

## WL 3382: Texas-Mexico Borderlands: A social, political, cultural and economic story (May Term 2018)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course focuses on the relationship between Mexico and the United States, and on the US-Mexico border(lands) as a historical, political, and cultural space, with a special focus on the relationship between Mexico and Texas. Topics will include the history of the border(lands) and its peoples; patterns of migration between Mexico and the US/Texas; music and literature of the borderlands; the relationship between Dallas and Mexico; and past and current debates about migration across the US-Mexico border. We will engage these topics through written and audio-visual texts, including historical and academic texts, literature, newspaper articles, websites, songs, and documentaries.

### REQUIRED READINGS:

- Neil Foley, *Mexicans in the Making of America* (The Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 2014)
- Tomás Rivera, *...And The Earth Did Not Devour Him* (Arte Público Press, 2015/1971)
- Valeria Luiselli, *Tell Me How It Ends: An Essay in 40 Questions* (Coffee House Press, 2017)
- Links to additional texts will be available on Canvas

### UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- **Human Diversity (UC 2012/16)**
  - 1a. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the historical, cultural, social, or political conditions of identity formation and function in human society, including the ways in which these conditions influence individual or group status, treatment, or accomplishments.
- **Ways of Knowing (UC 2012/2016)**
  1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of more than one disciplinary practice.
  2. Students will explain how bringing more than one practice to an examination of the course topic contributes to knowing about that topic.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

#### Preparation and Quizzes:

1. It is recommended that you read as many of the assigned chapters from our main historical text, Neil Foley's *Mexicans in the Making of America*, BEFORE the May Term begins! You are REQUIRED to Chapter One before our first meeting. You are NOT required to read chapters 4–6 at all. Reading guides for required chapters will be available in Canvas.
2. During the May Term you are expected to study all assigned materials thoroughly before each class session. On average, expect to spend 4-6 hours preparing for each class session. 6-point quizzes over daily homework will be given in the first minutes of most or all class sessions. If you arrive after a quiz has been distributed, 1 point will be deducted from your grade; if you are absent or arrive after the quiz has been collected, you will receive a "0".

**Participation:** This class is discussion-based, so expressing your ideas and opinions orally is important. I expect everyone to make an effort to contribute to classroom conversations, which benefit from a diversity of perspectives. Often the most insightful comments are not the most eloquent or verbose: a simple question or observation can open the discussion in unexpected ways. Similarly, sometimes students who talk the most, say the least: repeating questions/comments others have just made or making statements that reveal a superficial or incomplete reading of the homework will not improve your participation grade. An average of 1-3 thoughtful remarks or questions every class session will ensure a good (A-B range) participation grade. A complete or near-complete lack of oral participation in class will result in a participation grade of D or F. ***If you have difficulty expressing yourself in a classroom setting, please come see me so that we can develop strategies for helping you in this area.***

*Please note: Engaging in rude or distracting behavior (interrupting classmates, chatting with friends, playing with electronics, doing homework for other classes, sleeping, etc.) will result in a lower, or even failing, participation grade, regardless of the quality or frequency of your overall participation. Excessive late arrivals, early departures, or comings-and-goings during the class period may also affect your final participation grade. All electronic equipment, **including phones, tablets, and laptops**, should be **TURNED OFF** and **PUT AWAY** at the beginning of class and remain so for the duration, unless I have given you explicit permission to do otherwise.*

**In-class presentations:** You will be required, usually in groups, to synthesize and analyze course materials in order to prepare extemporaneous presentations on topics relevant to class discussions.

In-class essays: You will write four in-class essays during the May Term.

Final Exam: This course will have a cumulative final exam.

### **TESTING AND EVALUATION**

<u>Grade Breakdown</u> :	Quizzes:	10%
	Participation:	15%
	In-class presentation(s):	10%
	Short essays (4):	40%
	Final exam:	25%

Pass/Fail: With the approval of your adviser and me this course may be taken pass/fail. P/F forms, available from your adviser, must be filed with the Dean by Friday, May 18. Majors or those desiring UC credit may *not* take this class pass/fail.

Make-up work: Except for under grave circumstances, no make-up work will be allowed and no extensions will be given. Please note that, except for two at-home rewrites, all graded work will take place during class time.

### **ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES, AND WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES:**

Attendance and Unexcused Absences: Attendance will be taken at every class meeting (twice a day, in the morning and the afternoon session). Due to the compressed nature of May Term, NO unexcused absences will be permitted. Your final grade will drop 3% points for each 2-hour class session missed. If you miss more than three two-hour sessions you will fail the class. Excessive late arrivals, early departures, or frequent exiting during class time may also result in a lower final grade.

Excused absences (all other absences are unexcused unless special arrangements are made with me):

*A. Health*: See [www.smu.edu/StudentAffairs/HealthCenter/FrontDesk/ClassExcusePolicy](http://www.smu.edu/StudentAffairs/HealthCenter/FrontDesk/ClassExcusePolicy). Dated notes from personal physicians will also be accepted. Non-emergency medical appointments are not excused absences.

