Borderlands History: An Introduction
HIST 1305:001 CRN 31055
T/TH, 10:00 am – 11:20 am
LART 322

Instructor: RaeAnn Swanson-Evans
Office Hours: LART 320, T/Th 12:00 am – 2:00 pm or by appointment
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Course Description & Objectives:

This course focuses on defining “borderlands.” While much of the course will highlight the U.S.-Mexico border, it will also address the Canadian-U.S. border as well as the coastal borders. In addition, the course will cover borderlands that predate national borders, the transnational aspect of borderlands, and the many ways that migration and policing have expanded the borderlands. Topics significant to borderlands history will be discussed such as the Comanche empire, the U.S.-Mexico War, the Mexican Revolution, the Bracero Program, the growth of immigration policing. The readings and assignments explore themes of race, ethnicity, environment, migration, violence, compromise, citizenship, law, and labor. Students will come away with a sense of what it means to be a fronterizo living in the borderlands over time as well as understand the social, political, economic, and racial dynamics of the changing borderlands.

Readings:


Articles, book chapters, and websites as assigned

Course Requirements:

General Classroom Rules: Attendance is required. Missing class will result in missing assignments and in-class activities. Readings and assignments need to be completed by the beginning of class as noted in the Readings and Assignments section. Late assignments will be docked ten points for each late day. Participation is expected of all students and is an important aspect of this class. Makeup exams will only be available to those who have valid documentation
for missing a regular exam. Please speak with the instructor prior to planned events where you may miss an exam or in-class activity. **Student conduct** in this class should be fitting to a university classroom.

**In Class Activities and Response Papers:** **In class activities** will take place in class on the day they are listed in the Readings and Assignments section. An absence will result in all points lost unless prior arrangements have been made. **Response Papers** should discuss the main points of the readings assigned for the week and discuss how they contributed to your understanding of borderlands. They should be one page double-spaced and be size 12 Times New Roman font. Response papers will be turned in on Thursdays at the beginning of class, but they will be accepted Tuesday if there is no class on Thursday. Response papers will aid in class discussion. You only have to turn in 10 and they are worth 25 points each.

**Academic Honesty:** Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this classroom. Using any work that is not your own without proper citation qualifies as plagiarism. If you are found to be cheating or plagiarizing, you will be subject to disciplinary action. According to sections 1.3.1 of the UT Regents’ Rules and Regulations, “It is the official policy of the University that all suspected cases or acts of alleged scholastic dishonesty must be referred to the Dean of Students for investigation and appropriate disposition. It is contrary to University policy for a faculty member to assign a disciplinary grade such as an “F” or a zero to an assignment, test, examination, or other course work as a sanction for admitted or suspected scholastic dishonesty…” In short, anyone caught cheating will be reported to the Dean of Students.

**Students with Disabilities:** Accommodations are available for students with special needs. Please see me personally before or after classes during the first week to discuss any accommodations that you may need. Students need to contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) in the East Union Building, Room 106 within the first two weeks of classes. The CASS can also be reached by phone: (915) 747-5148 voice or via email: cass@utep.edu or via its website: http://sa.utep.edu/cass/

**Grading:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading</th>
<th>Grade Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Class Activities (5)- 250</td>
<td>900-1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Papers (10)- 250</td>
<td>800-899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm- 150</td>
<td>700-799</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam- 150</td>
<td>600-699</td>
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<tr>
<td>Borderlands Essay- 200</td>
<td>Below 599</td>
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**Extra Credit Opportunities:** Students can complete up to two extra credit assignments on different topics. The professor will provide a list of movies and TV shows (below) based on historical events in borderlands history. Students can earn up to 25 points per extra credit assignment by watching a movie or TV shows from the provided list and writing a two-page essay that summarizes the movie/show and describes how accurate or inaccurate the depiction of the borderlands, the historical event, or the time period was by using specific examples from readings and lectures. Be critical- did they tell the whole story? Was the movie biased? How did they cover borderland themes? The format of the assignment must be double spaced, times new
roman 12-point font with one-inch margins or points will be deducted. The final day to turn in extra credit will be Wednesday, December 4th (the last day of class) at the beginning of class.

