

Latino/Latin American Studies 1020 (section 001)  
Introduction to Chicano Studies: Humanities  
2:30-3:45 p.m., T & R, Arts & Sciences Hall 306  
Instructor: Dr. Ramón Guerra  
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Spring 2010

"Introduction to Chicano Studies: Humanities"
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TEXTS REQUIRED (Available at the University Bookstore)

*Bridging Cultures: An Introduction to Chicano/Latino Studies* by Mario T. Gomez

Some pieces posted on Blackboard site (when assigned, print off and bring to class with you).

\*Please bring all assigned readings to class with you for reference on the day they are assigned.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will provide an overview of Chicano Studies by concentrating on the *humanities*—that is, literature, art, philosophy, and other cultural production by and about Chicanos. This is an introductory course, so we will explore the basic elements of Chicano Studies from history to politics, to language, to religion, and so on. We will examine the origins of what is known as the *Movimiento Chicano* (Chicano Movement) in the 1960s and look at the development over time of Chicanos in American society as related to race, ethnicity, nationality, and other issues of identity. We will discuss the distinctions between the Chicano experience and experiences of other Latinos. We will connect all of these elements to the ways in which they have been expressed in literature and other art forms, concentrating on the ways that society is reflected in cultural production. Because of the introductory nature of the course, we will address some issues that may seem basic and more familiar to some while others may only be learning them for the first time. While some familiarity with the Spanish language may be helpful, it is certainly not a requirement for this course.

In the end, I hope and expect that you will learn a variety of things about the humanities and Chicano Studies, as well as some valuable approaches to addressing some specific, important aspects of our time. This class should be exciting, interesting, and always open to discussion—all students should feel welcome and not afraid to raise honest questions or comments in our conversations.

### COURSE STRUCTURE

The format that the class sessions will take will vary throughout the semester. It will be mostly, though not solely, based on lectures. **A great majority of the atmosphere will be based on "all-class conversation."** I feel the best way to learn is to become involved in what is being "said" in the classroom so I will not dominate the course with one-way communication. I will ask questions, students will ask questions, and we will all attempt to answer them by exploring the readings, the films, and our own experiences. In this way, everyone should feel responsible for contributing to the subject matter of the class. Occasionally, we will also do small group work or work in pairs to create smaller areas of discussion before addressing specific topics as an entire class.

## CLASS REQUIREMENTS

**Reading:** This course does require a significant amount of reading to be done in a short amount of time. However, if you manage your time wisely and look ahead, you should be able keep up with the readings from week to week. You should come to class prepared to talk about the readings that are listed on that day on the schedule at the back of this syllabus. Read actively—begin to formulate questions or discussion topics as you read. Write them down, underline or highlight them. Part of your responsibility is to come *prepared* to engage in our conversation. **There will be several moments throughout the course where I will instruct a student or student to come prepared to start the class discussion for the next period.**

**Quizzes:** There will be a quiz over every section of the course (six in all). The quizzes will be relatively short and will combine information that we have read, seen on film, or discussed in class. Each individual quiz will be given a score and the overall quiz grade will come from the combination (**not** the “average”) of all quiz scores. **No makeup quizzes will be allowed.** There may also be an occasional pop quiz to check your reading habits.

**Group Presentations:** Early in the semester I will be placing you all into groups of about eight (five groups in all). Each group will focus on one of the sections of our course and will make a 15-20 minute presentation at the beginning of each section. A visual presentation of some sort will be required (a Power Point presentation is not the only means of doing this but may be the most useful). You will need to meet as a group outside of class at least once or twice and all members will be required to participate. I will also try to provide some in class time to meet with your group. The grades for these presentations will be individual so I will solicit information from the entire group on everyone’s contributions.

**Midterm and Final Exams:** Each of the exams will cover the **material from one-half of the class**. All material from the readings, the films, the class discussions, and the group presentations will be available for the exams. We will talk more about the structure of the exams as we move into the semester. Generally speaking, they will combine a series of multiple choice questions, fill in the blanks, short answer questions, and short essays.

GRADING BREAKDOWN		
Quizzes	20%	Midterm Exam 25%
Group Presentations	20%	Final Exam 25%
Attendance and Participation	10%	

## CLASS POLICIES

**Attendance:** I will take attendance in class every day. You should strive to come to this class every day. A majority of the work done depends on the participation and involvement of students—part of your workload for the class can only be done in the classroom; therefore, your attendance is vital to the success of our group. If you are not here, you cannot contribute or receive guidance in the current discussion—think of the class as a “15 week conversation.” Each absence AFTER 2 will result in the final grade being lowered a half letter. **IF YOU REACH ABSENCE NUMBER SIX (6), YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PASS THIS COURSE.**

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be tolerated—it will result in automatic failure of the course and could lead to more serious consequences at the university. Don’t do it. I expect you will maintain an honored responsibility to yourself and others by turning in and taking credit for work that is your own original work written specifically for this class and nothing else.

