The Border | LABS 3301

LABS 3301 - CRN: CRN 27754
Fall | January 19 – May 6, 2021
Online Course - Asynchronous via Blackboard - with synchronous Meetings on Tuesdays 1:30-2:50 via Zoom

Instructor: Dr. Silvia Torezani
Course communication should be via Blackboard Email. You will find a "Blackboard Email" link on the main navigation panel within the course. However, if you are facing issues with Blackboard, here is my UTEP email address: satorezani@utep.edu
Virtual Office Hours: Tuesday 12:30-1:30 pm and by appointment via Zoom (links are available in Blackboard, under the Communication Tools tab.

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Course Description
Borders are distinctive social spaces and, as such, they invite the production of multiple narratives, partly based on facts, partly fantasized. Borders convey at once images of territorial, cultural, and socio-economic separation from those "outside" their confines. Yet they are also characterized for the blending of territories, cultures, and socio-economic
processes. Furthermore, borders can be conceived as spaces of transgression, especially through the mobility of people, ideas, and goods across them. Therefore, they are also construed as areas for the deployment of state power through mechanisms of protection. The impact of what takes place at these borders, however, reaches well beyond the borderlands, transforming the composition of populations, impacting national cultures and political systems. This course looks at borders as starting points for the study of broader historical and contemporary processes of social mobility as they take place both in local and global contexts.

In this course, we will look at the U.S. international territorial borders with Mexico in particular, but some discussion of other borders will be included. The course requires the student to think of borders and border-related problems in terms of specific as well as larger social contexts and establish complex, thoughtful, and scholarly informed relationships.

**Course Format**

This is a 100% interactive online course. It has two modes, asynchronous (via Blackboard) and synchronous (via Zoom—we will have live meetings most Tuesdays between 10:30 and 11:50pm). During these live class meetings we will further discuss ideas and/or questions you may have. You will also have 2 live online presentations during the semester, as part of your requirements for the course. The weekly meetings are a wonderful opportunity to get to know each other and enhance content learning through discussions. The equivalent to lectures will be through the Study Guides, available via Blackboard and organized in the Weekly Modules and weekly content. The course workload is about 9-12 hours of per week on average, thus requiring that you set a clear action plan to stay on top of the materials and assignments.

**Learning Outcomes**

During this course, we will delve into a variety of reading and thinking exercises aimed at critically assessing the validity and currency of commonly held assumptions about, for example, "border security," "immigrants," and "the wall."

At the end of this course, students will have gained:

1. A theoretical and comparative framework for understanding key social problems in connection to current debates on border issues, particularly as they relate to security, immigration, and development.
2. A more nuanced perspective on the cultural, socio-economic, and political interconnections within and across borders.
3. A critical perspective on the impact of historical and rhetorical practices and information gaps on the border and borderlanders.
Required Texts


Other required materials will be made available within Blackboard.

### This course requires the completion of the following assignments

1. Reading quizzes (3 x 25 = 75 points or 15%)
2. Discussion blog posts (8 x 15 = 120 points or 30%)
3. Critical Reading Oral Presentation (1 x 50 points or 10%)
4. Final Paper Oral Presentation (1 x 75 points or 15%)
4. Final Paper and Learning Reflection (1 x 180 points or 36%)

Instructions for assignments are inside each weekly module and the corresponding assignment box in Blackboard.

### Extra Credit:

You can earn up to a maximum of 75 extra credit points by actively engaging in the content discussions during the weekly live virtual class meetings via Zoom (Tuesdays 10.30am-11.50pm). You are highly encouraged to attend these meetings on a regular basis. We will discuss key ideas and content-related questions, besides getting to know each other a little better, of course! Please note that the days on which you are schedule to present content (see course requirements) you cannot earn extra credit points for attendance). Attending without contributing to the discussion will not earn your extra credit points, yet you are still encouraged to attend!

### Grades

You can earn up to 500 points in the class.

- **A 90%-100% = 450 - 500 points**
- **B 80%-89% = 400 - 445 points**
- **C 70%-79% = 350 - 395 points**
- **D 60%-69% = 300 - 345 points**
- **F below 59% = 295 points or below**

**Note1:** It is important, and your responsibility, to keep track of your grades. They will be uploaded onto Blackboard within a week of each submitted assignment.
Note2: You will notice a 5-point gap in between each letter grade listed above. It will be at your professor's discretion to move your grade up or down, based on your demonstrated commitment to the class.

You will be graded based on the following criteria for all assignments:

a. Preparedness. You are expected to demonstrate that you have completed all required readings and work for each assignment thoroughly. While personal opinion is okay, full points toward the course grade can only be earned on the demonstration of having completed the assigned readings.

b. Critical and thorough reflection on the topics covered through the assigned readings. Going beyond the mere summary of reading is expected.

c. Netiquette. When communicating electronically, many of the feelings or impressions that are transmitted via body language in face-to-face communications are lost. Consequently, interpreting emotions and innuendos is much more difficult. Only what is written, or drawn, carries the message. Often, excitement can be misinterpreted as anger or insult. It is important that we all keep this in mind as we communicate. Words in print may seem harmless, but they could emotionally injure us when working at a distance. Hence, it is vitally important that we are conscious of how we communicate while working at a distance.

