

The University of Texas at El Paso
HISTORY 3309 (25650) - Mexican American History- Spring 2024
Monday/ Wednesday 10:30- 11:50 a.m. Liberal Arts 211

Professor: Dr. Yolanda Chávez Leyva

Office: University Towers 310, 1900 N. Oregon

Office hours: M, W noon- 1 p.m. or by appointment/ Office hours will be held in Liberal Arts 320. Appointments will be held in University Towers.

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Course description

This course explores the history of Mexican origin people in the United States. We will focus especially on issues of identity and community. While much of the course will concentrate on the period following the U.S.-Mexico War, we will also look at earlier eras and their influence on Mexican Americans. Themes and topics will include identity, voluntary and involuntary incorporation into the United States, immigration and migration, resistance, and accommodation, as well as politics, economics, and culture. Throughout the course, we will use the concepts of ethnicity, race, class, and gender to explore the diversity found within Mexican American history.



Detail from Mural in South Central El Paso

The course is organized around “generations,” groups whose worldviews are shaped by the same historical events. We will look at the origin generation, the immigrant generation, the Mexican American generation, and the Chicano generation. We will contemplate the identity and worldview of the current generation.

The course requires both significant reading and writing throughout the semester. Although one of the major goals of the class is to familiarize you with the specifics of Mexican American history, there is an important secondary goal -- to help you to develop

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your analytical and critical skills. What is history and what are its functions? How can you use specific historical evidence to argue a point? How can you get your point across, clearly and convincingly, orally and in writing?

I have attempted to be as detailed as possible in this syllabus so that my expectations are clear to you. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask me. You are responsible for all the information provided in this syllabus so take the time to read it.

Land acknowledgment

Why do I include an Indigenous land acknowledgment? First, to encourage us to recognize the original guardians of these lands from before there were national borders till now. Secondly, so that we historians have a deeper understanding of the land upon which we live and study. Recent research by Dr. David Romo indicates that UTEP was built on land that was a Manso settlement during the colonial period, so this land acknowledgment is not something abstract. We are on unceded land. This land acknowledgment has been approved by the College of Liberal Arts and the Faculty Senate.

As members of the University of Texas at El Paso community, we acknowledge that we are meeting on unceded Indigenous land. We would like to recognize and pay our respects to the Indigenous people with long ties to the immediate region: the Lipan, Mescalero, and Chiricahua Apache; Piro; Manso; Suma; Jumano; Ysleta del Sur Pueblo; Piro/Manso/Tiwa Indian Tribe of the Pueblo of San Juan de Guadalupe; and Tortugas Pueblo. We also acknowledge the nations whose territories include present-day Texas: the Carrizo & Comecrudo, Miakan-Garza Band, Caddo, Tonkawa, Comanche, Alabama-Coushatta, Kickapoo, and the peoples of Chihuahua and northern Mexico from whom many of our students descend, such as the Rarámuri, Tepehuan, Wixarika and Nahuatlaca peoples. Finally, we recognize all of the Indigenous Peoples and communities who have been or have become a part of these lands and territories here in the Paso del Norte region. The University of Texas at El Paso honors your history and culture, and we seek greater awareness of the myriad ways in which your legacy can guide us in fruitful partnerships and mutually fulfilling relationships.



Pachuco mural at Museo Urbano 2011

Learning objectives

Students will become acquainted with the **major historical processes and events** that shaped the Mexican origin community in the United States.

Students will be able to compare the **economic, political, and social situations** of different political generations of Mexican origin people.

Students will be able to **synthesize information** from lectures, videos, and readings into a coherent historical narrative.

Students will gain experience in **identifying the thesis** and main arguments of historical works.



"Sister Cities" by Lxs Dos in South El Paso

Required readings.

Manuel Gonzalez, *Mexicanos, Third Edition: A History of Mexicans in the United States*

Articles as assigned posted in Blackboard.

Course requirements and grading

The final course grade will be based on the following:

Weekly in-class written reflections (10%)

Primary source analysis (10%)

In the news reflection paper (10%)

Oral history project (20%)

Mid-term paper (20%)

Final paper (30%)

Course assignments

In-class reflections: For ten weeks out of the semester, you will complete an in-class written reflection assignment based on the previous day's lectures and reading. It will be graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. Satisfactory gets you all the points. Unsatisfactory gets you no points. You will have 15 minutes to complete this. It may happen at the beginning, middle, or end of class.

Primary source analysis: First, please view this short video, "Primary, secondary, and tertiary sources" here: https://youtu.be/EDdEFsBa_78

The purpose of this assignment is to further develop your critical thinking and analytical skills. For this assignment, I will provide three primary sources two weeks before the assignment is due. You will write a 750-word essay that addresses the following:

Who wrote the three primary sources, when, and why?

