

**Course Syllabus**  
Fall 2020 Semester, Seven Week Term  
**Teaching Mode: Online (100%)**  
Syllabus updated January 2021

**Instructor: Dr. Silvia Torezani\***

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\*The course preferred means of communication is Blackboard email -check for the link inside the course shell.

**General Introduction/Course Description**

At the U.S.-Mexico border, diverse cultures meet, mix, and create. The future of two nations can be seen in major social changes taking place at the border. The course offers an introduction to this increasingly important region, and a good way for people with experience at the border to strengthen their tools for understanding and practice. The course has four goals: 1) to provide objective factual knowledge about the social and cultural composition of the U.S.-Mexico border region as a background to major public issues such as immigration, global industrialization, cultural diversity, transnationalism, poverty, and progress; 2) to examine the human side of those issues, paying close attention to the lives of individual people in the borderlands; 3) to place those individual lives in broader social and cultural frameworks that connect Mexico and United States; and 4) to allow students to clarify their values by exploring the many sides of these human issues.

Each course unit includes material so that students will understand the fundamental issues, along with representative details and examples. A brief outline of the course follows:

1. Border Region History and Geography
2. Nationalities, Ethnicity, and Orientations to the Border
3. Seeing Complicated Issues from Multiple Perspectives
4. Migration
5. Class and Gender on the Border
6. Mexico's Northern Border
7. Individual Research Paper (Topic: Border Migration)

Course activities will consist of reading (approximately one whole book a week), written discussions posted on discussion boards, and long weekly written assignments, plus a major research paper using approved internet sources (selected because they are reliable). **In general, it is expected that the course will require approximately 18 hours each week**, including reading, exercises, discussions, and all other activities. Please remember that this is a compressed course, and is twice as fast as a regular semester length course. This is a full course; nothing has been cut out.

Course schedule (assignments, due dates, etc.) The schedule of units and lessons for the course is located on the course main page menu under Calendar.

At the end of the course, the student will be able to:

- Use history and geography as a framework for understanding the border and analyzing border lives.
- Understand border identities, including nationality, ethnicity, and class, and apply them to analyzing border lives.
- Understand border orientations (nationalist/binationalist; unicultural/bicultural) and apply them to analyzing border lives.
- Recognize and analyze multiple, often conflicting, perspectives on border issues.
- Use the tools of "culture" and "social structure" to understand border working people, especially those facing poverty, low wages, low or no benefits, and discrimination in public.
- Apply the "multiple perspective" approach to U.S.-Mexico migration and know objective facts, humanistic understandings, and policy options for that issue.

### **Course Communications and Problem Solving**

Course announcements should be the first thing you see when you log onto the course website. Please read these and keep up to date--important information will be communicated to you through these announcements.

Dr. Torezani can be contacted at [satorezani@utep.edu](mailto:satorezani@utep.edu) in case you are having issues with the **Blackboard email**, which is the preferred medium of communication. You should allow 24 hours for response to e-mail during weekdays and 72 hours over the weekend or public holidays. Please e-mail the instructor only about content questions or personal matters that affect a student's ability to complete coursework (such as illness). For technical help, see below. Because of the time delay in responding to e-mails, especially over weekends, it is important for the student to examine content (readings, paper assignments, etc.) well in advance of due dates and promptly send e-mails to the instructor. The instructor will monitor discussion areas once each weekday, but normally will not intervene or comment unless needed.

Dr. Torezani cannot provide technical help. For technical help, see the next section.

### **Technology Support Help Desk**

Phone: 915.747.4357 (HELP)

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

Website: [helpdesk.utep.edu](http://helpdesk.utep.edu)

For students in 100% online courses, such as this one, please check the follow link with resources available only to UTEP connect students (100% online) <http://utepconnect.utep.edu/index.php/resources/student-services>.

### **Statement about taking course for graduate credit:**

Students may take ANTH/SOCI 4380 for graduate credit by doing advanced scholarly research paper(s), involving extensive additional reading and graduate-level analysis. Please **make sure to notify your professor that you are enrolled as a graduate student during the first week of the semester**, to receive specific instructions on required extra work and grading criteria. If you leave this until the end of the course, when all assignments have been graded, it will be too late for your professor to help you have this course count towards your graduate degree.

**Using the Lessons/Reading Guide.** The goal of each lesson is to give you a guideline for close, detailed reading of the books; **this takes the place of lecture from the professor.** Take advantage of it! It will make a big difference in discussion and on your papers, as this level of detail and understanding is what I am looking for. Please note: you do not need to write out answers to the questions (unless that would help you personally) and you do not need to submit the answers to the professor. Instead, you should review the questions before you read each set of pages indicated in the book, and have the questions by your side as you read. Not every question can be answered directly in the reading; some are there to make you think or to point out implications rather than direct statements. Experience indicates that many students neglect the course content, but it is there to help you and interest you, so it is entirely to your advantage to read it and use it alongside your readings.

