

ETHN 116: The U.S. Mexico Border in Comparative Perspective

Department of Ethnic Studies
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Summer Session I 2020

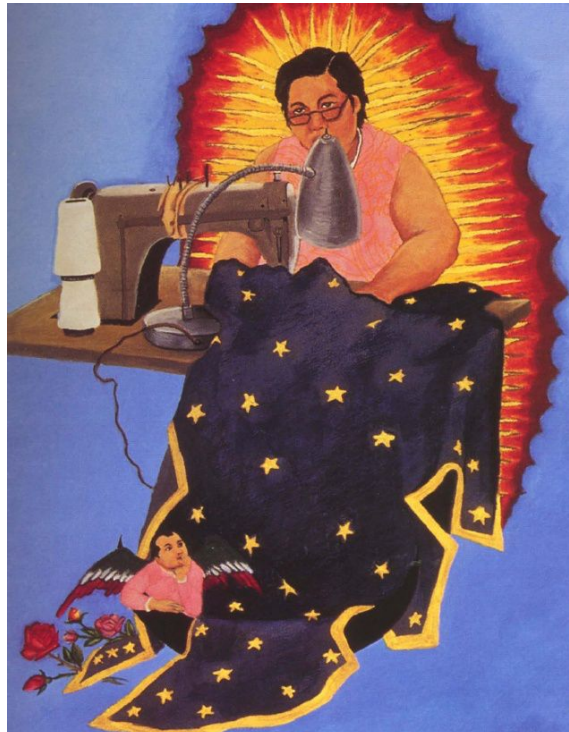
M/W 11:00am-1:50pm

Location: Zoom

Office Hours: Wednesday 2:00-3:00 and by appointment

Course Description:

This course examines how borders are socially, historically, and politically constructed. It is commonly believed that borders exist to demarcate boundaries so that countries may enact sovereignty over a territory. However, for many people from the Global South, US imperialism and capitalism has forced them to migrate. Although some people today argue that neoliberalism has rendered borders less relevant than ever, there continues to be an intensification of border policing and violence. In this class students will learn how borders produce and maintain global inequality by examining the history of the US-Mexico border, immigration, and US imperialism from an intersectional perspective, with a focus on the construction of racialized and exploitable workers. Additionally, we will examine the creative and political work of artists and activists who encourage us to envision a better world.



Course Requirements:

Introductory Written Assignment (5%): The first week of class you are required to submit an introductory assignment by Friday so I can get to know you better. See schedule below for exact instructions.

Reading Responses (15% each): Each week you are required to submit an **800-word** reading response, for a total of **four**. A prompt will be posted each Monday morning and the response is due the following Monday, with the exception of Week 5 when all assignments are due that Friday.

Blog Posts Submissions (10% each): Each week you are required to either author or comment on a blog post. You will need to author two original blog posts (300 words each) and comment on two (150 words each)—which is **one submission per week** for a total of **four submissions** over four weeks.

No Late Assignments Accepted. You must submit ALL assignments to pass this class.

A Note on Reading: I am assigning very little reading for this class, approximately 50-100 pages per week. I do this with the **expectation and confidence that you will read**. Reading is fundamental to your success in this class and the process of collective learning. **All readings will be uploaded to Canvas** as a PDF.

Class Structure: I realize this is an emotionally taxing moment for everyone and that our attention span is limited by the computer screen. So that we don't all become Zoombies I will be lecturing for approximately 30-45 minutes per class session. For those who cannot meet synchronously I will upload the recording of my lecture within 24 hours. After lecture, we will use the Zoom breakout room feature so that students can better discuss the class material and readings. Your ability to participate in these breakout sessions will not affect your grade but will tremendously improve your experience in this class. After the breakout sessions we will come together to discuss one final time before ending our session. This structure will be disrupted when we have guest speakers. Guest speakers will present and leave time for a question and answer session. Each week you will also be assigned a film in lieu of in-class time.

Accommodations: If you require accommodations to participate fully and successfully please let me know--I am happy to work with you. You may also seek assistance or information from the Office for Students with Disabilities. If you prefer to be called by a different name or gender pronoun other than the one under which you are enrolled, please let me know.

Academic Integrity

I expect the most rigorous and honest work from you— and from myself. This means that you, and I, take your enrollment and commitment to this course, and its subject matter, seriously, passionately, and respectfully. This also means that I expect you to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity. See UCSD Policy on Integrity of Scholarship (<https://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity/policy.html>).

Email Policy

I will regularly send you emails containing important course information to your official UCSD email. **I do not check email over the weekend or after 5pm.** I will typically respond to your email within 24 hours, unless you sent it over the weekend when you can expect a response by Monday. Don't be shy! Email me to set up office hours. I'm happy to answer questions or chat about the course material.

Community Guidelines: Given the nature of the course, there will likely be a wide range of opinions. Ideally, the course will prompt you to think for yourself and to raise questions about conventional views and received wisdom. Please engage one another with dignity, respect, and consideration. Abusive and harsh language, intimidation, and/or personal attacks will not be tolerated.

Majoring or Minor in Ethnic Studies

Many students take an Ethnic Studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a social science, non-contiguous, or other college requirement. Often students have taken three or four classes out of interest yet do not realize how close they are to a major, a minor, or even a double major. An Ethnic Studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, education, medicine, public health, social work, counseling, journalism, government and politics, international relations, and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor, please contact: Mónica Rodriquez, de Cabaza, Ethnic Studies Department Undergraduate Advisor (nmrodriquez@ucsd.edu).

