

# **Labor, Art, and Activism at the U.S.-Mexico Border**

## **SPAN 485W**

### **Spring 2020**

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**Head of course:** Prof. Sergio Delgado Moya

**Office hours:** Tuesday 4:30pm-6pm; by appointment – email to reserve a slot.

**Office location:** Callaway N510

**Course location:** New Psyc Bldg 225

**Course meeting time:** TuThur 2:30pm-3:45pm

### **Description and objectives**

This course is designed as a cultural analysis of the U.S.-Mexico border. It is conceived around a set of literary works (short stories, poems, novels, essays, testimonies) and artistic practices (film, photography, documentary, site-specific art, performance art) that take up conditions of work and conditions of life characteristic of the region: migration, movement, hybridity, violence, low-cost manufacture, precarious labor, inequality, nomadism, etc. It is structured as a series of discussions on the most prominent social, political, and cultural issues of the U.S.-Mexico border region: movement, migration, passage, sustenance in conditions of strain, labor and the neoliberal economy, hybridity, bilingualism, transnationalism, and so forth.

Over the course of the term, students are asked to think about how these issues are broached in the particular works that we will study and from the various artistic and literary genres to which those works belong. Students are evaluated based on their ability to demonstrate an understanding of the cultural history of the border grounded on the specificity of individual art and literary works.

Materials discussed in class include works by well-known Latin American and Latina/o writers and artists, as well as by historians, sociologists, anthropologists, and literary and cultural critics working in the field of border studies. As we work through the readings and art works assigned for each class meeting, students will be encouraged to take into account the larger trajectory of specific writers and artists and the nature of the medium they choose (short story, novel, film, testimony, photography, essay, performance, etc.) to broach border themes and border subjects.

### **Writing requirements**

This course is an intensive writing course. You will be asked to incorporate writing as a central component of your coursework. Writing assignments will be frequent, and will include exercises of reflection about the writing process. You will be asked to submit two versions of your final paper: a first draft, and a revised final draft. At the end of the semester, all students will compile a writing portfolio, which includes a portfolio writing letter, written at the conclusion of the semester.

## Requirements

- Consistent, informed, and constructive participation, in class as well as in discussion sections, if applicable. The criterion for evaluating participation includes both active intervention in class discussion as well as attentive listening to the interventions made by others.
- Short response papers. Short response papers are due twice a week, before every class, at **12pm before each class**. Short response papers should be between 150-200 words long. All short response papers should be revised for grammar and content before submission. Please submit your short response papers online, using Canvas.
- Two short, in-class presentations. First presentation will take place during the course of the semester: you will be assigned a reading or class material and your presentation will be structured around background research related to the reading or class material. Second presentation will take place at the end of the semester, during the last two weeks of class, and must be focused on the topic of your final essay.
- A first draft of the final essay, (5 pages long, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman or similar font, one-inch margins), due **April 27, 2020**. First draft of the final writing assignment should be submitted online, in the course Canvas site (in the tab titled "Assignments"), in Word format only (no PDF documents, please). For the final essay, students are expected to present an informed, insightful argument involving one or more works discussed in class, and to develop it cogently using textual evidence and at least one critical source. In completing the final essay, students may opt to develop ideas articulated in the shorter written assignments. Essay topics must be cleared with course instructor at least a week prior to the due date.
- Final draft of final essay (5 pages long, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman or similar font, one-inch margins), due **May 4, 2020**. Final writing assignment should be submitted online, in the course Canvas site (in the tab titled "Assignments").
- Writing portfolio, due **May 8, 2020**. Portfolio should include a cover letter (750-1250 words long) reflecting on your writing over the course of the semester.

## Grade composition

Participation in class:	15%
Short response papers:	25%
In-class presentations:	10%
Final paper first draft:	15%
Final paper:	25%
Portfolio/ portfolio cover letter:	10%

## Grading scale

<u>Average Score</u>	<u>College Grade</u>	<u>LGS Grade</u>
94 and above	A	A
90 to 93.99	A-	A-
87 to 89.99	B+	B+
84 to 86.99	B	B
80 to 83.99	B-	B-
77 to 79.99	C+	C+
74 to 76.99	C	C
70 to 73.99	C-	C
67 to 69.99	D+	F
60 to 66.99	D	F
0 to 59.99	F	F

## Course policies

Language. All written coursework must be completed in Spanish. Class discussions will take place in English and Spanish. You will note that although this course includes readings in Spanish, a significant portion of readings for this course is in English. This is to be expected given the nature of our subject of study: a geographical region that straddles two nations with many languages spoken in each one of them, Spanish and English included.

