

**American Studies 590: Seminar in Chicana/o Studies**  
**Mondays 1:15-4pm**

Professor Linda Heidenreich  
Office Hours: Wed/Fri. 3:00-4pm, and by appt.  
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**Course Description:**

This course will introduce you to the broad and interdisciplinary field known as Chicana/o Studies. Chicana/o Studies grew out of the activism and liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Four decades after the establishment of Chicano Studies programs throughout Greater Mexico, departments and programs continue to flourish not only in the “Southwest” but in the Midwest, in places such as the University of Wyoming. The vibrancy of this field is due, in part, to the continued and growing relevance of our work to the nation, continent and hemisphere. In this seminar, we will take a broad lens to the field of Chicana/o Studies, studying classic and banned texts such as Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands* and Acuña’s *Occupied America* as well as more recent work such as Maylei Blackwell’s *Chicana Power!* and Acevedo’s *Nymphos of Rocky Flats*. Because the field is so very vibrant, there is no way to cover all key texts in one semester; you are therefore encouraged to explore the field beyond the required readings.

By the close of this course you should be able to: 1) Map authors, concepts and texts that have shaped the field; 2) Locate your own research in relation to Chicana/o Studies; 3) Discuss the importance of Chicana/o Studies to education (community, K-12, university).

In the course of the semester students will write short analyses of assigned texts, produce a publishable book-review, facilitate one seminar, and write a conference-length term-paper.

**Required Texts:**

- Acevedo, Mario. *The Nymphos of Rocky Flats*
- Acuña, Rodolfo F. *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, 7th ed.
- Akers Chacón, Justin and Mike Davis. *No One is Illegal: Fighting Racism and State Violence on the U.S. – Mexico Border*
- Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/ La Frontera: La Nueva Mestiza*
- Blackwell, Maylei. *Chicana Power: Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement*.
- Castillo, Anna. *So Far From God*
- Gómez Quiñones, Juan. *Chicano Politics: Reality and Promise, 1940-1990*
- González, Jovita and Eve Raleigh. *Caballero: A Historical Novel*
- López, Marissa K. *Chicano Nations: The Hemispheric Origins of Mexican American Literature*
- Paredes, Américo. “*With His Pistol in His Hand*”: A Border Ballad and Its Hero
- Pérez, Emma. *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History*
- Reyes, Barbara O. *Private Women, Public Lives: Gender and the Missions of the Californias* (Chicana)
- *Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz* (eds. Electa Arenal and Amanda Powel.). *The Answer / La Respuesta*, Including a Selection of Poems

## **Class Grading and Requirements:**

**Class Attendance and Participation (25 points):** The success of this seminar depends on your regular attendance and active participation. A portion of your grade will be based on your insightful contributions to weekly discussions and on your ability to listen to the insightful contributions of your colleagues. Typed discussion questions also contribute to this portion of your grade (see weeks 11 and 16). Three missed seminars will result in a failing grade for the seminar.

**Seminar Facilitation (25 points):** During the course of the semester, you will facilitate one class session. In order to do this successfully, you will need to write a brief introduction to the material, craft discussion questions, and meet with the professor (with discussion questions in hand) one week prior to your facilitation. Please distribute and turn-in a 4-6 page introduction and discussion guide (use MLA or Chicago citations) to your professor and colleagues as part of your facilitation.

**Weekly Synopsis (10 points each):** Each Monday, with the exceptions of weeks 1, 7, 12, 16 (see schedule for details) you will turn in a two-paged, double-spaced, typed synopsis and evaluation of the assigned readings. This is not a book review, instead, it is a tool with which to think about what you have read before coming to seminar, and to provide you with a synopsis of key texts in Chicana/o Studies. Write-ups are due at the beginning of class. No late write-ups will be accepted.

**Book Review (50 points):** On **Friday**, week seven, you must turn in (via email) a book review that meets the following requirements:

- The book must be from the fields of Chicana/o or Latina/o Studies.
- The review must be publisher-ready.
- It must be crafted for a specific journal.
- It must focus on a book published no earlier than 2011.
- It must place the book within the context of a larger body of literature.