## **Assignments**

**Discussion Posts:** Each student is required to participate in on-line discussion as an individual. The discussion theme will be provided at the top of each week's discussion forum. Each lesson will require students to write at least 200 words ("main posting") in response to a question or set of questions in the discussion theme, as listed in the text for each week's discussion forum. Each student will also reply to at least two entries of other students. This consists of at least one extended comment [50 words or more] **and** one brief reply or follow-up of any length. All discussion posts must be submitted by or before the deadline. The minimum participation is thus three postings, a main one, a longer reply to one other student, and at least one short reply or follow-up reply (to someone who commented on your main post).

The deadlines for all aspects of discussion can be found in the course schedule /calendar. I will not grade submissions that consist only of reply posts but no main post. You will receive a grade of zero in such instances. Late submission policy will apply for posts submitted passed the due date (see details below). Please plan your work carefully.

Discussion postings must be in English to ensure mutual communication among participants. Words/phrases in Spanish should be translated in parentheses.

These discussion postings will focus on your ideas about the readings, not on summaries. Discussion postings are worth up to 50 points. The distribution of 50 points across all your posts is as follows:

**Main Post:** up to 35 points.

**Long Reply Post** (to one of your peers' main post): up to 10 points.

**Short Reply Post** (either to another of your peers' main post or a reply you received to your own main post): up to 5 points.

### **The grading criteria for your discussion are:**

- ◆ Overall your posts must show evidence that you have completed the assigned readings. This is particularly important in your main post. Please do not use replacement texts (those that are relevant to the topic and you have read on your own but are not required for the assignment. While you are encouraged to read and inform yourself extensively and it is OK to incorporate briefly a mention to a non-required reading, you must be careful that first and foremost you are clearly providing evidence that you have covered the specific materials for each assignment in order to be graded for it). Using examples, concepts, brief and relevant quotes from the readings as well as providing the corresponding source citation, is what will help you demonstrate that you read and understood the assigned readings.
- ◆ Demonstrate that you have reflected on the assigned readings, beyond merely summarizing them. For instance, when you cite a key concept or use an example from the reading, you elaborate (in your own words) what the concept is, what does this example tell us about the

topic -something not necessarily mentioned in the reading. Once you have explained it, you can further incorporate your critique or elaborate the idea further by, for example, looking at the situation from a different perspective to what is considered in the readings, or contradictory evidence or, perhaps, even sufficient lack of evidence to convince you of the point made by the authors.

- ◆ Have a clear argument or point you wish to make in response to the assignment's prompt.
- ◆ Make sure you support your main point or argument by the use of clear evidence. This is when bringing in and explaining concepts and examples, or citing statistics and acknowledging your sources, helps you bring a stronger paper.
- ◆ Does the follow-up discussion involve genuine interaction with and replies to other students? Zero points will be given for discussion that is vague and general, indicating that the reading was not effectively done.

The standard practice ("netiquette") for participation in networked discussion requires that all participation be focused on the topic at hand, not become personalized, and be substantive in nature. You may certainly disagree with others, but you must do so respectfully; you may express strong beliefs or emotions, but you may not get so carried away that you lose all perspective on the course itself.

**Weekly Papers:** Each paper's topic can be found in the assignments area, and can be submitted there. Papers are worth 100 points, except for the final individual paper (see below). Papers should be approximately 3-4 pages, double-spaced, **submitted by the due date through the assignment function on Blackboard as a Word ".docx" file document**. Late papers will be marked by Blackboard as such and deductions based on the late submission policy (see below) will apply.

**Papers are graded as follows,**

- ◆ Excellent analyses (clearly stated and fully developed, at length) in reply to the assignment questions, based on the reading and as appropriate on your own considered opinion; clearly stated main arguments and sub-arguments that organize these analyses;
- ◆ Knowledge of all of the relevant material in the assigned readings and lessons/reading guides, as reflected in excellent choice of supporting evidence.
- ◆ Use of ideas learned in discussion is encouraged, but plagiarism of another student's words from the discussion board will result in a referral to the Dean of Students. Learn to rephrase ideas in your own words.
- ◆ **Papers written in your own words will be given a higher grade than ones made up heavy of direct quotations.** Light, relevant use of quotations is acceptable.
- ◆ Length depends on what you have to say, and you are expected to have a lot to say after having done careful, thoughtful reading and course content and after participating actively in discussions. The suggested length is 3-4 double-spaced pages, but I grade on content quality, not length. Length is just a guide to the minimum required space that it usually takes to develop sufficient content to demonstrate that you have completed the required work.

