# The University of Texas at El Paso
# Department of Sociology and Anthropology
# Syllabus

## COURSE INFORMATION

The U.S.- Mexico Border Society and Culture
ANTH 4308, CRN 12886 | SOCI 4308, CRN 12889
Term: Fall 2024, 8WB
Duration: October 21 - October 13 2024
Delivery Method: Online (100%, asynchronous)

## Instructor: Dr. Silvia Torezani*

*Please use **Blackboard message** for course-related communication -check for the "Message" tab inside the course shell.
UTEP Email: satorezani@utep.edu
Ph: (915) 747-6829

Office Hours: email me via Blackboard to make an appointmet.

### T.A. : Vanessa Almada*

Email: via Blackboard message and vmalmada@miners.utep.edu

## 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. Seeing Complicated Issues from Multiple Perspectives
3. Migration
4. Class and Gender on the Border
5. Mexico's Northern Border
6. Final Research & Learning Reflection Paper (Topic: Border Migration)

Course activities will consist of reading (approximately half a book a week), bi-weekly written discussions posted on discussion boards, and bi-weekly written papers, plus a final 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 Course Schedule.

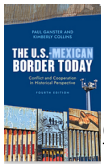
## COURSE OBJECTIVES AND UNIVERSITY LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

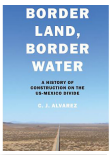
| Student Learning Objective | Outcome |
|---|---|
| Use history and geography as a framework for understanding the border and analyzing border lives. | Critical Thinking Skills |
| Understand border identities, including nationality, ethnicity, and class, and apply them to analyzing border lives. | |
| 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. | Social Responsibility |
| Apply the "multiple perspective" approach to U.S.-Mexico migration and know objective facts, humanistic understandings, and policy options for that issue. | |
| Articulate key ideas and knowledge in clear and effective writing | Communication Skills |
| Have meaningful and insightful interactions with peers on the learned topics | Teamwork Skills |

**REQUIRED MATERIALS**

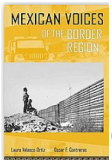
There are **3 required texts** for this course.




1. Ganster, Paul, and Kimberly Collins, The U.S.-Mexican Border Today: Conflict and Cooperation in Historical Perspective, Fourth Edition (Rowman & Littlefield, 2021). ISBN 978-1-5381-3180-0




2. Alvarez, C. J., Border Land, Border Water: A History of Costruction on the U.S.-Mexico Divide. (University of Texas Press, 2022). ISBN 9781477319017




3. 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 or www.barnesandnoble.com. Supplementary web sites, with URLs, will be given in the appropriate unit.

**ASSINGMENTS AND GRADING**

**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 a 250-300 word ("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. This is due by the time/date on the schedule that is marked "main discussion posting deadline." Each student will also reply to at least two entries of another student. This consists of at least one extended comment (50 words or more) **and** one brief reply or follow-up of any length. This must be done by the point when the "discussion closes." 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 or another student).

The deadlines for all aspects of discussion can be found in the course schedule. I will not grade submissions that consist only of reply posts but are missing the main post. You will receive a grade of zero in such instances. Assignments submitted past the deadline will be graded according to the "late submissions policy" (see details below). Please plan your work and time carefully. The **main post must always be submitted first**, before your reply posts.

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 required readings in specific connection to the prompt, not on your summaries of the readings. Discussion postings are worth up to 100 points between weeks 1 and 6. The distribution of 100 points across all your posts is as follows:

**Main Post**: up to 70 points.
**Reply Post** (long -to one of your peers' main post): up to 20 points.
**Short reply** (either on one of your peers' main post or a reply you received to your own main post): up to 10 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** may be relevant to the topic and you have read on your own or for other classes but **are not required for the assignment**). In short, you are being strictly graded on how well you demonstrate having covered the required readings for each assignment, as stated on the course schedule and assignments' prompts. Do **not** go outside the required sources, or you will not be grade and receive a zero for that assignment. Using examples, concepts, brief and relevant quotes from the assigned readings, as well as providing the corresponding source in-text citations 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 write 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 and/or uses sources other than the one/s assigned,** indicating that the reading was not effectively done. Do not merely agree/disagree or like your peers' posts but elaborate on your position based on the required readings to avoid loss of points.

