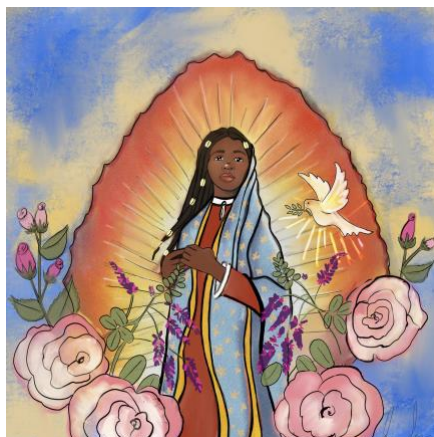


Introduction to Chicanx and Latinx Literature
ENG 243 | Winter 2021 | CRN 26359



Jiesha Stephens, 2020

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Course Description

This course is an introductory survey where we will identify and define the field of Chicanx and Latinx literatures and cultural studies through a critical engagement. In addition to considering how history, politics, and literary periods shape these robust fields, we will also examine the ways in which these texts continue to shape and inform our ongoing debates surrounding citizenship, belonging, and space-based identities. We will survey short stories, plays, novels, poetry, and other types of media to understand the transdisciplinary nature of these fields. Moreover, we will attend to the limitations and possibilities of the Latinx imaginary between the 20th and 21st century.

Students will develop creative and analytical writing assignments and projects that skillfully bridge together these questions, definitions, and concepts.

Required Course Materials

El Mesquite (1935/2000) by Elena Zamora O'Shea
Emplumada (1981) by Lorna Dee Cervantes
Mother Tongue (1990) by Demetria Martínez

All items available through the Duck Store and other online retailers.

All other readings will be uploaded as PDFs to Canvas.

Please bring required materials with you to class.

Course Content Warning

Our selected readings for this course will be either explicitly or implicitly violent and traumatic. This is the nature of working with texts from authors who are part of communities that have not only been marginalized, but treated as disposable subjects throughout our social and political history. We will grapple with the inheritance of Latinx histories within the United States, which includes, but is not limited to, racial, sexual, and gendered violence on and between Latinx communities. If the material seems particularly charged for you, I recommend that you drop by office hours or e-mail me so that we can discuss additional options.

Lastly, I do not tolerate the use of slurs or hateful speech in this course. If you are asking for a definition or translation of any term, please make sure to indicate that you are quoting a text or inquiring about a term before saying it. We must be responsible for our speech and each other.

Course Assignments & Grading Breakdown

Participation – 15%

You are expected to come to class prepared and having read the materials for that day. This class emphasizes the communication of ideas, questions, and concerns both in writing and in discussion. Your active participation in this class is essential. Furthermore, I expect you to be generous and ethical listeners and responders towards your peers. Keep in mind that absences, not reading, coming to class without materials (unprepared), not having your camera on during class, or having prolonged out-of-body experiences can affect your participation grade. Look alive.

Reading Analysis/Response Papers – 20%

You will be required to write 2 reading responses throughout the term on any two (but different) assigned readings of your choosing. They should be no less than 3 pages (double-spaced, 12pt. TNR font, 1” margins, etc.) and written somewhere between the style of a formal paper and blog post. Take these papers as an opportunity to reflect on what you enjoyed about the text or film, what surprised you, what you think is important about it, how the text related to another work we’ve read in class, or if there is a theme/idea/symbol that seems reoccurring. I don't want summaries/book reports, nor do I want you to use sources from outside of class. I want your analysis of your selected text grounded in examples/references from the text you selected. It is not necessary to have an overarching argument for the papers—you can simply engage each text on its own terms. The best papers will attend to how issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality (perhaps not all at once) are being deployed in that text.

Midterm: Close Reading Paper – 20%

At the end of Week 5, you will submit a Close Reading Paper of 4-5 pages. In this paper, you will select one literary text we have covered in class. You will select a short passage (at least a sentence, no more than a paragraph), and you will perform a detailed close reading as we have practiced in-class throughout term. Please refer to the close reading handout for more information.

Final Exam– 30%

We will have a final exam during our scheduled final exam time. The exam will consist of short and long answer questions that will cover the texts as well as the historical, social, and political movements that shaped those texts. Longer answer questions will allow you to utilize the skills of literary analysis that we will build upon throughout the term.

Attendance — 15%

I ask that you are respectful of our time together and that you show up on time and be as engaged as you can. We are only meeting on Mondays and Wednesdays for Winter term, so you may miss two classes this term (equivalent to 1 week of class) without penalty. I do not distinguish between excused or unexcused absences. Additional absences will result in 1/3 of a letter grade deduction to your final course grade. For example, the first additional absence over two will reduce a B to a B-, an additional absence would reduce a B- to a C+, and so on. Please notify me ahead of time if you anticipate you will be late or need to leave class early. Most importantly, please be in communication about any attendance concerns.

