Chicano / Latino Music in the U.S.

CHIC 3304 / COMM 4350 **T/Th 10:30 – 11:50 am** **COT #201**
CRN: 20919 / 25793

Spring Semester – 2025

Instructor: Roberto Avant-Mier, Ph.D.
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Phone: (915) 747.6588
Office Hours: Tue. & Thur. 8:30 am – 10:30 am (or by appointment), or Virtual (by appt)
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Required Texts:

REQUIRED Book: ***Barrio Harmonics: Essays on Chicano/Latino Music***
Author: **Steven Loza** Year: **2019** Publisher: **UCLA Chicano Studies Research Ctr. Press**

Course Description:

Chicano/Latino Music is an examination of popular music within the U.S., with a specific focus on Chicano/a music —and by extension, Latin/o/a/x music as well. This course explores a series of popular music genres, including mainstream U.S. genres (blues, rock, country, rap/hip hop, etc.) and other Latin or Latino (or Chicano) specific genres (corridos, tejano, salsa, rancheras, etc.). The class will mostly emphasize primary-source research articles, but will also screen some documentary films, as part of an analysis of Chicano & Latino music and the impact on U.S. popular culture overall. Generally speaking, this is an interdisciplinary course that borrows analytical constructs and techniques used in ethnic studies, communication/media studies, history, cultural anthropology, cultural studies, and sociology. Finally, this course will also review some basic tenets of Chicano history, culture, politics, and identity in order to apply this knowledge in understanding popular music as meaning-making cultural practice and for understanding the significance of mass-mediated popular music for Chicano/a/xs & Latino/a/xs.

Course Objectives: In this course you should,

- Become more familiar with Chicano/a Studies and develop a working vocabulary of terms and concepts that relate to Chicano/a history, identity, politics, and "The Chicano/a experience."
- Be exposed to Chicano/a culture and Chicano (or Latin/o) music as an art form, become more aware of popular music made by Chicano/a/xs and/or Latino/a/xs, and understand & track the evolution of Chicano/Latino musical expressions.
- Understand & discuss various social issues as expressed within or through Chicano/Latino music.
- Recognize the nuances, complexities, and influences of popular music on Chicana/o culture and identity(ies) (and possibly, vice versa).
- Discover some interdisciplinary perspectives in studying popular music as media/communication.

Course Policies:

1. ATTENDANCE:

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, a student is 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 (not from the professor), and for learning 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 means 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 that meets 3 times per week. 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 "lates" will be considered the same as one absence (for final grading). [2 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 personal and work schedules far in advance to accommodate these deadlines and policies. Once again, because the attendance policy dictates that you will (for the most part) be present in this in-person 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 at least 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, they will be required to submit documentation and then fulfill an alternative assignment. In other words, only in extreme circumstances will your instructor make arrangements with you to complete your coursework through "make-ups" or 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. Laptops for note-taking are permitted, only with (a.) instructor permission and (b.) as long as the student sits in the front rows of the classroom. [In other words, students should not 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. COVID-19 PRECAUTION STATEMENT:

Please stay home if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, so that we can work on appropriate accommodations. If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you are encouraged to report your results to covidaction@utep.edu, so that the Dean of Students Office can provide you with support and help with communication with your professors. The Student Health Center is equipped to provide COVID-19 testing.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that people in areas of substantial or high COVID-19 transmission wear face masks when indoors in groups of people. The best way that Miners can take care of Miners is to get the vaccine. If you still need the vaccine, it is widely available in the El Paso area, and will be available at no charge on campus during the first week of classes. For more information about the current rates, testing, and vaccinations, please visit epstrong.org.