For example, avoid the use of caps in your electronic messages, as wording in caps comes across as shouting. 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. (Translation: 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.)

Please observe the following:

- You are required to check the Blackboard course shell daily for messages, updates and assignments.
- Respect and courtesy must be provided to fellow classmates and the instructor at all times, in all contexts. No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- Be professional and careful in what you say about others.
- When reacting to someone else's message, address and focus on the ideas, not the person who posted them.
- Be careful when using sarcasm and humor. Without face-to-face communications your joke may be viewed as criticism.

Dropping Class

I do NOT drop students from class. It is your responsibility to know important dates such as University drop dates, and officially withdraw. You can find the information here https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/registrar/Academic%20Calendars/academic-calendar.html
Plan for Success

Be proactive, protect and backup your work!

Back Up Your Work
It is your responsibility to make sure you back up your work safely and regularly to avoid missing deadlines. It is also your responsibility to keep copies of all your graded work. If you happen to lose your work due to technological malfunction of work not backed up, I will not be able to accept your late submission.

Technology Malfunction
There are computer labs and printers installed throughout campus accessible to students. Always plan your work with plenty of time to avoid missing deadlines. Note that technology malfunction (i.e. your computer dying, getting a virus or your printer running out of ink, for example) are not acceptable exceptional circumstances for this class.

Timely Communication
We will be checking in on Blackboard every morning Monday-Friday. We will try to respond to your emails as soon as possible but allow 24 hours during weekdays and 72 during weekends. Allow at least between 48-72 hours to receive feedback from assignments. If you have questions about assignments, please give yourself sufficient time to receive an answer. If you send us a message an hour before an assignment is due, we will not be able to respond or help you!

Technology Support
For any technology and Blackboard related issues, please contact the Help Desk promptly.

Contact the HELP Desk:
Phone: 915-747-4357 (HELP)
Email: helpdesk@utep.edu

Or Make a Formal Request:
servicedesk.utep.edu
**Academic Integrity**

The International Center for Academic Integrity, comprised of a consortium of universities worldwide, defines academic integrity as “a commitment to fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. From these values flow principles of behavior that enable academic communities to translate ideals into action.” As they relate to students, these values can be defined as follows:

**Honesty:** “adhering to standards of truthfulness and integrity”

**Trust:** participating in “an environment of confidence”

**Fairness:** abiding by the “standards, practices, and procedures” outlined by your instructors and institution

**Respect:** “encouraging a wide range of opinions and ideas”

**Responsibility:** assuming personal accountability and accepting sanctions in cases of misconduct.

Students are responsible for adhering to the above standards in all academic activity and refraining from all forms of academic dishonesty. According to the **UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures**, academic dishonesty includes committing (or attempting to commit) the following:

- **Plagiarism** – taking credit for work that is not your own (e.g., copying and pasting from the internet, failing to cite sources of information, failing to attribute direct quotes to their original author, or submitting your work from another course without prior permission).

- **Cheating** – This includes copying another student’s work during an exam; using notes, books, or electronic devices during an exam without prior permission; taking an exam for another student; and communicating with or helping another student during an exam.

- **Collusion** – any collaboration with another student without the permission of the instructor.

In this course, we use SafeAssign to check for plagiarism. Academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students.

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**Tech Tools, Resources and University Support Centers**

**Learn More about Blackboard**

Everything you need to help support you in a class that uses an online environment like Blackboard--can be found here: [Learning Remotely at UTEP](http://academics.utep.edu/)

**Help with Writing**

The UWC or University Writing Center (Library Building 277, on the ground floor) provides a range of services at no cost. Call 747-5112 or visit [http://academics.utep.edu/writingcenter](http://academics.utep.edu/writingcenter) for more information.
Library Services
Visit http://libraryweb.utep.edu/services/contact.php. You will find an excellent breakdown on how to correctly use the required APA 6th style at http://libguides.utep.edu/apa. For outside sources, another excellent site to visit is the Purdue Online Writing Lab, https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/.

Counseling Center
The University Counseling Center offers confidential support to students struggling in their studies due to a diverse range of issues, in English and Spanish. They are located at 202 Union West. Call 747-5302 to make an inquiry or visit their website http://sa.utep.edu/counsel/, for more information.

ADA
If you feel that you may have a disability requiring accommodations and/or modifications, contact CASS via email cass@utep.edu or phone (915) 747-5148. You also can visit the CASS website at https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/cass/.

Disclaimer: Information is subject to change. While I have made my best effort to provide dates for due readings and assignments, they may be subject to change at your professor's discretion. Changes will be given due notice in class.