

CHICANO CINEMA 3302-005

Spring 2023

Course Reference: CRN: 21422

Class Hours: T/R 9:00-10:20 a.m.

Class Location: Education Building- EDUC 303

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Professor Haydee Alonso

Office: Graham Hall 110A

Office phone: 915.747.7667

Office hours: By appt. – Available M-F, times vary

Email: shalonso@utep.edu **

** preferred method of contact

Required Materials:

The class usually screens films that I own. You do NOT need to purchase any such films. The class requires NO textbook. All readings will be posted in PDF format on Blackboard.

Class Description:

The course examines the representation of Chicanxes in films and documentaries. The Chicano experience is centered in struggles for social justice and a continuous negotiation of identity: Are we American? Mexican? Both? Neither? We will watch films to identify and address the social critiques and commentaries they offer on multiple social issues and to consider how film influences individual and societal perceptions of Chicanxes. Cinema's vilification of Mexican Americans as criminals, drug addicts, oversexed señoritas or Latin lovers, undocumented immigrants, and/or welfare frauds builds on negative stereotypes from the early 1800s. Hollywood often promotes paranoia about and disdain for Mexican Americans and many of these views are linked to the "Anything but Mexican" mentality prevalent throughout the US (Acuña, 1996). The film industry also impacts Chicanxes via the often negative framing or complete omission of them. If society ignores a group, *symbolic annihilation* (Gerbner, 1976), they do not really exist. Recently has Hollywood begun to suggest that Brown people may be positive social models, for example, some of the roles played by Michael Peña. Yet, the film industry often negatively stereotypes the poor, regardless of race, Chicanxes and African Americans are among its biggest victims. Yet, Latinxes attend films with much greater frequency, spend more at the theater, and purchase more film-related merchandise than any other U.S. social category. The economic idea that Spanish-language media serve those who are monolingual Spanish-speakers or Spanish-dominant "Otherizes" these groups and contributes to anti-Mexican/American views. Latinxes are the largest ethnic minority in the US (18% of the population; 63.3% of these people are Mexican origin). Film teaches us who we are, what to purchase, and to what lifestyle we should aspire. It reveals who in society has power and who does not. We will address these issues during our time together.

Course Objectives:

1. To learn about and understand the major themes explored in Chicana/o Cinema.
2. To learn to read mass mediated information critically to resist its hegemonic influence, particularly when it presents Chicanas/os/exes as the "Other" in society.
3. To learn to think about and write critically about social issues. How one sees the world and how one communicates such views is vital to being a successful professional and valuable member of society.

Course Assignments:

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| 1. Identity essay (Due: Week 5, Sun, Feb 19 by 11:59 p.m.) | 11 points |
| 2. Midterm Exam (Due: Week 8, Thurs, Mar 9) | 25 points |
| 3. Participation | 20 points |
| 4. Quizzes (12 x 2 points each. due on the following Sunday by 11:59 p.m.) | 24 points |
| 5. <u>Final Exam (Due: Tuesday, May 9 10:00am – 12:45pm)</u> | 20 points |

Total**100 points****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.

INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ALTER THE CLASS SCHEDULE

Instructor's Message about Learning: Learning can be challenging and this class will expose you to ideas that may contest your worldview. You do not need to agree with any idea(s) advocated for in the assigned readings, films, guest speakers (if any), or lectures. You do, however, need to contemplate what is being said, doing so will either reinforce what you already believe or allow you to think in a new way. One defining element of the class is that it is taught from a *Chicanonormative* perspective. The lectures, films, and readings will call out issues of classism, homophobia, racism and other prejudices levied against Chicanxes. I will address these themes repeatedly because generations of people in the US have displayed racist views, enacted racist policies, and engaged in violence, against Mexican Americans. I cannot change this reality and we will discuss it in an honest and complex manner.

You are here voluntarily and my job is to help you grow intellectually. Doing so requires that you engage the class with an open mind. I do not ask you to agree, simply to consider how others see the world. Please participate in class by showing others the respect you ask that they show you. The grading criteria are designed to let you express your views. Good grades require a cogent argument, solid writing, and a deep contemplation of the course materials. Your particular views will not help or hurt your grade. I am concerned with how well you develop and defend your argument. No one will pass or fail because of their comments or views. Anyone who turns in well-written work that displays a sophisticated use of theory, good structure, and solid grammar will do quite well. The grading criteria are in the follow section.