9. ASSIGMENTS & GRADING SCALES

Assignments

* Attendance & Participation	30 %
Quiz #1:	15 %
Mid-Term Exam:	20 %
Quiz #2:	15 %
Final Exam/Final Project:	20 %

* Attendance & Participation Points Earned

0-1 absences = 90-100% for attendance grade
2-3 absences = 80-89% for attendance grade
4-5 absences = 70-79% for attendance grade
6-7 absences = automatic "D" for final grade
8 or more = Automatic failure / "F" (or "W")

PLZ NOTE:

2 Lates = 1 Absence

Numeric Scale – Letter Grade Achieved

90 – 100 = **A** 80 – 89 = **B** 70 – 79 = **C** 60 – 69 = **D** below 60 = **F**

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE – Spring 2025

Week	Date	Topic	Be ready to discuss:
1	T 1/21	a Introductions, syllabus & course overview	(Get the books/ materials!)
	Th 1/23	a. Who Is a "Chicano?" b. And what does "Chicano" mean? Latino?	* Salazar: "Who Is a Chicano?..." [Notes]
2	T 1/28	a. Some notes on indigenous music b. Corridos and "Greater México"	* Gutiérrez: "Chicano Music" S. Loza ***BH***, Ch. 1
	Th 1/30	What is "Chicano" Music?	* C. Ortega: "On Chicano Music…"
3	T 2/ 4	a. Tejano Music: La Rosa de San Antonio b. The Mother of Tejano Music	* Vargas: "Rosita Fernández" Mendoza: "Mal Hombre" (1934)
	Th 2/ 6	a. Son Jarocho from Veracruz to L.A. b. *Latin Music USA, Pt. 2* (2009)	S. Loza ***BH***, Ch. 3 [documentary film]
4	T 2/11	a. Mexican/Chicano Music: L. Guerrero b. *Lalo Guerrero: "The Original Chicano"* (2006)	S. Loza ***BH***, Ch. 4 [documentary film]
	Th 2/13	**QUIZ #1**	
5	T 2/18	1960s: *Latin Music USA, Pt. 3* (2009)	[documentary film]
	Th 2/20	Assimilation, Reclamation, and Rejection…	S. Loza ***BH***, Ch. 9
6	T 2/25	a. Chicano Rock Music? b. *Chicano Rock!: Sounds of East L.A.* (2008)	* Avant-Mier: "Latinos in the Garage" [documentary film]
	Th 2/27	a. The Curious Case of Doug Sahm b. "Mendocino," "Chicano," and "Ya No Llores/Chicano""	* Cruz Dávila: "Él es Chicano?" / Sahm: "Mendocino" (1969), "Chicano" (1973) "Ya No Llores" (1981)
7	T 3/ 4	*Singing Our Way to Freedom* (2018)	[documentary film]
	Th 3/ 6	a. Chicano Country Music? b. Chicano Country: Freddy Fender	* Lewis: "Mexican Influences…" * Vargas: "Freddy Fender's…"
	3/10 – 3/14	***SPRING BREAK***	(No classes)

8	T 3/18	a. Chicano Country: Johnny Rodriguez b. Carrie Rodriguez **+** "Tiny Desk Concert"	* Vargas: "Brown Country" "Let Me In" (2008), "Tiny Desk" (2016)
	Th 3/20	**MID-TERM EXAM**	
9	T 3/25	*Linda Ronstadt: The Sound of My Voice* (2019)	[documentary film]
	Th 3/27	*Rock 'n' Roll Made In Mexico* (2007)	[documentary film]
10	T 4/ 1	Chicano Rap Music from the 80s to 90s	* D.V. Mausfeld: "Chicano Rap history"
	Th 4/ 3	a. Chicanos & "Alternative" Music/Culture b. *Is It Really So Strange?* (1999)	* "Their Charming Man" (G. Arellano) * "Viva Morrissey!" (C. Klosterman) [documentary film]
11	T 4/ 8	a. 1990s: Chicano/Latino Punk? b. *Más Allá de los Gritos* (1999)	* Zavella: "Beyond the Screams" [documentary film]
	Th 4/10	a. Mexican… Chicano… Latino Rock b. From *Rock en Español* to Rock Latino	* Calderón: "Mexico City-LA Mosh Pits" * Kun: "File Under: Post-Mexico"
12	T 4/15	On Borders…	* Kun: "The Aural Border"
	Th 4/17	The Cultural Politics of Chicana/o Music…	* Viesca, "The Battle of L.A…"
13	T 4/22	Identity, Nationalism, & Aesthetics in Chicano Music	* S. Loza ***BH***, Ch. 5
	Th 4/24	**QUIZ #2**	
14	T 4/29	a. Implications of Globalizing Latin Music b. The Many Contradictions of 'Latin Music'	a. * S. Loza ***BH***, Ch. 10 b. A. Sayre: Link to article
	Th 5/ 1	[Student presentations: Order TBD]	
15	T 5/ 6	[Student presentations: Order TBD]	
	Th 5/ 8	[Student presentations: Order TBD]	
16	Thurs. May 15th	**FINAL EXAM** **(10:00 am to 12:45 pm)**	As per university schedule
***	5/ 21	FINAL GRADES DUE	