We will discuss book reviews in class during weeks one and four.

**Review or Research Essay (100 points):** Rough Drafts Due Friday March 22<sup>nd</sup> 3pm. Final Drafts due by noon, Monday April 29, 1:15pm.

Students may choose *one* of paper assignments:

- A) Write a 10-15 page *review essay* mapping a subfield of Chicana/o Studies (literature, history, feminism, education) and its significance to a specific project (i.e. treat it like the introduction to a dissertation).
- B) Write as 10-15 page Chicana/o Studies research paper on the approved topic of your choice. The finished project should be ready to present at an academic conference.

Assignment	Points	Percentage of Grade
Attendance/Participation	55	16%
Seminar Facilitation	25	7%
Weekly Synopsis	110	32%
Book Review	50	15%
Seminar Paper	100	29%
Totals	340	100%

### **Ground Rules for Class Discussion:**

**(Based on Lynn Weber Cannons’ “Fostering Positive Race, Class, and Gender Dynamics in the Classroom,” Women’s Studies Quarterly (1990).**

In AM ST 590, the class participation portion of your grade is not based on how much you talk, but on the quality of your participation in seminar and your skill in building an academic dialogue. The following ground rules will help you succeed in this portion of the course requirements.

1. Do not to blame ourselves for misinformation we have learned, but to accept responsibility for not repeating misinformation after we have learned otherwise.
2. When a colleague constructs an argument or question that is racist, sexist, abelist, homophobic, etc. – point out the structural problems of the argument.
3. Never demean or devalue what your colleagues have to say; this includes rolling eyes, passing notes in the middle of a discussion, etc. Such behavior will result in your being asked to leave the room and an absence for the day.
4. Listen attentively to your colleagues.
5. Encourage your colleagues to contribute to the conversation.

**Students with Disabilities:** Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Access Center. All accommodations **MUST** be approved through the Access Center (Washington Building, Room 217). Please stop by or call 509-335-3417 to make an appointment with an Access Advisor.

**Academic Integrity Policy:** Plagiarism or cheating of any kind on any assignment will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade for the assignment and a report to Student Conduct and the American Studies Program Director. (See the WSU handbook, Academic Dishonesty). If you are at any time unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, please see me.

**Emergency Notification System:** WSU has made an **emergency notification system** available for faculty, students and staff. Please register at myWSU with emergency contact information (cell, email, text, etc). You may have been prompted to complete emergency contact information when registering for classes on RONet. Please refer to the University emergency management website <http://oem.wsu.edu/emergencies> as well WSU ALERT <http://alert.wsu.edu> for information on WSU’s communication resources WSU will use to provide warning and notification for emergencies. The entire WSU safety plan can be found at <http://safetyplan.wsu.edu>.

## Schedule of Readings and Assignments

### Week One

#### Introduction to Readings in American Studies

Mon. Jan. 7

Introduction to colleagues, professor, and syllabus.

Discussion of book review formats and why book reviews are important.

Discussion, what is Chicana/o Studies?

### Week Two

#### What Matters: Periodization

Mon. Jan 14

**Read:** Acuña, Rodolfo F. *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, 7th ed.; C. Alejandra Elenes, "Reclaiming the Borderlands: Chicana/o Identity, Difference, and Critical Pedagogy," *Educational Theory* 47 no. 3 (1997): 359. Education Full Text Database.

Remember, no two-page write up today. Turn in a one-page write-up on Elenes, and an annotated timeline with six watersheds in Chicana/o history based on Acuña's text. Use citations and one-paragraph explanations of why you chose each particular watershed.

### Week Three: MLK Day

#### Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

Mon. Jan 21 (Class does not meet, post write-ups to Angel by Tuesday 5pm)

**Read:** Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz (eds. Electa Arenal and Amanda Powel.). *The Answer / La Respuesta*, Introduction to Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (lecture on Angel).

