failure of a course (for a 3 times per week class). There are no exceptions to this rule.

Fourth, absences for any reason, including illness, personal crises, athletics or other extra-curricular activities are included in this total. If a student is involved in any activity that might require that student to miss 3 or more weeks of a particular course, then that student should not enroll in the course. If a student is involved in any activity that might require that student to miss an exam or quiz, then that student should not enroll in the course.

Next, it is important to note that tardies (arriving late to class) will also be marked and counted, and a simple class rule is that excessive tardies/lates will result in the reduction of the student's final grade. More specifically, for "Attendance & Participation" purposes two tardies will be considered the same as one absence (for final grading). [2 tardies/lates = 1 absence]

Finally, students are required to keep track of their own absences, and therefore should not expect the instructor to regularly report absences or notify students in case of attendance issues or problems (unless as a courtesy by the instructor, determined by the instructor's discretion).

2. DEADLINES:

All assignments and exams/quizzes will be scheduled far in advance, and due dates for exams and assignments are announced in this syllabus. Therefore, you must plan your work and personal schedule far in advance to accommodate these deadlines and policies. Because the attendance policy dictates that you will (for the most part) be present in class, make-ups and late work are therefore largely irrelevant. Otherwise, for a few special cases at the discretion of your instructor, late work will be docked one letter grade for each day late (each calendar day, not each day of class).

3. EXAMS:

Make-up tests will not be given, except for emergencies. If a student misses an exam or quiz because of a documented emergency or situation, he/she will be required to fulfill an alternative assignment. Only in extreme circumstances will your instructor make arrangements with you to complete your coursework through alternative assignments.

4. ADA STATEMENT (Americans with Disabilities Act):

The University of Texas at El Paso seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the instructor and to the Center for Accommodations & Support Services (CASS) to make arrangements for accommodations in advance.

5. CASS POLICY (Center for Accommodations & Support Services):

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations & Support Services (CASS) at (915) 747.5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu. Or visit their office located in the UTEP Union – East, Room #106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. CASS staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.

6. PHONES / ELECTRONIC DEVICES:

Cell phones or other personal electronic communication devices are NOT permitted during class, so phones should be turned off AND put away during class. Students are required to follow these simple rules, and failure to comply with phone rules during class will result in students being counted absent for the day. Also, it is NOT the instructor's responsibility to notify the student if/when he or she has been counted absent for this reason. Thus, a student may possibly (or likely) be counted "absent" as a result of using phones in class, without being notified about the marked absence. Finally, laptops for note-taking are permitted but only with (a.) instructor permission and (b.) as long as the student sits in the front rows of the classroom. (In other words, students cannot sit in the back rows when they are using laptops.)

7. ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

The University of Texas at El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence, and students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, submitting work for credit that is attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act that gives or attempts to give unfair advantage.

8. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING SCALES

Assignments

* Attendance & Participation	20 %
Paper #1: Lit. Review	10 %
Paper #2: Analysis	10%
Final Paper:	30 %
Critical Reading Questions & Presentations: (6 x 5%) =	30 %

[Each student is required to present at least 6 times]

* Attendance & Participation Points Earned

0 -1 absences =	80-100% for attendance grade
1 - 2 absences =	60-79% for attendance grade
3 or more =	Automatic failure of course / or "W"

Numeric Scale – Letter Grade Achieved

90-100 =	A	80-90 =	B	70-80 =	C	60-70 =	D	below 60 =	F
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TENTATIVE SCHEDULE – Spring 2020

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Required Reading:</u>
1	W 1/22	a. Introductions, syllabus & course overview b. Defining “LatinX” Studies and “Communication”	(Get the books or materials!) Lecture/Discussion

2	W 1/29	Why does “LatinX” Studies need to be a thing? a. “Can Cultural Studies Speak Spanish?” (2006) b. “#OscarsSoWhite...Hollywood & Everything” (2016) c. “ Why Cultural Criticism Matters ” (2018)	* Article: G. Mariscal * Article: I. Molina-Guzmán * Online article: VanDerWerff

3	W 2/ 5	History, Colonialism a. “A History of Hispanic/Latino Panethnicities” (2016) b. “The Problem of Identity...” (1978) c. “ <i>Hasta La Vista, Baby</i> : Anglo Spanish in the Southwest” (1993)	* Article: R. Gutiérrez * Article: A. Paredes * Article: J. H. Hill

4	W 2/12	The Legacy of Borders & Colonization a. “Language, Race, and White Public Space” (1998) b. A Crash Course On Hollywood’s Latino Imagery (2002) c. Becoming Pedro: “Playing Mexican” at South of the Border (2018)	* Article: J. H. Hill * Article: C. Ramírez Berg * Article: C. Márquez

