ENG 243: Intro to Latinx Literature
CRN 32041 | Spring 2021 | MWF 8:00-8:50am

Instructor: Megan Reynolds
Office Hours: Wednesday 10:30-1:30 and by appointment. Please use this Google Doc to sign up for appointments:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/15POqOvHgeWQoSEJEcm1oROJ2qFvjVr1lOOP5F5yE
sxI/edit#gid=0
Office Location and Phone: PLC 241 but Remote for Spring 2021, 541-346-0531
Email: mreynol2@uoregon.edu (This is the best way to reach me. I check it regularly throughout
the day but please be aware that emails sent at 2:00am, 5:00am, or other times when most people are
asleep will not get a prompt response. I also encourage you to make sure you send emails with
specific questions about assignments at least 12 hours before the assignment is due; otherwise
this question will most likely go unanswered and we will both be stressed out).
- Please do not use Canvas messaging/email. I don’t get those notifications so your
  email will probably go unanswered (and I want to answer your questions!).

Course Description
This introductory course explores the forms, cultural resonances, aesthetics, and political exigency of
Latinx literatures in the United States. From the Chicano Civil Rights Movement to current debates
on citizenship, this course examines how Latinx literature from the 20th and 21st centuries addresses
what it means to be “Latinx.” Through our examinations of short stories, novels, poetry, and other
media, we will develop an understanding of the field of Latinx literature, including key themes of:
Latinx literature’s engagements with labor, race, and gender; its reflections on socio-political
developments; and its dialogues about identity. Students will complete creative and analytic writing
assignments and projects that engage with various course topics.

Required Course Material
- Under the Feet of Jesus by Helena Maria Viramontes
- The Tattooed Soldier by Héctor Tobar
- The Girl from H.O.P.P.E.R.S by Jaime Hernandez

All items available through the Duck Store and other online retailers (if you can please consider
checking local bookstores!)

All other readings will be available as PDFs on Canvas.

Bring required materials to class.

Content Warning: The texts we will be working with in this course will include explicitly or
implicitly violent and traumatic themes. This leads us to an important question:

Why do we read difficult texts?
This is a question I bear in mind (and want you to as well) throughout this class. Reading in general
allows us to experience other stories, ones that move us beyond our own realm of familiarity. As the
famous George R.R. Martin wrote in a little known series called Game of Thrones, “a reader lives a
thousand lives before he dies. The man who never reads lives only one.” Reading is important. We
know that. But why is reading violent and difficult texts important? The texts I’ve chosen push us to consider the marginalized lives of those often over-looked or considered disposable. Reading these texts shines a very needed light on these often “invisible” subjects. If you find you are struggling or want to discuss some of these themes further with me, I strongly encourage you to make an office hours appointment. The work we do here is important. But it’s hard.

**Discourse Community**

Our class represents our discourse community. Each member in our community will work together throughout the year. We respect every member of this community and strive to challenge each other productively. Our inquiry will never deny anyone from any walk of life the right to exist. Such inquiry is neither productive nor respectful and therefore does not meet our discourse community standards. Any such members who create a negative learning environment for our discourse community will be asked to leave and will not be invited back for the remainder of that class period. If asked to leave, this resultant absence will count towards that student’s participation grade.

I will never tolerate the use of slurs or other hateful speech. If you are asking for clarification or explanation of a term in the text, please indicate that you are quoting the text and indicate the word you mean by say the first letter then “word”. For example, the “n-word.” Words have power; let’s be careful how we wield it.

**Course Assignments and Breakdown**

**Participation: 15%**

As this class is concerned with written and oral communication, your participation in class is essential to your success. I expect you to come to class having completed the reading for that day and prepared to discuss the material. While part of your participation depends on your contributions to class discussions, I also expect you to be ethical and generous listeners and responders to your peers. To get full participation points for the day, your camera must be on for 80-90% of the class period. Class periods in which your computer is not on for this amount of time will result in grade deductions.