### Week Four

#### Standing on Shoulders

Mon. Jan 28

**Read:** Reyes, Barbara O. *Private Women, Public Lives: Gender and the Missions of the Californias*.

Antonia Castañeda, "Engendering the History of Alta California, 1769-1848," *California History* 76 no. 2/3 (1997): 230. JSTOR.

Updates on book reviews! (each student must introduce their text to the seminar)

### Week Five

#### Power of the Word

Mon. Feb 4

**Read:** Paredes, Américo. "With His Pistol in His Hand": A Border Ballad and Its Hero; José R. López Morín, "The Life and Early Works of Américo Paredes," *Western Folklore* 64 no. 1-2 (2005): 7-28 JSTOR.

**Week Six**  
**Traditional History: Chicano Style**

Mon. Feb 11

**Read:** Gómez Quiñones, Juan. *Chicano Politics: Reality and Promise, 1940-1990*; Richard A. García, "The Origins of Chicano Cultural Thought: Visions and Paradigms: Romano's Culturalism, Alurista's Aesthetics, and Acuña's Communalism," *California History* 74 no. 3 (1995): 290.

**Week Seven**

✓ **FINAL VERSIONS OF BOOK REVIEWS ARE DUE FRIDAY, 12 NOON (email)** ✓

Mon. Feb 18: President's Day: No Class today.

**Week Eight**  
**La Nueva Mestiza**

Mon. Feb 25

**Read:** Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/ La Frontera: La Nueva Mestiza*; Yvonne Yarbrow-Bejarano, "Gloria Anzaldúa's Borderlands/La Frontera: Cultural Studies, 'Difference,' and the Non-Unitary Subject," *Cultural Critique* No.28 (1994):5. JSTOR.

Optional: Emma Pérez, Gloria Anzaldúa: La Gran Nueva Mestiza" *Feminist Formations* 17 no. 2. Project Muse.

**Week Nine**  
**Decolonizing Our Histories/Decolonizing Our Now**

Mon. March 4

**Read:** Pérez, Emma. *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History*

**Week Ten**  
**Spring Break**

Mon. March 11 – 15th

**Week Eleven**  
**NACCS**

Mon. March 18

**Read:** Blackwell, Maylei. *Chicana Power: Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement*. Del Castillo, "La Visión Chicana" *Chicana Feminist Thought* (ed. García). NietoGomez, "Chicana Feminism," *Chicana Feminist Thought* (ed. García)

Profe @ NACCS: Post Synopsis to Angel by 5pm Monday (or email if you choose to meet)  
Email Rough Drafts of Final Papers by 3pm Friday March 22<sup>nd</sup>

**Week Twelve  
NACCS**

Mon. March 25 Class Does Not Meet on Monday

**Mandatory Conferences to review final essays Thursday and Friday**

**Week Thirteen  
Writing the Border**

Mon. April 1

**Read:** Akers Chacón, Justin and Mike Davis. *No One is Illegal: Fighting Racism and State Violence on the U.S. – Mexico Border*

**Week Fourteen**

Mon. April 8

**Read:** Castillo, Anna. *So Far From God*; Castillo, “The Watsonville Women’s Strike, 1986: A Case of Mexicana Activism,” in *Massacre of the Dreamers*.

**Week Fifteen**

**Mapping it (Acevedo and González should be read by now)**

Mon. April 15

**Read:** López, Marissa K. *Chicano Nations: The Hemispheric Origins of Mexican American Literature*

**Week Sixteen  
All about My Work**

Mon. April 22

**Read:** Marci R. McMahon, “Alma López California Fashions Slaves: Denaturalizing Domesticity, Labor, and Motherhood,” *Chicana/Latina Studies* 11 No.1 (2011): 158.

(No write-ups, bring two discussion questions about the article. Students will give brief 5-10 informal presentations on their final papers).

✓ **All Final Papers Are Due by 1:15 Monday April 29** ✓