

WL 3376
Food, Literature and Nation:
Autonomy, Foreign Influence, and Identity in the Southwest

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Course Description

This course examines the important historical role food and literature play in the process of identity-formation of different groups in the so-called American Southwest, with a special focus on the themes of foreign influence (US and Spain) and autonomy (indigenous culture and environment). We will study how both food and texts both represent and forge the cultural, political, religious, linguistic, and social identities of different communities. We will also discuss the ways in which outsiders (primarily “Anglo” observers and enthusiasts) imagine and represent these communities and their environment. We will read historical texts (primary sources) and historiography of the pre-Columbian experience, the Spanish “conquest,” US presence in the region over the centuries, and indigenous culture, read short stories, and explore the culinary arts. We will also visit Taos sites on organized field trips to better understand the multiple categories to which the Southwest belongs and the anxieties it continues to endure.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will acquire a more profound understanding of Southwest literature, society, and history.
2. Students will understand and summarize the major historical events, actors, and changes that took place in the identity-building processes of the Southwest.
3. Students will analyze and critically evaluate Southwest primary and literary texts in the context of history, culture, society, and values as well as be able to compare and contrast texts and writers.
4. Students will develop and refine their ability to produce written critical work.

University Curriculum

Language and Literature: Students will understand and discuss the ways in which the content, language, and style of Southwest literary texts communicate fundamental elements of the identity-formation process to their communities, particularly how they represent the region’s eternal conflict between (the desire for and rejection of) foreign influence—particularly from Spain and later from the United States—and (the desire and rejection of) the autochthonous. They will understand and articulate the nuances of this conflict through reading short stories, novel excerpts, poetry, and essays from the Southwest region. Informed by reading critical work and class lecture, students will also understand and analyze the ways in which the language and style of texts explicitly author and represent the identity-building project in their respective communities; they will not only recognize how these literary texts represent the “foreign v. autochthonous” conflict but, more importantly, how texts design and perpetuate anxiety these communities endure through a sustained analysis of the texts’

language and style. Ultimately, students will understand that the form and content of these texts are foundational catalysts of Southwest social, cultural, and political identity.

Historical Contexts I: Students will have a comprehensive understanding of the historical narrative (the main events, actors, and primary sources) of the complex process of identity-formation of Southwest from pre-Colombian times through the 20th century—particularly the conflict between foreign influence and the autochthonous—through reading a series of primary sources.

Texts:

Please note we will only read excerpts from the following texts (posted on Canvas).

Alurista and Rojas-Urista, Xelina. *Southwest Tales: A Contemporary Collection*. Maize, 1986.

Anaya, Rudolfo. *Bless Me, Ultima*. 2012. (Original 1972) (Spanglish)

Bodine, John. "A Tri-Ethnic Trap: The Spanish Americans in Taos." *Spanish-Speaking People in the United States: Proceedings of the 1968 Annual Spring Meeting of the American Ethnological Society*. Ed. June

Brooke, James. "In New Mexico, Hispanic Pride Clashes with Indian Anger." *NYT*, 8 February 1998.

Castillo, Ana. *So Far From God*. New York: Norton, 1993.

Chávez, John. *The Lost Land: The Chicano Image of the Southwest*. Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1984.

Frank, Lois Ellen., et al. *Native American Cooking: Foods of the Southwest Indian Nations*. Potter, 1991.

González-Berry and David R. Maciel. *The Contested Homeland: A Chicano History of New Mexico*. Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1989.

Mélendez, Young, Moore, and Pynes. *The Multi-Cultural Southwest: A Reader*. U of Arizona P, 2001.

Núñez, Cabeza de Vaca, Álvar. *The Narrative of Cabeza de Vaca*. 1527.

Silva-Corvalán, Carmen. "Spanish in the Southwest." *Language in the USA: Themes for the Twenty-First Century*. 2004.

Simmons, Marc. *Spanish Pathways: Readings in the History of Hispanic New Mexico*. U of New Mexico P, 2001.

Silko, Leslie. *Ceremony*. Penguin, 2006.

Ulibarrí, Sabine. *Mi abuela fumaba puros y otros cuentos de Tierra Amarilla*. Quinto Sol, 1977. (English)

Weber, David. *The Spanish Frontier in North America*. Yale UP, 2009.

Vigil, Angel. *The Corn Woman: Stories and Legends of the Hispanic Southwest*. 1994.