Further Reading Suggestions, Resources, and References:

Alvarez, L. (2007), "From Zoot Suits to Hip Hop: Towards a Relational Chicana/o Studies," *Latino Studies 5*: 53-75

Arellano, G. (19 Sept. 2002), "Their Charming Man: Dispatches from the Latino Morrissey Love-In," *The OC Weekly*: 53-75

Avant-Mier, R. (2010). *Rock the Nation: Latin/o Rock and the Latin Rock Diaspora*. New York: Continuum.

Bender, S. (2001), "Will the Wolf Survive?: Latino/a Pop Music in the Cultural Mainstream," *Denver University Law Review 78*, 719-751.

Dempsey, J.M. (2002), "The Light Crust Doughboys Are On the Air," *Journal of Radio Studies 9*, no. 1, 107-125.

Garcia, M. (1999). "The Chicano Dance Hall: Remapping Public Space in Post-World War II Greater Los Angeles," in *Sound Identities* (McCarthy et al.), pp. 317-341.

Habell-Pallán, M. (1999)."El Vez Is Taking Care of Business: The Inter/National Appeal of Chicano Popular Music," *Cultural Studies 13*, no. 2, 195-210.

Hernández, M.A. (2001)."Remaking the Corrido for the 1990s: Maldita Vecindad's El Barzón," *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture 20*, 101-116.

Klosterman, C. (2007). "1,400 Mexican Moz Fans Can't Be (Totally) Wrong," in *Klosterman IV: A Decade of Curious People and Dangerous Ideas* (Klosterman), pp. 47-56.

Lewis, G.H. (1992), "La Pistola y El Corazón: Protest and Passion in Mexican-American Popular Music," *Journal of Popular Culture 26*, 51-67.

Loza, S. (2008), "Assimilation, Reclamation, and Rejection of the Nation-State by Chicano Musicians," in *Postnational Musical Identities* (by Corona & Madrid), 137-150.

Loza, S. (1994), "Identity, Nationalism, and Aesthetics Among Chicano/Mexicano Musicians in Los Angeles," *Selected Reports in Ethnomusicology 10*, 51-58.

Kun (19xx), "Rock's Reconquista"

Kun (2000), "The Aural Border," *Theater Journal 52*, 1-21.

Macias, A. (2003), "Rock Con Raza, Raza Con Jazz: Latinos/as and Post-World War II Popular American Music," in *Musical Migrations* (by Aparicio & Jáquez), 183-197.

Martinezl-Morrison, A. (2014)."Black and Tan Realities: Chicanos in the Borderlands of the Hip-Hop Nation," *Alter/Nativas: Latin American Cultural Studies Journal*, Spring 2014, 1-24.

McCleese, D. (2006), "Sir Douglas Sahm & the Garage as Big as Texas," *Popular Music & Society 29*, 441-450.

Morales, E. (2002). "Rock Is Dead and Living in Mexico," in *Living In Spanglish: The Search for Latino Identity in America*.

Pacini Hernández, D. (2000). "A Tale of Two Cities: A Comparative Analysis of L.A. Chicano and Nuyorican Engagement with Rock 'n' Roll," *CENTRO Journal 11*, 71-92.

Shank, B. (1994). "Punk Rock at Raul's," in *Dissonant Identities: The Rock Scene in Austin, Texas* (by B. Shank).

Solórzano-Thompson, N. (2007). "Performative Masculinities: The Pachuco and the Luchador in the songs of Maldita Vecindad and Café Tacuba," *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture 26*, 79-96.

Stigberg, D.K. (1985), "Foreign Currents during the 60s and 70s in Mexican Popular Music: Rock and Roll, the Romantic Ballad, and the Cumbia" *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture 4*, 170-184.

Taylor, P.S. (1934). *An American-Mexican Frontier: Nueces County, Texas*.