I use a function called "SafeAssign" to check for potential misses of sources, including plagiarism. So, if you plagiarize (copy from other sources, including books, the internet, or other students), you will be referred to the Dean of Students. Please be diligent in correctly acknowledging your sources as you prepare all your assignments for this class.

**Final Research and Individual Reflection Paper:** Detailed guidelines on this assignment can be downloaded from a document available on the Assignments part of the website. The paper will be 6-8 pages, double-spaced, Word ".docx" file attachment, submitted through the assignment function on Blackboard by the due date. The value of this paper is 500 points.

**Language of Papers:** Periodic papers and the final paper may be submitted to the professor in Spanish or English.

### **Grades and Course Policies**

Grades will be calculated on the basis of the following formula:

Syllabus quiz 1 @ 20 = 20 pts

Discussion participation 6 @ 50 each = 300 pts

Papers 6 @ 100 each = 600 pts

Final paper 1 @ 500 = 500 pts

Extra **free** points (no work required) = 80 pts (added once all assignments have been graded, at the end of the course)

Total = 1500 pts

Students may access their grades in the blackboard gradebook on the course website. The grading scale for the course is:

**1350-1500 A**

**1200-1349 B**

**1050-1199 C**

**900-1049 D**

**0-899 F**

Work submitted formally (Papers, Final Paper) will be evaluated for content and for standard grammar and style. Contributions to weekly discussions will be permitted somewhat greater deviation from standard practice of formal submission. It is important that you spell-check your work before submitting it to improve readability.

**Academic Integrity:** Standard practices of academic integrity are required in the course. All material submitted must be the student's own work. Ideas and expressions cited from the work of others must be credited appropriately. Avoid plagiarism by giving credit where credit is due, using quotation marks when using words directly from another source, and preferably putting things in your own words. I prefer your own phrasing, even if it is imperfect, to a beautifully phrased statement that is borrowed from some other source.

### **Academic Dishonesty Statement**

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. 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.

**Citing and Referencing:** ALL your assignments (papers AND main discussion posts) should contain full acknowledgement of the sources used, including in-text citations and references. The style required for this course is APA 7th. For guidance and examples consult [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/general\\_format.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html)

**"Attendance"/Participation in an On-line Course:** While the course will be largely conducted in an asynchronous mode (students can participate and submit work from anywhere at any hour of the day), it is not a self-paced course. The course schedule will be strictly adhered to, both in the activities for each unit and in the submission of work. Students are responsible for reading all instructions and assignments carefully, and for paying special attention to due dates. Attendance in an on-line course consists of prompt fulfillment of all class activities. Students are responsible for reading all assignments in the time frame indicated and completing all activities (discussions, papers) within the announced time span. Exceptions will be made only for documented medical emergencies.

**Due Dates and Late Submission Policy:** All deadlines are on the course schedule. Late assignments incur a deduction of 10% per each day they are late and up to a maximum of 30% or 3-days. After that your late submissions will not be graded. Please plan your work carefully. For estimation of lateness after the due date, I follow the submission time marked by Blackboard. Submit your work with time to spare. Do not wait until the last minute.

**Course Drop Out:** I do NOT drop students out of class. Students need to be aware of course withdrawals due dates.

**Academic Assistance and Disability Statement:** I will make reasonable accommodations to support students with disabilities. Make sure to contact CASS either via their website at <http://sa.utep.edu/cass/> or at the CASS office in Room 106 East Union Building.

**Textbooks:** There are **6 required texts** for this course. An email with the required texts is sent 2-3 weeks prior to the start of the course to all registered students at that point. The list of texts is also available via the UTEP Bookstore website months in advance.

1. Ganster, Paul, and David E. Lorey, The U.S.-Mexican Border Today: Conflict and Cooperation in Historical Perspective, Third Edition (Rowman & Littlefield, 2015) ISBN 978-1-4422-3111-5
2. Martínez, Oscar J., Border People (Univ. of Arizona Press, 1994) ISBN 0-8165-1414-3
3. Richardson, Chad, Batos, Bolillos, Pochos, and Pelados, (Univ. of Texas Press, 1999) ISBN 0-292-77090-1 [Note that there is an earlier version of this book. Either will be OK to use for the purpose of the course's assignments].
4. Davidson, Miriam, Lives on the Line, (Univ. of Arizona Press, 2000) ISBN 0-8165-1998-6
5. Holmes, Seth, Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States, (University of California Press, 2013) ISBN 978-0520275140.
6. Velasco Ortiz, Laura, and Oscar F. Contreras, Mexican Voices of the Border Region (Temple University Press, 2011) ISBN 978-1-59213-909-5

For students on the UTEP campus, these books can be purchased at the UTEP bookstore. Students in other locations can order them at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com). Supplementary web sites, with URLs, will be given in the appropriate unit.

**Course schedule** (assignments, due dates, etc.)

Please see the schedule of units and lessons for the course is located on the course menu under Calendar.