*B. Religious Observance*: Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence (see University Policy No. 1.9.)

*C. University Extracurricular Activities*: Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (University Undergraduate Catalogue)

Withdrawal from courses: During the first two days of the May Term a student may drop a course without record. Beyond that a student who drops a course will receive a "W." No classes may be dropped after Tuesday, May 29. Please be sure that the drop is processed; otherwise, the final grade will be recorded as an "F."

### **OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:**

Academic Dishonesty and the Honor Code: All students are expected to adhere to the provisions of the SMU Honor Code. You may read the SMU Honor Code at [www.smu.edu/StudentAffairs/StudentLife/StudentHandbook/HonorCode](http://www.smu.edu/StudentAffairs/StudentLife/StudentHandbook/HonorCode). Cheating of all kinds, including intentional or unintentional plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Any work that is plagiarized in part or in whole, or completed in part or in whole by another person, or translated from English (or any other language) into Spanish by a tutor or online or other translation service will result in a reduced grade (up to and including a grade of zero), a final grade of "F" in the course, and/or disciplinary action.

Disability Accommodations: Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first register with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS). Students can call 214-768-1470 or visit [smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS](http://smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS) to begin the process. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with the professor as early in the semester as possible, present a DASS Accommodation Letter, and make appropriate arrangements. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.

## Daily Schedule, WL 3382 (May Term 2018): Texas-México Borderlands

### Day One: May 17

#### Homework to be completed before class:

- **explore** the website *borderland: dispatches from the u.s.-mexico boundary* from NPR ([npr.org/series/291397809/borderland-dispatches-from-the-u-s-mexico-boundary](http://npr.org/series/291397809/borderland-dispatches-from-the-u-s-mexico-boundary)). You are **required to read/view the introductory section** of this web site (“We Drove the Entire Mexico Border: Here’s What We Saw in 12 Short Stories”). You should also explore other stories on the website (including radio/audio stories). As you explore this site, prepare class discussion points with the following questions in mind: **What is the borderland like in geographical, historical, political and/or cultural terms? How is it different from or similar to my preconceptions?**
- **read** Foley, prologue and chapter 1

#### Topic One: Introduction to the class

- course syllabus and requirements
- what is a border? what is a borderland?
- overview of geography of the Texas-Mexico borderlands (map quiz)
- **discuss** “We Drove the Entire Mexico Border”, i.e. “The border isn’t a line, it’s a...”

#### Topic Two: The Historical Border(land), i.e. Tracing the Line (1762–1853)

- **discuss** Foley, chapter 1
- **explore and discuss** additional materials on the topic

### Day Two: May 18

#### Homework to be completed before class:

- **read** Foley, chapter 2, pp. 39-52 (to “...forbidding any but ‘free whites’?”)
- **read** “Introduction” (xvii-xxiv) and “Part II: Songs of Border Conflict” (21-45) in *A Texas-Mexican Cancionero: Folksongs of the Lower Border* (academic study by Américo Paredes, 1976)

#### Topic One: The Historical Border(land), Re-remembering the Alamo

- **discuss** Foley, chapter 2
- **read in class and discuss** *Personal Memoirs of John N. Seguín*
- **explore and discuss** additional materials on the topic

#### Topic Two: The Cultural Border(land), The Texas-Mexican *corrido*

- **discuss** selections from *A Texas-Mexican Cancionero: Folksongs of the Lower Border* (academic study by Américo Paredes, 1976)
- **listen to** selected *corridos*
- **write Paper #1**

### Day Three: May 21

#### Homework to be completed before class:

- **read** “The Plan de San Diego Uprising and the Making of the Modern Texas-Mexican Borderlands” (historical article by Benjamin Johnson, 2004)
- **read** selections from *Recollections of My Trip* (memoir by Olga Beatriz Torres, 1918)

#### Topic One: The Historical Border(land), the Mexican Revolution (1910–24)

- **watch and discuss** clips from *The Storm that Swept Mexico* (documentary on the Mexican Revolution)

**Topic Two: The Political Border(land), the Mexican Revolution in Texas**

- **discuss** Johnson article
- **discuss** selections from *Recollections of My Trip* (memoir by Olga Beatriz Torres, 1918)
- **read and discuss** “Ignorance: the Cause of Racial Discrimination” (1923) and “The Evolution of Mexican Americans” (1924), speeches/essays by Alonso Perales
- **explore and discuss** additional materials on the topic

**Day Four: May 22**

**Homework to be completed before class:**

- **read** Foley, chapter 3
- **explore** website “Bittersweet Harvest: The Bracero Program 1942-1964”  
<http://americanhistory.si.edu/exhibitions/bittersweet-harvest-bracero-program-1942-1964>

**Topic One: The Historical Border(land), The Bracero Program (1942–1964)**

- **discuss** Foley, chapter 3
- **discuss** “Bittersweet Harvest” website
- **explore and discuss** additional materials on the topic