Given our circumstances during this ongoing pandemic, you will have assigned roles for each class period. You must do each role once per week. Please use the Google Sheet to sign up (included below). These roles include:

- The Questioners (Questioners post 3-4 questions they had about the texts to the class Google Doc no later than when class begins. Questioners will also use these questions to help structure our class discussions. At the end of class, Questioners will highlight any questions we didn’t get to)
- The Responders (Responders will respond to the Questioners questions as we get to them.)
- The Note Takers (Note Takers will be responsible for tracking and transcribing the class discussions on our class Google Doc.)

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1_DJaSbhr6Y_0EY_Qwsm1vxuyLtMs1d664-JY-0Vjyr8/edit?usp=sharing

**Attendance: 15%**

Attendance is crucial for not only enriching your own thinking about our topic but also that
of your fellow classmates. More than one week (three absences) will result in the lowering of your final course grade by one grade step (from a B to a B-, for example) per absence regardless of the cause. It will therefore be your responsibility to budget your absences in case of illness. Class will start promptly. If you arrive after class begins you will be recorded as late. Tardiness disrupts valuable class time. I consider four late appearances equivalent to one complete absence and it will count towards your two allotted absences. If you arrive more than fifteen minutes late or otherwise miss more than fifteen minutes of class time, you will be marked as absent. When you are late you must check in with me at the end of that same class session to make sure you have been noted as in attendance. If you miss a class or are late, it is your responsibility to check in with classmates and/or myself to learn the highlights of the class session you have missed.

**Close Reading Papers: 20%**

Over the course of the term you will write two Close Reading papers – one in the first five weeks and one in the second five weeks. These papers are 3-4 pages long (meaning at least one line of your original writing makes it to the first line of the 4th page). I will provide you with 3 passage options, of which you will choose one to write about using the skills we’ve practiced in class. These papers do not need to be argumentative, but you will need to offer some suggestions about the significance of the formal features you analyze. More details will be provided during class.

**Midterm: Reading Analysis: 20%**

At the end of week five you will turn in a Reading Analysis Paper. This paper is 4-5 pages (meaning at least one sentence of your original writing makes it to the first line of the 5th page). This is not a plot summary and it will not include any outside sources. You need to ground your analysis and response in specific examples from the text (so you need to quote the text directly!). More details will be provided during class.

**Final Exam: 30%**

We will have a final exam during our scheduled exam time. This exam will consist of short and long answer questions related to course content, including not only the literary information we covered but also any relevant social, historical, and political movements that impacted and shaped Latinx literature.

**Grading Scale**

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**Course Policies**

**Academic Honesty:**

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. Failure to properly cite any information used in assignments will result in a failure in the course.

**Late Work:**
I do not accept late work because feedback on assignments is designed to help you with future assignments. Assignments are due on the date and time listed on the syllabus and on Canvas. I will deduct 1/3 of a letter grade for each day as assignment is late. This means that an assignment that would’ve earned a B that is turned in a day after the deadline would now be a B-. I will not accept work after three days. You may request an extension, but you must ask 24-hours in advance.

*However, I will accept one late assignment per term; use this option wisely. Should you choose to hand an assignment in late you must inform me by the due date. “On time” means submitted, with the correct document, on Canvas by the start of class on the due date. If you have not informed me about using this late policy for your own allotted assignment, it will be counted as a late assignment with point deductions.*

**Formatting Guidelines for Written Work:**
All written work should be typed and double-spaced, using 12-point Times New Roman font and 1” margins. Use MLA format for quoting and citing sources. Failure to format and cite sources may significantly lower the assignment or essay grade.

Please see the “Format and Documentation” handout for complete instructions. Failure to follow any formatting guidelines will be reflected in your grade for the assignment by at least one grade step (from a B to a B-, for example).