Attendance. Attendance to both lecture and discussion section (if applicable) is mandatory. Three or more unjustified absences will automatically decrease final grade by a third of a letter grade (from A to A-, A- to B+, etc.). Persistent tardiness will negatively impact participation grade.

Participation. Participation in discussion sections as well as in lecture is expected and encouraged. Participation will be graded on the basis of quantity, quality, and regard for other members of the class, students and instructors alike. Participation should be informed and constructive. Students are encouraged to attend office hours with the head of the course and the teaching fellow, if one is appointed.

Special accommodations. Any student needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to present their letter from the Accessible Education Office (AEO) and speak with the professor by the end of the second week of the term. Failure to do so may result in the Course Head's inability to respond in a timely manner. All discussions will remain confidential, although AEO may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation.

Laptops and hand-held devices. Laptops and handheld devices can only be used in class for class readings and note-taking purposes. Please refrain from using computers and hand-held devices for anything other than class readings and note-taking.

Collaboration policy. Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. For assignments in this course, you are encouraged to consult with your classmates on the choice of paper topics and to share sources. You may find it useful to discuss your chosen topic with your peers, particularly if you are working on the same topic as a classmate. However, you should ensure that any written work you submit for evaluation is the result of your own research and writing and that it reflects your own approach to the topic. You must also adhere to standard citation practices in this discipline and properly cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc. that have helped you with your work. If you received any help with your writing (feedback on drafts, etc.), you must also acknowledge this assistance.

Tutoring policy. Students are encouraged to seek help at the Emory Writing Center. Tutors in the Emory Writing Center are available to support Emory College students as they work on papers, discussion posts, websites, and other projects. Writing Center tutors work on idea development, structure, use of sources, grammar, and word choice. They do not proofread for students. Instead, they discuss strategies and resources students can use as they write, revise, and edit their own work. Tutors also support the literacy needs of English Language Learners; several tutors are ELL Specialists, who have received additional training. Learn more about the Writing Center and make an appointment through the EWC website:  
<http://www.writingcenter.emory.edu/>.

Please review tutoring policies before your visit. A maximum of 2 appointments are allowed each week. Students need to bring hard copies of drafts to their appointments. The Writing Center is located in Callaway N-111 and is open on Monday-Thursday from 11am to 8pm, on Friday from 11am to 5pm, and on Sunday from 12pm to 8pm. The Spring Semester opening date is January 28, 2020.

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**\*\*\* Meetings\*\*\***

**Block I – Crossing, borders, globalization**

TUESDAY JAN 14

- Mary Louise Pratt, “Why the Virgin of Zapopan Went to Los Angeles: Reflections on Mobility and Globality” (2002)

THURSDAY JAN 16

- Etienne Balibar, “Strangers as Enemies. Further Reflections on the Aporias of Transnational Citizenship” (2006)

Optional reading: Sandro Mezzadra, Brett Neilson, “The Proliferation of Borders” in *Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Method* (2013)

TUESDAY JAN 21

- Mae Ngai, “Braceros, ‘Wetbacks,’ and the National Boundaries of Class” in *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (2004)

THURSDAY JAN 23

- Samuel Huntington, "The Crisis of National Identity" in *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity* (2004)
- Huntington, “The Hispanic Challenge”

Optional reading: Doug Massey et al, “Principles of Operation: Theories of International Migration” in *Beyond Smoking Mirrors: Mexican Migration in an Era of Economic Integration* (2002)

**Block II – U.S. Southwest, its long history of crossing**

TUESDAY JAN 28

- Norma Elia Cantú, *Canícula: Snapshots of a Girlhood en la Frontera* (1995), to page 68/ chapter titled “Halloween”

THURSDAY JAN 30

- Continue with *Canícula*, finish the reading
- Susan Sontag, “In Plato’s Cave,” *On Photography* (1980)

Optional reading: José David Saldívar, “The Dialectics of Our America” in *The Dialectics of Our America* (1991)

TUESDAY FEB 4

- Selections from Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/ La frontera* (1987):  
“Preface to the First Edition,” “The Homeland, Aztlán/ *El otro México*,”  
“Entering Into the Serpent,” “La Herencia de Coatlicue”

THURSDAY FEB 6

- No class today – instructor traveling for work.