5	W 2/19	What’s in a Name? a. “Coloniality at Large: Western Hemisphere...” (2001) b. Hispanic vs. Latino vs. “LatinX” (Brief History) (2018) c. “LatinX” Is Officially in Dictionary (2018) d. Spanish Royal Academy says NO to “LatinX” (2018)	* Article: W. D. Mignolo * Online article: Y. Simón * Online article: Y. Simón * Online article: A. Cataño

6	W 2/26	Other Perspectives on “LatinX” a. “What’s In an X? An Exchange about ‘Latinx’ ” (2017) b. The Case Against ‘Latinx’ (2017) c. Coming to Terms with “Latinx” (2017) d. What the Hex is “Latinx?” (2018)	* Article: C. de Onís * Online article: D. Hernández * Online article: A. Davis * Online article: D. Bowles

7	W 3/ 4	Mexican, Chicano/a, and Latino Monsters in Film a. “Despicable Others...” (2017) b. “Chicano Monsters & LatinX Futures...” (2018) c. “Days of the (Un)Dead: Vampires, Zombies...” (2013)	* Article: J. Khrebtan-Hörhager & R. Avant-Mier * Article: Lechuga & Avant-Mier * Article: J. Alemán

8	W 3/11	Other Perspectives on “Latinidad” (and Media) a. “Race, Racialization, & Latinos in US” (2016) b. “(Re)Constructing <i>Latinidad</i> ” (2016) c. “Jennifer As Selena: Rethinking Latinidad...” (2003)	* Article: T. Almaguer * Article: F.R. Aparicio * Article: F.R. Aparicio
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9	3/16 – 3/20	SPRING BREAK	(No classes)
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10	W 3/25	Latinas and Rhetorical (Communication) Theory a. “Chicana Feminists Craft a Homeland” (2006) b. “#CommunicationSoWhite” (2018) c. “LatinX Rhetoric & Intersectionality in Racial Rhetoric” (2018)	* Article: Lisa A. Flores * Article: Chakravartty, et al. * Article: SotoVega & Chávez
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11	W 4/ 1	a. PAPER #1 Due [Review of Literature, draft version] b. Lecture	
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12	W 4/ 8	Latinas, LatinXs, Sex, and Borders a. “Mediating Frida: Discourses of Latina/o in Media” (2006) b. A History of Latina/o Sexualities (2016) c. Border (In)Securities: LGBTQ Immigrants Discourse (2010)	* Article: I. Molina-Guzmán * Article: R. Gutiérrez * Article: K. Chávez
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13	W 4/15	a. PAPER #2 Due [Analysis of media/popular culture artifact, draft version] b. Lecture	
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14	W 4/22	Talking #BrownTV book, etc. a. Introduction to <i>Talking #BrownTV</i> b. <i>Talking #BrownTV</i> , Sections I and II c. “The Future is Brown...& Fat: LatinX Health & Nation-State” (2019)	Aldama & Nericio: (Theory, Paradoxes...) * Article: E.C. Dame-Griff
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15	W 4/29	More #BrownTV, and other stuff a. <i>Talking #BrownTV</i> : Sections III, IV, and V b. “ Understanding Colorism in Latino Communities ” (2018)	Aldama & Nericio: (Sombreros, Niños, Fear...) * Online article: G. Castro
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16	W 5/ 6	Paper Presentations & FINAL PAPERS DUE	
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17	Wed. May 13 th	FINAL EXAM 7:00 – 9:45 pm	(as per university schedule)
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***	5/20	GRADES DUE	

Other Recommended/Suggested Texts:

[for the purpose of weekly assignments & presentations]

- ***A Companion to Latina/o Studies***, Edited by J. Flores & R. Rosaldo (2007, Wiley-Blackwell Press)
- ***The New Latino Studies Reader: A Twenty-First-Century Perspective***, Edited by R. Gutiérrez & T. Almaguer (2016, University of California Press)
- ***The Chicana/o Cultural Studies Reader***, Edited by A. Chabram-Dernersesian. (2006, Routledge)
- ***The Chicano Studies Reader: An Anthology of Aztlán, 1970-2015***, Edited by C. Noriega, *et al.* (2016, UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Press)
- ***The Making of Chicana/o Studies***, by R. Acuña (2011, Rutgers University Press)
- ***Keywords for Latina/o Studies***, Edited by D. Vargas, N. Mirabal, & L. La Fountain-Stokes (2017, NYU Press)
- ***Latinx Studies: Key Concepts***, by F. Aldama & C. González (2018, Routledge)
- ***Latina/o Studies (Short Introductions)***, by R.L. Mize (2018, Polity Press)