Grading Point Distribution

			97-100%	A+			
93-100%	A	83-86%	B	73-76%	C	63-66%	D
90-92%	A-	80-82%	B-	70-72%	C-	60-62%	D-
87-89%	B+	77-79%	C+	67-70%	D +	<60%	F

Course Policies

Late Work

All assigned work is due at the date and time listed on the syllabus. I deduct a 1/3 of a letter grade for each day that any assignment is late. For example, day after a deadline a B+ would be a B, second day a B would be a B-, etc. I will not accept work after three days. You may request an extension once per term, but I require a 24-hour advance notice. The strict deadlines are in place to give you ample writing time between assignments and to give me sufficient time to read and give you feedback on your work.

Academic Integrity

All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course, which means you may not submit papers or portions of papers you have written for any other course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. This includes ideas you get from your classmates. This also includes ideas you get from websites as well as books and other media. Even if you rewrite a source in your own words, if you do not cite that source in your text and your bibliography, you are still committing plagiarism. Please see me or a librarian for help on citations. **Academic dishonesty will result in an automatic failing grade for this course.** For definitions of cheating and plagiarism, you may refer to the Student Conduct Code on the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards website. You are also welcome to contact me with any questions about your use of sources.

Access

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me in week one if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You may also wish to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Schedule of Assignments

Readings marked with an asterisk () can be found on Canvas. All readings are to be completed before coming to class.*

Week 1

Monday: Course introduction, Introductions, & Syllabus

Wednesday: Defining Latinx and Latinidad

Friday: Close Reading Handout

Week 2

Monday: Texas History and the Making of Tejax Identity

Wednesday: “Mexican American Modernisms” & addressing questions of periodization

Read: Zamora O’Shea, *El Mesquite* p. LXXI “The Ranches of Southwest Texas” & p. 1-28

Friday: Read: Zamora O’Shea, *El Mesquite* p. 29-54

Week 3

Monday: **Class canceled in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day**

Wednesday: Narrative Voice and Narrative Space

Read: Zamora O’Shea, *El Mesquite* p. 54-80

Friday: Independent watching of *César Chávez: An American Hero* (Swank)

Week 4

Monday: Fields of Promise: On Im/Migrant Labor, Conversation on film

Wednesday: On the Chicano Movement

Read: Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales’s “I am Joaquin” (via Canvas)

Friday: Problems within the Chicano Movement (recorded)

Week 5

Monday: The Rise of Chicana Feminism

Read: Cervantes, *Emplumada*, Dedication to p. 23

Wednesday: Indigenous Identities Across Latinidad: Romanticization or Geneology?

Cervantes, *Emplumada*, p. 25-66

Friday: Writing Due: Close Reading Paper due by Friday by 11:59pm, see Canvas for details

Week 6

Monday: Fragmented Narratives of Latinidad and Immigration: El Salvador

Read: Martínez, *Mother Tongue*, Preface to p. 25 (ends with “life’s earthquakes.”)

Wednesday: On Language and Conquest

Read: Martínez, *Mother Tongue*, p. 25-58 (ends with “he opened the door.”)

Friday: Read: Martínez, *Mother Tongue*, p. 58-108 (ends with “before men invented war.”)

Week 7

Monday: On Gender, Women, and Masculinity

Read: Martínez, *Mother Tongue*, p. 108-150

Wednesday: Conclusions

Read: Martínez, *Mother Tongue*, p. 153-194

Friday: Catch-up day

Week 8

Monday: On Form and the Short Story

Read: “We Came All the Way from Cuba So You Could Dress Like This?” by Achy Obejas & “Pilón” by Sandra Cisneros (both on Canvas)

Wednesday: A Brief History of Latinx Theatre & Questions of Citizenship and Migrations

Read: “Detained in the Desert” by Josefina López (Canvas)

Friday: Watch *Real Women Have Curves* (Swank)

Week 9

Monday: Afro-Latinidades

Read: Keyword Essay: “Afro-Latinas/os” by Tanya Katerí Hernández (Canvas)

Wednesday: On Latinidad as a Diaspora

Read: “Frijochuelas” by Jasmine Mendez and “Afro-Latina” by Melania-Luisa Marte (all on Canvas)

Friday: Language in Afro-Latindad

Read: “Dear White Girls in My Spanish Class” by Ariana Brown

Week 10

Monday: Futurity of Latinx and Chicanx literature and studies?

Wednesday: Final Exam Review

Friday: Extra office hours for Final Exam Review

Finals Week

Please see Final Exam schedule via the University of Oregon website for our scheduled online exam time and date.