Grading Scale: Final grades will be given according to the student's demonstrated level of mastery of the subject matter as determined by assignments, class discussion, and attendance. The assignments for this course are based on a scale of 100 points. Letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

(A): 90-100 (B): 80-89 (C): 70-79 (D): 60-69 (F): 0-59

Late Papers: I do not accept late papers unless there are circumstances beyond your control that you can document. If you need to submit an assignment late, please let me know ahead of time, whenever possible. You will lose 5 points off the final grade for each day it is late. In cases of illness or death, please contact me directly via email: shalonso@utep.edu

Graduate Credit for this Course: In order to obtain graduate credit for this course, you must satisfactorily complete a graduate level project with a topic and parameters approved beforehand by the course instructor.

Participation: It is imperative that you keep up with the reading assignments, discussions, films, and quizzes.

Class Policies:

Attendance: Attendance and participation in class are required. Should you miss a class, you are still responsible for everything that is covered in that class. Missing class or being late is no excuse for missing a due date or misunderstanding an assignment. Therefore, you will want to contact a classmate, not the instructor, to find out what you missed.

Participation: This class relies extensively on readings, discussions, quizzes, and screening/viewing films. It is imperative that you keep up with these assignments. Participation is part of your grade.

Dropping the Class: Students may drop the class and receive a “W” any time prior to March 30, 2023.

Academic Dishonesty: 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, processing 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 person’s 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. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from the University for such actions.

Student Support Services: If you have a documented special needs and require specific accommodations you will need to contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106 within the first two weeks for classes. For additional information please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. I will make any reasonable accommodations for students with limitations due to special needs, including all learning special needs. Please see me personally before or after class in the first two weeks or make an appointment, to discuss any special needs you might have.

Student Conduct: [From the Handbook of Operating Procedures: Student Affairs]: Each student is responsible for notice of and compliance with the provisions of the Regents Rules and Regulations, which are available for inspection electronically at <http://www.utsystem.edu/bor/rules/homepage.htm>.

Quizzes: Quizzes about course content (e.g., lectures, readings, guest speakers) will be regularly assigned. They are part of your final grade and are posted on Blackboard and you have only ONE opportunity to complete them. They cannot be made up.

Final Grades: I do NOT provide students with final grades via email or telephone. Final grades are posted on Goldmine once they are processed by the Registrar's Office. Please do NOT contact me for grades prior to their official posting on Goldmine.

We will have frequent discussions and students are expected to tolerate and respect the opinions of others. All students are expected to behave as responsible adults.

Please SILENCE cell phones before class and NO TEXT MESSAGING and/or Facebooking, Snapchatting, Tweeting, etc. during class!!!

Final Note: Despite the rather lengthy syllabus rules and procedures, we will have fun in this class. I anticipate our journey to be one that runs smoothly, allows each of us to learn from one another, and is filled with memorable moments.

A Note about Readings: The readings for the week will be listed in each corresponding folder on Blackboard (BB).

(Instructor reserves the right to alter the class readings and/or assignments)

COURSE CALENDAR

Week 1 – Jan 17 and 19 Course Overview What is a Chicana/o?

Learning Objectives / Outcomes: To explore labels for Americans of Mexican descent and their meanings

Readings: None

Videos:

Lecture Notes: What is a Chicana/o/x

Discussion

Quiz 1: The Syllabus (answer this for a few easy points)

Week 2 – Jan 24 and Jan 26 Mexican/Americans in film

Learning Objectives / Outcomes: Explore the representation of Mexican/Americans in film.

Readings:

Videos: I am Joaquin (1969)

Lecture Notes: Chicana/os in U.S. Cinema

Discussion:

Quiz 2: Hollywood Stereotypes of Chicana/o/x Peoples in Hollywood

Week 3 – Jan 31 and Feb 2 Zoot Suit (1981) – Chicanos on the WWII Homefront

Learning Objectives / Learning Outcomes: Learn about the Sleepy Lagoon Murder Trial of 1942 and the Zoot Suit Riots of 1943

Readings: Fregoso on Zoot Suit and Intertextuality and Alvarez on the Power of the Zoot

Videos: *Zoot Suit* (1981)

Lecture Notes: *Zoot Suit* (1981)

Discussion

Quiz 3: Alvarez, Fregos, and *Zoot Suit* (1981)

Week 4 – Feb 7 and 9 Chicano Struggles in the Post-WWII Era

Learning Objectives / Learning Outcomes: Learn about the miners' strike represented in *Salt of the Earth* (1953) and the Witch Hunt for Communists in Hollywood