Optional reading: María Josefina Saldaña Portillo, *Indian Given: Racial Geographies across Mexico and the United States* (2016); Ernesto J. Martínez, *On Making Sense: Queer Race Narratives of Intelligibility* (2013)

**Block III – US-Mexico migration in the post-bracero era**

TUESDAY FEB 11

- Robert M. Young, *Alambrista!* (FILM, 1977)

THURSDAY FEB 13

- David Carrasco, “Dark Walking, Making Food, and Giving Birth to *Alambristas*: Religious Dimensions of the Film” in *Alambrista and the U.S.-Mexico Border* (2004)

Optional viewing: Robert M. Young, *Nothing But a Man* (1964)

#### TUESDAY FEB 18

- Jason de León, *The Land of the Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail* (2015): “Introduction,” “Prevention Through Deterrence” [available online, through the Emory library catalogue]

#### THURSDAY FEB 20

- Jason de León, *The Land of the Open Graves*: “Dangerous Ground,” “Necroviolence”

Optional viewing: Patricio Guzmán, *Nostalgia de la luz* (2012)

#### TUESDAY FEB 25

- TBT Volume. Electronic Disturbance Theater 2.0/b.a.n.g. lab (Micha Cárdenas, Amy Sara Carroll, Ricardo Dominguez, Elle Mehrmand, and Brett Stalbaum), *The Transborder Immigrant Tool/ La herramienta fronteriza para migrantes* (2014)
- Ricardo Dominguez and Leila Nadir, "Poetry, Immigration, and the FBI: The Transborder Immigrant Tool" (2012)

#### THURSDAY FEB 27

- Sergio Delgado Moya, “A Theater of Displacement: Staging Activism, Poetry, and Migration through a Transborder Immigrant Tool,” *Online Activism in Latin America*, ed. Hilda Chacón (2018)
- *Border Film Project: Photos by Migrants & Minutemen on the U.S.-Mexico Border* (2007)

Optional reading: Kelly Lytle Hernández, *Migra! A History of the U.S. Border Patrol* (2010)

### **Block IV – Maquiladoras**

#### TUESDAY MAR 3

- Norma Iglesias, *La flor más bella de la maquiladora* (1985): “Introducción,” Partes I-III

#### THURSDAY MAR 5

- Norma Iglesias, *La flor más bella de la maquiladora* (1985): Partes IV-VI

Optional reading: Maria Patricia Fernandez-Kelly, *For We Are Sold, I and My People: Women and Industry in Mexico's Frontier* (1983)

TUESDAY MAR 10

- Spring break

THURSDAY MAR 12

- Spring break

~~TUESDAY MAR 17~~

- ~~• *Maquilapolis* (2006), produced and directed by Vicky Funari, Sergio De La Torre in collaboration with the women of Grupo Factor X, Colectivo Chilpancingo, Promotoras por los Derechos de las Mujeres~~

THURSDAY MAR 19

- Krzysztof Wodiczko, *Tijuana Projection* (2001)  
(two videos available on Canvas)

Optional reading: John C. Welchmann, "The Philosophical Brothel" (1996)

TUESDAY MAR 24

- Lourdes Portillo, *Señorita extraviada* (2001)

Film available here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nE8xl\\_p-uiM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nE8xl_p-uiM)

THURSDAY MAR 26

- 656, *Ñáñaras*

Optional reading: Amy Sara Carroll, "'Accidental Allegories' Meet 'The Performative Documentary': *Boystown*, *Señorita Extraviada* and the Border-Brothel-Maquiladora Paradigm" (2006); Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* (1993)

### **Block V – Los Angeles and the Californias corridor**

TUESDAY MAR 31

- Laurence Weschler, "Ramiro Gomez's Domestic Disturbances," (2015)
- Ramiro Gomez, paintings and catalogue (in course website)