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact me for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to participate fully in course activities or to meet course requirements.

*I don't plan on it but should it be necessary, I reserve the right to alter the syllabus and/or the course schedule at any time.*

### **COURSE SCHEDULE**

(All items and assignments are listed on the day that you should have them ready. For instance, on Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup> you should come to class having read the Introduction from *Bridging Cultures*.)

#### **Tuesday 1/12**

Syllabus review and introductions. Overview of the course themes and goals.

#### **Thursday 1/14**

Read: "Introduction" (v-xi) from *Bridging Cultures*

Due: Letter to me (1 page) explaining why you've been drawn to this particular class, what you hope to get out of it, and what your past experience with Chicano or Latino Studies.

**Tuesday 1/19                      NO CLASS; Research Day to look into group presentation topics**

### **History**

#### **Thursday 1/21**

Read: Part 1 in *Bridging Cultures* (1-54)

*\*Sign up for group presentations\**

#### **Tuesday 1/26**

Film: *La Vida: A Journey of Latinos Throughout Nebraska*

*\*Initial meeting with your groups\**

#### **Thursday 1/28**

Read: Gloria Anzaldúa's "The Homeland Aztlán" (On Blackboard)

#### **Tuesday 2/2**

Read: Américo Paredes's "The Legend" from *With His Pistol in His Hand* and lyrics to "The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez" (On Blackboard)

Quiz over *History*

**Thursday 2/4                      NO CLASS**

### **Immigration and Labor**

#### **Tuesday 2/9**

Group #1 Presentation; Read: Parts 2 & 3 in *Bridging Cultures* (55-110)

#### **Thursday 2/11**

Read: Octavio Paz's "Mexico and the United States" (On Blackboard)

Begin Film: *La Misma Luna/Under the Same Moon* (2007)

**Tuesday 2/16**

*La Misma Luna/Under the Same Moon* continued

**Thursday 2/18**

Read: Sections from Tomás Rivera's *Y No Se Lo Trago La Tierra/And the Earth Did Not Devour Him* (On Blackboard)

Quiz over *Immigration and Labor*

**Education**

**Tuesday 2/23**

Group #2 Presentation: Read: Part 4 in *Bridging Cultures* (111-120)

**Thursday 2/25**

Read: Sections from Richard Rodriguez's *Hunger of Memory* (On Blackboard)

**Tuesday 3/2**

Read: Sections from Américo Paredes's *George Washington Gomez* (On Blackboard)

**Thursday 3/4**

Film: *Stand and Deliver* (1988)

**Tuesday 3/9**

*Stand and Deliver* continued

Quiz over *Education*

**\*\*Thursday 3/11 MIDTERM EXAM, IN CLASS\*\***

**March 14-21 NO CLASS; SPRING BREAK**

**Politics**

**Tuesday 3/23**

Group #3 Presentation; Read: Part 5 in *Bridging Cultures* (121-147)

**Thursday 3/25**

Read: Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales's "I Am Joaquin" (On Blackboard)

**Tuesday 3/30**

Read: Section from Oscar Zeta Acosta's *The Revolt of the Cockroach People* (On Blackboard)

Quiz over *Politics*

**Religion**

**Thursday 4/1**

Group #4 Presentation; Read: Part 6 in *Bridging Cultures* (149-187)

**Tuesday 4/6**

Read: Section from Rudolfo Anaya's *Bless Me, Ultima* (On Blackboard)

**Thursday 4/8**

Film: *The Milagro Beanfield War* (1988)

**Tuesday 4/13**

*The Milagro Beanfield War* continued

Quiz over *Religion*

**Feminism and Culture**

**Thursday 4/15**

Group #5 Presentation; Read: Parts 7 & 8 in *Bridging Cultures* (189-234)

Film: *Lalo Guerrero: The Original Chicano*

**Tuesday 4/20**

Read: Gloria Anzaldúa's "*Movimientos de rebeldía y las culturas que traicionan*" (On Blackboard)

**Thursday 4/22**

Read: Sandra Cisneros's "Woman Hollering Creek" (On Blackboard)

**Tuesday 4/27**

Film: *The Bronze Screen* (2002)

**Thursday 4/29**

*The Bronze Screen* continued

Quiz over *Feminism and Culture*; Course wrap-up and evaluations

**May 1-7 FINALS WEEK**

***\*Thursday, May 6, 2:30-4:30 Scheduled Final Exam Period\****