Readings: Lorrence on Suppression of *Salt of the Earth* and Perales (2010) on Smelertown

Videos: *Salt of the Earth* (1953)

Lecture Notes: *Salt of the Earth* (1953)

Discussion

Quiz 4: *Salt of the Earth* (1953)

Week 5 – Feb 14 and 16 Chicanos – The Nation's Forgotten War Heroes

Learning Objectives / Learning Outcomes: Learn about the Longoria Affair and Chicanos in Vietnam and PTS

Readings: Rosales on Fighting the War Back Home

Videos: The Longoria Affair and Soldados: Chicanos in Vietnam

Lecture Notes: Fighting the War Back Home

Discussion

Assignment Due: Ethnic Identity Essay (No later than Sunday, February 19 at 11:59 p.m.)

Quiz 5: Chicanos in WWII and Vietnam

Week 6 – Feb 21 and 23 American Betrayal – The Repatriation of Mexican/Americans

Learning Objectives / Learning Outcomes: To learn about US repatriation of Mexicans and Mexican Americans during the Great Depression

Readings: Balderrama and Rodríguez (2006) - Deportation: ¡Adíos, Migra!

Videos: Various short clips

Lecture Notes: Repatriation

Discussion

Quiz 5: Repatriation (No later than Sunday, February 21 at 11:59 p.m.)

Week 7 – Jan 28 and March 2 Vatos Locos – Chicano Gang Member Representations

Learning Objectives / Learning Outcomes: Develop a Multidimensional Understanding of Chicano Gang Members

Readings: Richard Mora - Cinematic Cholos and Abjection

Videos: *Boulevard Nights* (1979), *End of Watch* (2012)

Lecture Notes: Mora on Abject Cholos

Discussion

Quiz 6: Chicano Gang Members

Week 8 – March 7 and 9 MIDTERM EXAM**Week 9 – March 14 and 16 SPRING BREAK****Week 10 – March 21 and 23 Female Gang Member Representations**

Learning Objectives / Learning Outcomes: Develop a Multidimensional Understanding of Chicana Gang Members

Readings: Pitman on Policing cinematic barrio (2010)

Videos: *Mi Vida Loca* (1993)

Lecture Notes:

Discussion

Quiz 7: Chicana Gang Members

Week 11 – March 28 and 30

The Struggle for Chicano Representation in El Paso's Public

Memory and Public Space

Learning Objectives / Learning Outcomes: Learn about El Paso's fantasy heritage and its negative impact on Mexican Americans.

Readings: Pérez and Ortega (2008) - The Juan de Oñate Controversy in El Paso

Videos: Las Marthas

Discussion

Lecture Notes:

Quiz 8: Fantasy heritage and Juan de Oñate

Week 12 – April 4 and 6

Chicanas/os/exes and Education Pt.1

Learning Objectives / Learning Outcomes: Continue to learn about the history of structural racism against Mexican Americans in US public and higher education.

Readings: Cepeda et al on Gang Members and Trauma

Videos: *Spare Parts* (2015)

Lecture Notes:

Discussion

Quiz 9: Cepeda et al. and *Stolen Education* (2015)

Week 13 – April 11 and 13

Chicanas/os/exes and Education Pt.2

Learning Objectives / Learning Outcomes: Learn about the history of structural racism against Mexican Americans in US public and higher education

Readings: Shouse on *Stand and Deliver* and Organizational Structures

Videos: *Stand and Deliver* (1987) and *Stolen Education* (2015)

Lecture Notes:

Discussion

Quiz 10: *Stolen Education*

Week 14 – April 18 and 20

Chicanas in the Professional Realm

Learning Objectives / Learning Outcomes: Learn about Chicanas in the Professional Realm.

Readings: Nancy Aguirre - A Stranger in Charleston

Videos: *Tortilla Soup* (2001)

Discussion

Lecture Notes

Quiz 11: *Tortilla Soup* and Aguirre

Week 15 – April 25 and 27

Chicanas in and retelling fantasy heritage

Learning Objectives / Learning Outcomes: To explore fantasy heritage as created and critiqued by Mexican American women in/from Texas.

Readings:

Videos: Las Marthas (2013)

Discussion

Quiz 12: Las Marthas

Week 16 – May 2 and 4 ***What did you learn and Final Exam Review***

Learning Objectives / Learning Outcomes: Explore what we learned and review for Final Exam next week

Readings: Review

Videos: Review

Discussion

No Quiz

Week 17 – May 9

Complete the **Final Exam**: 10:00am – 12:45pm