**Topic Two: The Local Border(land), México in Dallas**

- **explore and discuss** materials on the topic
- **write Paper #2**

**Day Five: May 23**

**Homework to be completed before class:**

- **read** p. 75-106 of *...And the Earth Did Not Devour Him* (by Tomás Rivera, short novel, 1971)

**Topic One: The Historical Border(land), The Chicano Movement**

- **watch and discuss** *Chicano!*, pt. 4, on Crystal City, TX (PBS documentary, 1996)

**Topic Two: The Cultural Border(land), Tomás Rivera on the Migrant Worker’s Life**

- **begin discussion** of Rivera’s novel *...And the Earth*

**Day Six: May 24**

**Homework to be completed before class:**

- **finish reading** *...And the Earth Did Not Devour Him* (by Tomás Rivera, short novel, 1971)

**Topic Two: The Cultural Border(land), Tomás Rivera on the Migrant Worker’s Life**

- **finish discussion** of Rivera’s novel *...And the Earth*
- **write Paper #3**

**Topic Two: The Cultural Border(land), Tejano music**

- **watch and discuss** *Chulas Fronteras* (documentary by Les Blanks, 1976)

**Day Seven: May 25**

**Homework to be completed before class:**

- **read** Foley, chapter 7, pp. 179-186 (to “...retired the bandito for good in 1971.”) and chapter 8, pp. 200-210 (to “...make the Puritans proud,’ he said.”)

- **read** “Mexican Migration Policy after IRCA” (abstract of policy study by Francisco Alba, 1999) and “IRCA in Retrospect: Guideposts for Today’s Immigration Reform” )Issue Brief by the Migration Policy Institute, 2014)

**Topic One: The Political Border(land), Ronald Reagan’s “Amnesty” (IRCA of 1986)**

- **discuss** Foley, selections from chapter 7
- **discuss** “Mexican Migration Policy after IRCA” and “IRCA in Retrospect”
- **explore and discuss** additional materials on the topic

**Topic Two: The Political Border(land), Bill Clinton, NAFTA, and the Militarized Border**

- **discuss** Foley, selections from chapter 8
- **read and discuss** “Afta Thoughts on NAFTA”
- **explore and discuss** additional materials on the topic

**Day Eight: May 29**

**Homework to be completed before class:**

- **read** newspaper articles on Bush/Fox relationship and 9/11:
  - [cnn.com/2001/ALLPOLITICS/09/04/bush.fox.visit/](http://cnn.com/2001/ALLPOLITICS/09/04/bush.fox.visit/)
  - [dallasnews.com/news/nationworld/mexico/20130426-once-solid-the-george-w.-bush-vicente-fox-partnership-faded-after-911.ece](http://dallasnews.com/news/nationworld/mexico/20130426-once-solid-the-george-w.-bush-vicente-fox-partnership-faded-after-911.ece)
- **read** “Homeland/Atzlán” (literary essay by Gloria Anzaldúa, 1987)

**Topic One: The Political Border(land), George W. Bush, Vicente Fox and 9/11**

- **discuss** newspaper articles
- **explore and discuss** additional materials on the topic

**Topic Two: The Cultural Border(land), The border isn’t a line, it’s a...**

- **discuss** “Homeland/Atzlán” (literary essay by Gloria Anzaldúa, 1987)
- **write Paper #4**

**Day Nine: May 30**

**Homework to be completed before class:**

- **read** “Immigration Detention Bed Quota Timeline” (report by the National Immigrant Justice Center)
- **read** other readings TBD due to volatility of topics
- **read** selections from *The Crystal Frontier* (short stories by Carlos Fuentes, 1995)

**Topic One: The Political Border(land), Dreamers and Detention under Barack Obama + Donald Trump’s “Big, Beautiful Wall”**

- **discuss** Report on Detention and Bed Quota, TBD readings
- **explore and discuss** additional materials on the topic

**Topic Two: The Cultural Border(land), The border isn’t a line, it’s a...**

- **discuss** selections from *The Crystal Frontier* (short stories by Carlos Fuentes, 1995)

**Day Ten: May 31**

**Homework to be completed before class:**

- **read/watch** selected reports from [www.wola.org](http://www.wola.org) (Washington Office on Latin America)
- **read** *Tell Me How It Ends: An Essay in 40 Questions* (literary essay by Valeria Luiselli, 2017)

**Topic One: The Political Borderland, The Central American Crisis**

- **discuss** selected reports from [www.wola.org](http://www.wola.org)
- **explore and discuss** additional materials on the topic

**Topic Two: The Cultural Border(land), The Central American Crisis**

- **discuss** *Tell Me How It Ends*
- **discuss** format of final exam

**Day Eleven: June 1**

**Homework to be completed before class:**

- **study** for final exam

**Topic One: The Political Border(land), The Future of Mexico-US Immigration + The Local Border(land), México in Dallas Today**

- **explore and discuss** selected reports from [www.pewhispanic.org](http://www.pewhispanic.org)
- **explore and discuss** materials about México in Dallas today
- **explore and discuss additional materials on the topic(s)**

**Final exam**

- **take final exam**