THURSDAY APR 2

- Anna Indych-Lopez, *Judith F. Baca* (2018): "Introduction," "The Mural Lady"

Optional reading: Baca, "The human story at the intersection of ethics, aesthetics and social justice" (2005)

TUESDAY APR 7

- Anna Indych-Lopez, *Judith F. Baca* (2018), "Looking Back"

THURSDAY APR 9

- Salvador Plascencia, Part I, *The People of Paper* (2005)

Optional reading: Ramón Saldívar, "Historical Fantasy, Speculative Realism, and Postrace Aesthetics in Contemporary American Fiction" (2011)

TUESDAY APR 14

- Salvador Plascencia, Part II, *The People of Paper* (2005)

THURSDAY APR 16

- Salvador Plascencia, Part III, *The People of Paper* (2005)

TUESDAY APR 21

- Presentations

THURSDAY APR 23

- Presentations

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**Reference materials (available in the Reserves Desk at Lamont library):**

- David Harvey, "Space as Keyword" (2004) in *Spaces of Global Capitalism* (2006); David Harvey, "Notes towards a theory of uneven geographical development"; Herbert Eugene Bolton, selections from *Bolton and the Spanish Borderlands* (1964)
- David Harvey, "Introduction," chapters 1, 2, 4 of *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (2005); "Maquilas, Technology Transfer, and Trade Corridors" in John A. Adams Jr., *Bordering the Future: The Impact of Mexico on the United States* (2005)
- José Rabasa, Introduction, *Writing Violence On the Northern Frontier: The Historiography of XVI Century New Mexico and Florida and the Legacy of Conquest* (2000)



- Amy Sara Carroll, “‘Accidental Allegories’ Meet ‘The Performative Documentary’: *Boystown*, *Señorita Extraviada* and the Border-Brothel-Maquiladora Paradigm” (2006)
- Sergio González Rodríguez, *The Femicide Machine* (2012)
- Optional reading: Rosalind Krauss, "Reinventing the Medium" (1999)
- Mae Ngai, selections from *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (2004)
- *Border Women: Writing from La Frontera*. Eds. Debra A. Castillo and María Socorro Tabuenca Córdoba. University of Minnesota Press, 2002.
- *Crossing the Border: Research from the Mexican Migration Project*. Eds. Jorge Durand and Douglas S. Massey. New York : Russell Sage Foundation, 2006.
- *Hard Line: Life and Death on the U.S.-Mexico Border*. Ken Ellingwood. New York: Pantheon Books, 2004.
- *inSITE94: a binational exhibition of installation and site-specific art*. Ed. Sally Yard. San Diego: Installation Gallery, 1994.
- *InSITE 2000-2001: parajes fugitivos*. Eds. Osvaldo Sánchez and Cecilia Garza. San Diego: Installation Gallery, 2002.
- *Juárez: The Laboratory of our Future*. Charles Bowden. New York: Aperture, 1998.
- *Line in the Sand: A History of the Western U.S.-Mexico*. Rachel St. John. Princeton University Press, 2011.
- *Mexico Reader*. Duke University Press: 2009.
- *Private time in public space: inSITE97*. Ed. Sally Yard. San Diego : Installation Gallery, 1998.
- *Público (situacional): interventions--scenarios, August 26-November 13, 2005, San Diego-Tijuana: inSite\_05*. Eds. Osvaldo Sánchez and Donna Conwell. San Diego: Installation Gallery, 2006.
- *Rethinking Borders*. Ed. John C. Welchman. Basingstoke : Macmillan, 1996.
- *Who Are We?: The Challenges to America's national identity*. Samuel P. Huntington. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004.
- *Why Walls Won't Work: Repairing the US-Mexico Divide*. Michael J. Dear. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- *Women and Migration in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands: A Reader*. Eds. Denise A. Segura and Patricia Zavella. Durham: Duke University Press, 2007.
- *Writing on the Edge: A Borderlands Reader*. Ed. Tom Miller, 2003.
- *Continental crossroads: remapping U.S.-Mexico borderlands history*. Eds. Samuel Truett and Elliott Young. Published: Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.
- *Writing Violence On the Northern Frontier: The Historiography of XVI Century New Mexico and Florida and the Legacy of Conquest*. José Rabasa. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000