**NETIQUETTE**

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.

Blackboard is not a public internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted on in these online spaces is intended for classmates and professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space.

## WEEKLY PAPERS

Each paper's topic can be found in the assignments area, and can be submitted there. Papers are worth up to 200 points, except for the final individual paper (see below). Papers should be approximately 2-3 pages (minimum of 2 full pages of content), double-spaced, **submitted by the due date through the assignment function on Blackboard as a Word ".docx" file document**. Papers submitted on a different file format can often not be graded on Blackboard, therefore, incurring loss of points. 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. In all instances, sources muct be cited to support your statements. You should follow the required APA 7th style (author, year, p.#). You must cite your sources throughout your papers, even when not using "direct quotations."
- All assignments have been designed to be adequately addressed by using the assigned readings. **Do NOT replace the due readings or use sources other than the required readings** for your weekly papers. You risk a significant loss of points or even a grade of zero.
- 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 2-3 double-spaced pages, but I grade primarily 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, other students, or even your own work from other classes or assignments), 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 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. Unlike the weekly papers, for your final paper you are required to conduct some independent library research.

**Language of Papers**: Weekly 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 @ 40 = 40 pts
Discussion participation 3 @ 100 each = 300 pts
Papers 3 @ 200 each = 600 pts
Final paper 1 @ 500 = 500 pts

Extra **free** points (no work required) = 60 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.

## 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.

## 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 primarily **via the course Blackboard email**. In the event that Blackboard were to be down, you can contact her at satorezani@utep.edu. Always try Blackboard email first, as it is the preferred means of communication for the course. You should allow 24 to 48 hours for a 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 REQUIREMENTS

Course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course.

You will need to have access to a computer/laptop. You will need to download or update the following software: Microsoft Office. If you do not have a word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and more) for free via UTEP's Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about Microsoft Office 365 and follow the instructions.

### Technology Support Help Desk

Phone: 915.747.4357 (HELP) | Email: helpdesk@utep.edu |
Website: helpdesk.utep.edu

If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP Help Desk as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped than I am to assist you!

## COURSE SCHEDULE & GUIDELINES

For assignments due dates, please see the units and lessons in the Schedule linked on the home page of the course. For assignment guideles and materials check inside each weekly folder inside the Learning Modules.

### COURSE POLICIES

**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, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports.

Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. 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.

**AI prohibited:** Use of AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as ChatGPT or DALL-E, is ***not allowed*** for assignments in this class. Each student is expected to use critical and creative thinking skills to complete tasks and not rely on computer-generated ideas. Any direct use of AI-generated materials submitted as your own work will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

**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. You need to cite in-text the page numbers, whenever possible, following this pattern: (author/s, year, p.#). For example, for a single author cite: (Martinez, 1991, p. 34). For two authors, cite: (Ganster & Collins, 2021, pp. 19-20). A more extended guide is available inside the course in Blackboard. For the references list at the end of your papers and main posts, follow the APA 7th style. For guidance and examples consult https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html You do not need to format your entire papers in APA 7th, just your references list.

**"Attendence"/Participation in an On-line Course**: While the course is 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 from the class. Students need to be aware of course withdrawals due dates. You can find the information at the Registration and Records office. If you do not, you are at risk of receiving an "F" for the course.

**Accommodations and Auxiliary Services:** The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in

programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Students who become pregnant or have parenting responsibilities may also request reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. The UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) will process requests for accommodations based on a disability, pregnancy, or parenting. Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.

**COURSE RESOURCES:** Where you can go for assistance.
UTEP provides a variety of student services and support. Please refer to the QR code below for a listing of campus resources or visit https://www.utep.edu/advising/student_resources/student-success-resource-hub.html.