Who was the intended audience?

What are the main arguments of each source?

Compare the three sources. What do they have in common? How are they different?

Reflect on the sources. What is their significance?

Write the essay in essay form with an introduction and a conclusion. Write grammatically correct sentences. Use transitions between paragraphs. Spell-check your draft.

Use Times New Roman, 12 font, and double-space the essay. Remember to put your name on your assignment.

Due Wednesday, February 7 by 5 p.m. The essay must be uploaded to Blackboard.

In the news:

This assignment's purpose is to help you develop critical thinking skills when it comes to the media.

Choose four newspaper articles published between 1940-1970 from <https://www.proquest.com/hnpelpasoherald/advanced?accountid=7121> This link takes you to two local newspapers, the *El Paso Times* and the *El Paso Herald*.

Use one of these keywords:

- LULAC
- American G.I. Forum
- Viva Kennedy campaign
- United Farm Workers
- Chicano Movement
- If you have another relevant topic you would like to explore, let me know.

Write a 750-word essay on the four newspapers. What are the articles about? What is the tone of each article? Compare the four articles. Do you see similarities or differences? Do they present the stories in a similar light? Are their versions of the story the same or different?

Remember to write this in essay format with a short introduction and conclusion. Double-space and use Times New Roman 12 font.

Due Wednesday, March 20 by 5 p.m. The essay must be uploaded to Blackboard.

Oral history assignment:

For this assignment, you will listen to two oral histories chosen from either the UTEP [Institute of Oral History's collection](#) or [El Paso Food Voices](#). They should be interviews with Mexican Americans. Write a 1000-word essay that reflects on what you learned about the two individuals but also put it in historical context using the textbook and the lectures.

Remember to write this in essay format with a short introduction and conclusion. Double-space and use Times New Roman 12 font.

Due April 5 at 5 p.m. The essay must be uploaded to Blackboard.

Mid-term paper:

I will provide the essay question two weeks before the due date. The paper must be at least 1500 words. It should include an introduction (with a thesis) and a conclusion. Draw from lectures, readings, and videos. Be sure to cite your sources. The paper should be double-spaced, free of grammatical or typing errors, and in 12-point font Times New Roman.

Due March 6 by 5 p.m. The midterm must be uploaded to Blackboard.

Final paper:

I will provide the essay question two weeks before the due date. The paper must be at least 1500 words. It should include an introduction (with a thesis) and a conclusion. Draw from lectures, readings, and videos. Be sure to cite your sources. The paper should be double-spaced, free of grammatical or typing errors, and in 12-point font Times New Roman.

Due May 10 by 12 noon. The final must be uploaded to Blackboard.

At the end of this syllabus, you will find a grading rubric that details how I will grade all your take home assignments.

Course communications

The best way to communicate with me is to email me or speak to me after class. I will try my best to answer your emails within 24 hours Monday through Friday. Please do not use Blackboard messaging because I will not be checking it.

Drop policy

It is your responsibility to contact me if you want to drop the class. I will not automatically drop students. If you decide to drop the class, you must take steps to do so. Do not depend on my dropping you. Remember the deadline for dropping with an automatic W is **March 28**. The instructor determines a grade of F or W after that. If you are having difficulty in class, I urge you to discuss it with me. Please, for your own sake, do not "disappear" for days at a time, then come in and ask me what you can do to catch up. This never works. The best policy is to keep open communication with me if you are experiencing problems. I am a nice person. I do not bite.

Blackboard

The syllabus, Power Points, and assignments will be available on Blackboard, which you will have access to on January 16, 2024.

Academic integrity

Plagiarism is the use of the ideas, information, or words of another author without giving proper credit to your source. The University takes academic integrity very seriously. You are responsible for citing your sources as indicated by the instructor and, in cases where you directly quote from a source, for enclosing those words that are not your own in quotation marks. Failing to give proper credit to your sources in these ways is academic dishonesty. All suspected incidences of academic dishonesty will be referred immediately to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution for investigation. Students found guilty of such

actions will be penalized. See UTEP policy on this issue at <http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/>.

Students with disabilities

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.

Where you can go for assistance- Student Success Resource Hub

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.



How to spend three hours a week together in peace

One of my most serious expectations in any class is mutual respect. As a learning community, respect between students and between instructor and students is essential. I will treat each of you with the same consideration and respect, which I expect of each of you. Treating you respectfully means that I will come to class prepared. I expect the same from you. You can participate fully in the class only if you are fully prepared. Treating you respectfully means that I will respect your views even though they may be different from mine. Differing views are not only an acceptable part of a learning community, but they are also an essential element. If you disagree with me, feel free to discuss your disagreement. However, remember, I will expect you to back up any argument with evidence.