Grading Policy

Grade Distribution:

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| 1. Participation | 15% |
| 2. Daily Diary | 20% |

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| 3. Blog entries and responses | 10% |
| 4. Oral presentations | 15% |
| 5. Paper | 40% (20% for first draft, 20% for final) |

Grading Scale:

Outstanding work receives an A; outstanding work far exceeds what is expected (superior):
A = 100-93 A- = 90-92

Excellent work receives a B; excellent work exceeds what is expected (above average):
B+ = 87-89 B = 83-86 B- = 80-82

Good work receives a C; good work basically meets expectations (average):
C+ = 77-79 C = 73-76 C- = 70-72

Acceptable work receives a D; acceptable work is not particularly good, but is not failing (below average): D+ = 67-69 D = 63-66 D- = 60-62

Unacceptable work receives an F; unacceptable work demonstrates poor effort and/or misunderstanding (failing): F = 59 and below

Course & Instructor Policies

1. Participation: Attendance to class meetings and field trips is mandatory. Due to the compressed nature of this term, missing more than one class will warrant withdrawal from course. Students are required to contribute to class discussions and come prepared with readings.
2. Diary: All students will be required to write an entry about each of the readings, experiences, or discussion we have in class (template and schedule is on Canvas). Students are encouraged to include photographs, personal art work, creative writing, etc. that has been inspired by their Taos experience. Each post will be about 75-100 words.
3. Blog: There will be a sign-up on when students will post. Students will either contribute their favorite/most significant diary entry, or write a different post, presented in such a way that will trigger discussion online and in class. Each student will post at least 6 original posts and also will respond to classmates' posts at least 6-8 times. The professor will also contribute daily to the blog and students are encouraged to respond to her entries, too. Each original post will be about 75-100 words and responses will vary, as long as they are thorough, relevant, and significant.
4. Oral presentation**: Students will discuss a regional topic of their choice and critically engage it in a formal oral presentation in Spanish of 10-15 min. Students will be required to share audio/visual media. Presentations can also be a creative response to class topics, provided a personal reflection is also shared. Oral presentations will be schedule throughout the term, beginning June. 8. Students will discuss topic and outline with professor at least 2 days before presentation.
5. Paper**: students will write a 4-5-page paper and will then revise it. This will be based on a topic discussed in class and researched and/or explored further by the student. The final

composition will be due 1 week after the last of class, due to professor on Canvas: lmolina@smu.edu. All writing, discussion, etc. culminates in this assignment.

****While these are independent assignments, students may choose to engage the same topic for both. This is encouraged, as it will allow students to explore any given topic deeper and more thoroughly.**
*****Please note that all major assignments (compositions, oral presentation) MUST acknowledge all topics of the course, as these topics are inherently related.**

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of instructor.

Academic Dishonesty: According to University regulations and the SMU Honor Code, dishonesty in connection with any university activity constitutes misconduct for which students may be subject to administrative action or disciplinary penalties. Cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information are examples of dishonesty. Instances of cheating include, but are not limited to: handing in work done by someone else as your own (in paper or electronic form), copying from websites, assisting others in cheating, failing to cite sources, etc. While in this course collaboration on assignments is encouraged, individual work must be demonstrated. This means that all written assignments as well as other types of assignments must be the original work of the student turning them in. Any work that is either partially or fully copied, plagiarized or the result of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero for that work.

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 <http://www.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.

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.)

Excused Absences for 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)

The Importance and Significance of the Syllabus: Thoroughly acquaint yourself with the contents of the syllabus and refer to it frequently, since it contains essential information related to this course and many helpful hints that will ensure your success in this course. An updated version of the syllabus will always be available on Canvas.

Academic Calendar and Assignments

Subject to modifications, will attempt to line up field trips with KNW course trips

Date	Class topic
June 5	The “American” Southwest, New Mexico, and Taos/Santa Fe: An Introduction Readings: Weber, Ulbarrí Field trip: SMU-in-Taos kitchen (Taos treats and ingredients)
June 6-7	The Pre-Columbian Experience Readings: Frank, Meléndez, Alurista Field trip: Taos Pueblo and Pre-Colombian food tasting
June 10-11	La conquista: The Spanish Arrival Readings: Vigil, Núñez Field trip: Hacienda Martínez and colonial food tasting
June 12-13	Identity after Contact Readings: Anaya, Bodine Field trip: SMU-in-Taos kitchen (homemade Taos Treats)
June 14	Religion and Spirituality Readings: Castillo, Cather Field trip: Chimayó and Chili tasting
June 17	The Language Problem Readings: Anaya, Silva-Corvalán Guest speaker: Local food expert
June 18	The Contemporary Spanish Southwest Experience Readings: González-Berry, Brooke, Chávez Field trip: Taos food fusion experience (Taos Plaza)

June 19-20	The Land and Environment Reading: Ulibarrí, Meléndez Field trip: Eco-adventure (TBD) Conclusions