Schedule:

Week 1:

Monday, June 29th: Introduction

Wednesday, July 1st: We Didn't Cross the Border, the Border Crossed Us: The U.S. Conquest of Mexico

- Akers Chacon, Justin and Mike Davis, "Conquest Sets the Stage" in *No One is Illegal: Fighting Racism and State Violence on the U.S.-Mexico Border*. Haymarket Books, 2006. Pgs. 99-107

Friday, July 3rd: Introductory Assignment Due

- Answer the following questions: 1) Briefly tell me what you know about the US-Mexico Border and what would you like to know; and 2) tell me something you want me to know about you (for example, your hobbies, why you're taking this class, any challenges you foresee that I should be aware of, etc.)

Week 2:

Monday, July 6th: The Anti-Asian Roots of Immigration Control

- Lee, Erika "The Chinese Are Coming. How Can We Stop Them?: Chinese Exclusion and the Origins of American Gatekeeping," in *At America's Gate: Chinese Immigration*

During the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943. The University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
Pgs. 23-46

Wednesday, July 8th: The Construction of the “Foreign” Worker

- Schmidt Camacho, Alicia “These People Are Not Aliens: Transborder Solidarity in the Shadow of Deportation” in *Migrant Imaginaries: Latino Cultural Politics in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands*. New York University Press, 2008. Pgs. 21-61
- Akers Chacon, Justin and Davis, Mike “Constructing the ‘Illegal’ Mexican Worker: Racism and Mexican Labor” in *No One is Illegal: Fighting Racism and State Violence on the U.S.-Mexico Border*. Haymarket Books, 2006. Pgs. 191-195.
- Film: Salt of the Earth
 - o Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FE1oKQCww04>

Friday, July 10th: Blog Submission #1 Due

Week 3:

Monday, July 13th: Neoliberalism and Gendered Labor in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands

- Schmidt Camacho, Alicia “Narrative Acts: Fronteriza Stories of Labor and Subjectivity” *Migrant Imaginaries: Latino Cultural Politics in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands*. New York University Press, 2008. Pgs. 237-282.
- Cruz-Malave, Arnaldo “Testimonio” in *Keywords for Latina/o Studies* edited by Deborah R. Vargas, Nancy Raquel Mirabal, and Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes. New York University Press, 2017. Pgs. 228-231.
- Film: Maquilapolis
 - o Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3EGupx8u18>

Reading Response #1 Due

Wednesday, July 15th: When Existing is a Crime: The Construction of Migrant Criminality

- Cacho, Lisa Marie “White Entitlement and Other’s People’s Crimes” in *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected*. New York University Press, 2012. Pgs. 35-60.

Friday July 17th: Blog Submission #2 Due

Week 4:

Monday, July 20th: Borderlands Culture

- Anzaldúa, Gloria “How To Tame a Wild Tongue” in *Borderlands La Frontera: The New Mestiza, Fourth Edition*. Aunt Lute Books, 2007. Pgs. 75-86
- Vargas, Deborah R. “Giving Us That Brown Soul: Selena’s Departures and Arrivals” in *Dissonant Divas in Chicana Music: The Limits of La Onda*. University of Minnesota Press, 2012. Pgs. 179-215.

Reading Response #2 Due

Wednesday, July 22nd: Challenging U.S. Imperialism in Latin America

- Gomez, Alan Eladio “Mexico, Anticommunism, and the Chicana/o Movement” in *The Revolutionary Imaginations of Greater Mexico: Chicana/o Radicalism, Solidarity Politics, and Latin American Social Movements*. University of Texas Press, 2016. Pgs. 41-66.
- Talamante, Olga “De Campesina a Internacionalista: A Journey of Encuentros and Desencuentros” *Chicana Movidas: New Narratives of Activism and Feminism in the Movement Era* edited by Dionne Espinoza, Maria Eugenia Cotera, and Maylei Blackwell. University of Texas Press, 2018. Pgs. 290-299.

Film: The Battle of Chile, Part II

- Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cYIh8ZL7U10&t=264s>

Friday, July 24th: **Blog Submission #2 Due**

Week 5:

Monday, July 27th : Policing Mexico’s Southern Border and Central American Migration

- Abrego, Leisy “Salvadoran Transnational Families” in *Sacrificing Families: Navigating Laws, Labor, and Love Across Borders*. Stanford University Press, 2014. Pgs. 1-24.
- Film: Las Patronas (ordered from the library, will post link once available)

Reading Response #3 Due

Wednesday, July 29th: Women of Color Feminisms for a Borderless Future

- Anzaldúa, Gloria and Cherrie Moraga “El Mundo Zurdo” *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, Fourth Edition. State University of New York Press, 2015. Pgs. 195-196
- Davis, Angela “Abolitionist Alternatives” in *Are Prisons Obsolete?*
- Gumbs, Alexis Pauline “Evidence” *Octavias Brood: Science Fiction Stories from Social Justice Movements* edited by Adrienne Maree Brown and Walidah Imarisha. AK Press, 2015. Pgs. 33-41.

Friday, July 31st: Blog Submission #4 Due and Reading Response #4 Due

***The schedule is subject to change at my discretion**