

## **WL 3382: Texas-Mexico Borderlands: A social, political, cultural and economic story (May Term 2019)**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course focuses on the relationship between Mexico and the US, 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; 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)
- Américo Paredes, *A Texas-Mexican Cancionero* (U of Texas P, 1995/1976)
- Tomás Rivera, *...And The Earth Did Not Devour Him* (Arte Público Press, 2015/1971)
- Gloria Anzaldeua, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (aunt lute books, 1987)
- Yuri Herrera, *Signs Preceding the End of the World* (& other stories, 2015/2009)
- 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:**

- **Oral Communication (UC 2012/16)**
  1. Students will select, organize and use appropriate evidence or information to suit a specific or targeted audience.
  2. Students will use appropriate vocal and visual cues to deliver a presentation to a specific or targeted audience.
- **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.
- **Language and Literature (UC 2016)**
  1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of how a symbolic system communicates meaningfully within its language community.
  2. (2a) Students will analyze or create text such as literature, films, or musical compositions.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

#### Preparation:

1. It is recommended that you read as many of the assigned selections from our main historical text, Neil Foley's *Mexicans in the Making of America*, BEFORE the May Term begins! **You are REQUIRED to have read Chapter One before our first meeting. 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.

Participation: This class is discussion-based, so expressing your ideas and opinions orally is important. I expect everyone 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.*

**Daily Quizzes:** I will give brief quizzes at the beginning of the morning session or post-lunch session, or both. Quizzes will test that you have done the reading & will be distributed in the first 5 minutes of the class period (morning or post lunch). If you arrive late & miss the quiz, you will receive a “0”. I drop the lowest quiz grade.

**Daily Assignments:** You will use in-class time to prepare a daily assignment to help reflect upon our discussions, readings, lectures, and in-class video viewings. These assignments may include writing assignments, longer quizzes, & oral presentations or debates. **Bring a laptop or other electronic device to class every day so that you can complete these assignments.** Note that with both writing assignments and presentations, part of your evaluation may include active interaction with classmates. I will drop the lowest Daily Assignment grade.

**Final Presentation:** You will give a final presentation on the last day of class. Details forthcoming.

**Exams:** You will take two essay-based exams. No make-up exams will be given.

## **TESTING AND EVALUATION**

<b>Grade Breakdown:</b>	Daily Quizzes:	10%
	Participation:	15%
	Daily In-Class Assignments:	15%
	Final presentation:	10%
	Two essay exams:	50%

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

**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. 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:** To drop once classes begin, you MUST complete an Enrollment Discrepancy petition by visiting the May Term office (408 Blanton). Last day to drop with a partial refund (50% of tuition) and without a “W” on transcript is Friday, May 18. Last day to drop WITH a grade of “W” is Tuesday, May 29.

**OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:**

Academic Dishonesty and the Honor Code: Students are expected to adhere to the SMU Honor Code. You may read the SMU Honor Code at [smu.edu/StudentAffairs/StudentLife/StudentHandbook/HonorCode](http://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. Accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.

## Daily Schedule, WL 3382 (May Term 2019): Texas-México Borderlands

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE:** I will assess preparation of daily homework assignments through a variety of in-class activities, including quizzes, impromptu presentations/debates, and in-class writing prompts. \*\*

### Day One: May 16

#### Homework to be completed before class:

- read Foley, chapter 1, p. 13-33 and **write/type out answers** to reading guide questions

#### Topic One: Introduction to the class, “The border isn’t a line, it’s a…”

- course syllabus and requirements
- what is a border? what is a borderland?
- overview of geography of the Texas-Mexico borderlands (map quiz)
- **explore and 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 17

#### Homework to be completed before class:

- **read and discuss** selections from *Personal Memoirs of John N. Seguín* (autobiography, 1858)
- **read/explore** additional information on the history of the Alamo (TBD)
- **read** selections from *A Texas-Mexican Cancionero* (academic study by Américo Paredes, 1976) and prepare online activities
- **prepare** for map quiz

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

- **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) + related activities
- **listen to** selected *corridos*

### Day Three: May 20

#### 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 and Cultural Border(land), the Mexican Revolution in Texas

- **discuss** Johnson article
- **discuss** selections from *Recollections of My Trip* (memoir by Olga Beatriz Torres, 1918)
- **explore and discuss** additional materials on the topic