**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 uoaecc@uoregon.edu.

**Schedule of Events**
Link to class Google Doc:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vmIAp-m1-Aub-0OzDlz1K0llXzY-mNtjdAQstYhof28/edit?usp=sharing

**Week One**
**What is Latinx?**
Monday March 29th: Introductions, first-day survey, and syllabus overview

**To Do Before Next Class Meeting: Sign up for class roles (Google doc included here and in our module for week 1)**

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1_DJaSbhr6Y_0EY_QwsmlvxuyLtMs1d664JY-0Vjvr8/edit?usp=sharing
Wednesday March 31st: Reading Due – “The Possessive Investment in Whiteness” (Lipsitz) (Canvas)

Friday April 1st: Reading Due – Selection from On Latinidad: U.S. Latino Literature and the Construction of Ethnicity (Caminero-Santangelo) (Canvas)

*Week Two*

**Mexican American Literature**

Monday April 5th: Reading Due – Under the Feet of Jesus (up to chapter 3)

Wednesday April 7th: Reading Due – Under the Feet of Jesus (up to chapter 4)

Friday April 9th: Reading Due – Under the Feet of Jesus (finish)

*Week Three*

**Undoing Expectations**

Monday April 12th: Reading Due – Selections from Latinx Literature Unbound (Rodriquez) (Canvas)

Wednesday April 14th: Reading Due – Selections from Border Fictions (Sadowski-Smith) (Canvas)

Friday April 16th: Close Reading Paper 1 Due on Canvas by 11:59pm

Finish Undoing Expectations Discussions

*Week Four*

**Comics**

Monday April 19th: Reading Due – The Girl from H.O.P.P.E.R.S (TBD)

Wednesday April 21st: Reading Due – The Girl from H.O.P.P.E.R.S (TBD)

Friday April 23rd: Reading Due – The Girl from H.O.P.P.E.R.S (TBD)

*Week Five*

**Feminisms**

Monday April 26th: Reading Due – Selections from This Bridge Called My Back (Canvas)

Wednesday April 28th: Reading Due – Selected poems by Lorna Dee Cervantes (Canvas)

Selected poems by Julia de Burgos (Canvas)

Friday April 30th: Midterm Reading Analysis Paper Due on Canvas by 11:59pm

Finish Feminisms Discussions

*Week Six*

**Guatemalan American Literature**
Monday May 3\textsuperscript{rd}: Reading Due – *The Tattooed Soldier* (Part One)

Wednesday May 5\textsuperscript{th}: Reading Due – *The Tattooed Soldier* (Part Two)
¡Feliz Cinco de Mayo!

Friday May 7\textsuperscript{th}: Reading Due – *The Tattooed Soldier* (Up to chapter 15)

\textit{Week Seven}

Monday May 10\textsuperscript{th}: Reading Due – *The Tattooed Soldier* (finish)

Wednesday May 12\textsuperscript{th}: Finish discussion of *The Tattooed Soldier*

Friday May 14\textsuperscript{th}: Close Reading Paper 2 Due on Canvas by 11:59pm
Finish *The Tattooed Soldier* Discussion

\textit{Week Eight}

\textbf{Afro-Latinidades}

Monday May 17\textsuperscript{th}: Reading Due – Entry for “Afro-Latinas/os” by Tanya Kateri Hernández (you can find this through the library. Need to be logged in to your UO account to have access)


Wednesday May 19\textsuperscript{th}: Material Due - “Afro-Latina” by Elizabeth Acevedo (https://youtu.be/tPx8cSGW4k8)

Friday May 21\textsuperscript{st}: Reading Due – “Dear White Girls in My Spanish Class” (Brown) (https://www.acentosreview.com/august2019/dear-white-girls-in-my.html)
“How to be a Negro Without Really Trying” (Thomas) (Canvas)

\textit{Week Nine}

\textbf{Latinx and Genre}

Monday May 24\textsuperscript{th}: Reading Due – “Especially Heinous” (Machado) (Canvas)

Wednesday May 26\textsuperscript{th}: Reading Due – “Inventory” (Machado) (Canvas)

Friday May 28\textsuperscript{th}: Reading Due – “Real Women Have Bodies” (Machado) (Canvas)
Selections from *Real Women Have Curves* (Videos on Canvas)

**Week Ten**

**Final Questions and Review**

Monday May 31st: The Future of Latinx Studies

Wednesday June 2nd: Review for Final Exam

Friday June 4th: Extra Office Hours

**Finals Week**

**Final Exam**

Final exam will be available on Canvas and will take place during our scheduled final exam time as determined by the university. I will let you know when that is as soon as I do.