Finally, for three hours a week, you will receive my full attention. Again, I expect the same. Please do not carry on conversations, read other class materials or newspapers, or fall asleep in class! Please do not come to class late or leave early without checking with me first. I will not hesitate to point out this unacceptable behavior to you. (In extreme cases, I have asked students to leave the classroom because of their disruptive behavior.) In return, I will work hard to do my part to make this class a valuable learning experience. You will have to do your part as well!

Guidance on Artificial Intelligence

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).

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week 1: January 17 Introduction

- Mexican American history through the generations
- What's in a name?
- Read and discuss Gonzalez, "Introduction"
- In-class reflection

Week 2: January 24, 26 Mexico Profundo

- Mexico Profundo
- Discuss Leyva, "In Ixtli in Yollotl: Remembering the Ancestors"
- Discuss Gonzalez, chapter 1
- In-class reflection (either M or W)

Week 3: January 29, 31 Spanish colonization & the origin generation

- The origin generation- New Mexico
- The origin generation- Tejas and California
- Discuss Gonzalez, chapter 2
- In-class reflection (either M or W)

Week 4: February 5, 7 The origin generation

- The U.S.-Mexico War
- The aftermath of the U.S.-Mexico War
- **Primary source analysis due Wednesday, February 7 by 5 p.m.**

Week 5: February 12, 14 The origin generation

- *Latino Americans, Episode One, Part One: Foreigners in Their Own Land* (Part 1)
- Discuss Gonzalez, chapter 3
- In-class reflection (either M or W)

Week 6: February 19, 21 The Mexican immigrant generation

- Economic development during the Porfiriato
- Economic development in the Southwest
- Discuss Gonzalez, chapter 4
- Discuss Leyva, “Cruzando la linea”
- In-class reflection (either M or W)

Week 7: February 26, 28 Library research workshops

Monday, 2/26- UTEP Library Special Collections, 6th floor, workshop facilitated by Claudia Rivers, Head of Special Collections, and Susannah Holliday, Assistant Head.

- If your last name starts with A-J, your workshop will be from 10:30- 11.
- If your last name starts with K-Z, your workshop will be from 11:10-11:30

Wednesday, 2/28- UTEP Library 204B, workshop facilitated by Jennifer Urban-Flores, Online Teaching and Learning Librarian.

Week 8: March 4, 6 The Immigrant generation

- The immigrant generation background
- El Paso and the Mexican Revolution
- Discuss González, chapter 5
- **Midterm essay due March 6 by 5 p.m.**

SPRING BREAK March 11-15

Week 9: March 18, 20 The Mexican American generation

- Mexican American generation during the Great Depression
- Discuss Gonzalez, chapter 6
- Discuss Leyva, “Years of Desperation”
- **In the news due March 20 by 5 p.m.**

Week 10: March 25, 27 The Mexican American generation

- *Salt of the Earth* (movie)
- Discuss Gonzalez, chapter 7
- In-class reflection (either M or W)

- Discuss Leyva, “Interview with Felipe Serrano”
- Discuss Leyva, “Crossing the Border with Oral History”

Week 11: April 1, 3 The Chicano Generation

- The Chicano Generation
- Discuss Gonzalez, chapter 8
- *Chicano!: Taking Back the schools*
- In-class reflection (either M or W)

Week 12: April 8, 10 The Chicano Generation

- Women in the Chicano Movement
- Discuss Gonzalez, chapter 9
- **Oral history project due April 10 at 5 p.m.**

Week 13: April 15, 17 Organizing

- A history of organizing
- *A Class Apart*
- In-class reflection (either M or W)

Week 14: April 22, 24

- Discuss Gonzalez, chapter 10
- In-class reflection (either M or W)

Week 15: April 29, May 1 Today’s generation

- Who is the contemporary generation
- Discuss Gonzalez, chapter 11
- In-class reflection (either M or W)

Finals week: May 10 **Final essay** must be uploaded to Blackboard by 12 noon on this day.

**HISTORY 3309 GRADING
RUBRIC FOR ALL TAKE-
HOME ASSIGNMENTS**

Scoring Options: 2: needs more work
 3: adequate
 4: good, solidly completed
 5: very strong, excellent

Criteria

Score and Additional Comments

Title: Does the title give you a sense of what the paper is about?	
Introduction: Does the introduction clearly describe the topic, argument, parameters, significance, and plan?	
Thesis: Is the thesis clear? Are you making a clear point?	
Evidence: Is your argument backed up by enough primary-source evidence? How well is this evidence utilized?	
Analysis: Does the paper do more than describe the information gathered? How effectively are the points made?	
Organization and flow: Does the organization of the paper add or detract from the argument? Are there gaps, mistakes, or other distractions?	
Conclusion: Does the conclusion pull things together and sum up the argument, without undue repetition	
Language conventions: How would you rate the paper's clarity, grammar, and spelling?	