#### **Day Four: May 21**

##### **Homework to be completed before class:**

- **read** Foley, chapter 2, p. 39-52 (to "...forbidding any but 'free whites'?"); chapter 3, p. 64-89; and chapter 5, 126 ("When the Mexican Farm Labor Program Agreement...")-136 ("...are not forced to leave Mexico) **AND** 140 ("During the period from 1947 until 1955...")-146 ("I strongly suspect that they are purposefully so") and **write/type out answers** to reading guide questions

##### **Topic One: The Historical Border(land), Mexicans in America, 1920s to 1950s**

- **discuss** Foley, chapters 2 and 3 (selections indicated above)
- **explore and discuss** additional materials on the topic

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

- **discuss** Foley, chapter 5
- **explore and discuss** other materials on the topic

#### **Day Five: May 22**

##### **Homework to be completed before class:**

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

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

- **watch and discuss** selections from *Chicano!*, pt. 4, on Crystal City, TX (PBS documentary, 1996); and *Chulas Fronteras* (Les Blanks documentary, 1976)

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

- **introduction to and discussion** of Rivera's novel

#### **Day Six: May 23**

##### **Homework to be completed before class:**

- **finish reading** Rivera's novel
- **prepare** for Exam #1

##### **Topic One: The Cultural Border(land), Tomás Rivera on the Migrant Worker's Life**

- **finish discussion** of Rivera's novel

##### **Topic Two:**

- **Essay Exam 1**

#### **Day Seven: May 24**

##### **Homework to be completed before class:**

- **read** Foley, chapter 7
- **read** "Homeland/Atzlán" and "How to Tame a Wild Tongue," ch. 1, 5 in *Borderland/La Frontera* (by Gloria Anzaldúa, literary essays, 1987)

##### **Topic One: The Political Border(land), Ronald Reagan's "Amnesty" (IRCA of 1986)**

- **discuss** Foley, chapter 7
- **explore and discuss** additional materials on the topic

##### **Topic Two: The Cultural Border(land), Imagining Aztlán**

- **discuss** "Homeland/Atzlán" and "How to Tame a Wild Tongue"

**TWO IMPORTANT NOTES FOR THIS WEEK: 1.** It is recommended that you use the three-day weekend to get a jump start on this week's readings, especially the novella, *Signs Preceding the End of the World*, and the literary essays *Tell Me How It Ends*. **2.** We will set aside some time on Wednesday and Thursday of this week to discuss and work on final presentations.

### **Day Eight: May 28**

#### **Homework to be completed before class:**

- read Foley, chapter 8
- read "Afta Thoughts on NAFTA" (short think piece by J. Bradford DeLong)

#### **Topic One: The Economic (and Cultural) Border(land), NAFTA and Maquiladoras**

- discuss Foley, first half of chapter 8 (p. 200-212)
- discuss "Afta Thoughts on NAFTA"
- watch and discuss clips from *Maquilopolis* (documentary, 2006)

#### **Topic Two: The Political (and Cultural) Border(land), 9/11 and Border Militarization**

- discuss Foley, second half of chapter 8 (212-224)
- read and discuss articles on Bush and Fox's relationship
- watch and discuss clips from *Crossing Arizona* (documentary, 2006)

### **Day Nine: May 29**

#### **Homework to be completed before class:**

- read *Signs Preceding the End of the World* (by Yuri Herrera, novel, 2009)

#### **Topic One: The Political Borderland, Migration from Mexico's Perspective**

- explore and discuss materials on the topic

#### **Topic Two: The Cultural Border(land), The Mythical Tale of Makina's Crossing**

- discuss *Signs Preceding the End of the World*

### **Day Ten: May 30**

#### **Homework to be completed before class:**

- read TBD articles due to volatility of topics
- read *Tell Me How It Ends: An Essay in 40 Questions* (literary essay by Valeria Luiselli, 2017)

#### **Topic One: The Political Border(land), Dreamers and Detention under Obama + Trump**

- discuss TBD readings
- explore and discuss additional materials on the topic

#### **Topic Two: The Political (and Cultural) Borderland, The Central American "Crisis"**

- explore and discuss additional materials on the topic
- discuss *Tell Me How It Ends*

### **Day Eleven: May 31**

#### **Homework to be completed before class:**

- prepare final presentation
- prepare for Essay Exam 2

#### **Topic One: Course wrap-up and Final exam, part one: Student presentations**

#### **Topic Two: Final exam, part two: Essay Exam 2**