Movies and TV Shows:

**Texas Rangers (2001)** - A group of Texas Rangers patrols the U.S.-Mexico border after the Civil War


**Hostiles (2017)** - In 1892 a U.S. Army officer transports a Cheyenne Chief from New Mexico to his ancestral home in Montana while anticipating Comanche attacks

**My Family (1995)** - Follows three generations of a family from 1920s to 1960s

**Zoot Suit (1981)** - Musical film adaptation of the Broadway play that depicts the Zoot Suit Riots of the 1940s in LA


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**La Bamba (1987)** - Biography of Ritchie Valens

**Salt of the Earth (1954)** - A family and community of miners who go on strike in New Mexico in the 1950s

**90 Millas (2005)** - Story of a Cuban family trying to make it to Florida

**Cesar Chavez (2014)** - Biography of Cesar Chavez and his work with United Farm Workers

**El Norte (1983)** - The film follows the journey of a brother and sister who flee the civil war in Guatemala to the United States

**Selena (1997)** - Biography of Selena Quintanilla-Pérez, famous Mexican-American singer

**Desierto (2015)** - Migrants are attacked by a vigilante at the border


**Orange is the New Black (2019)** *must watch both episodes*- “And Brown is the New Black” - Season 7, Episode 3 - The episode chronicles Maritza and Blanca’s time in a detention center and Season 7, Episode 11 “God Bless America” - This episode follows ICE detainees as they confront the legal system

**Readings and Assignments:**

**Week One: Introduction**

Tuesday, August 27th: Introduction to the Class

Thursday, August 29th: Introduction to Borderlands


**In-Class Activity #1: Defining Borderlands (Round One)**

**Week Two: Spanish Borderlands**

Tuesday, September 3rd:
- **Readings:** OAH Magazine of History V. 14, No. 4 (Summer 2000): The Spanish Frontier in North America. Available through Jstore:

Thursday, September 5th:
- **Readings:** OAH Magazine of History V. 14, No. 4 (Summer 2000): The Spanish Frontier in North America, continued. Available through Jstore:
  - Amy Turner Bushness, “Missions and Moral Judgement.” 20-23
  - Antonia I. Casañeda, “Hispanas and Hispanos in a Mestizo Society.” 29-33

**Week Three: Indigenous Borderlands**

Tuesday, September 10th

Thursday, September 12th
- **In-Class Activity #2- Interpreting Primary Sources**

**Week Four: Slavery, War, and Demarcation in the Borderlands**

Tuesday, September 17th
- **Readings:** Sean Kelley, “‘Mexico in His Head’: Slavery and the Texas-Mexico Border, 1810-1860,” Journal of Social History 37, 3 (Spring 2004): 709-723. Available through Jstore
Thursday, September 19th

**Week Five: Infrastructure, Economic, and Demographic Changes in the Borderlands**

Tuesday, September 24th

Thursday, September 26th
**In-Class Activity #3- Crafting an Essay**

**Week Six: Pacific Borderlands**

Tuesday, October 1st
Begin Film: Chinese Exclusion Act, PBS Documentary

Thursday, October 3rd
Film: Chinese Exclusion Act, PBS Documentary

**Week Seven: Canadian Borderlands**

Tuesday, October 8th

Thursday, October 10th

**Week Eight: Revolution and Public Health in the Borderlands**

Tuesday October 15th
Readings: Kelly Lytle Hernandez, “Scorpion’s Tale,” Ch. 4 of *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and The Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771-1965* (Chapel Hill: The
Thursday, October 17th

Midterm Exam

Week Nine: Rise of Immigration Control Enforcement

Tuesday, October 22nd


Thursday, October 24th

Readings: Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *Migra!* 152-234

Week Ten: Environmental Borderlands

Tuesday, October 29th


Thursday, October 31st


Film: Birders, Netflix Documentary

Week Eleven: Labor and Activism in the Borderlands

Tuesday, November 12th


Thursday, November 15th

Film: Dolores, PBS Documentary

Due: Turn in topics for your borderlands essay
Week Twelve: Negotiating Border Spaces

Tuesday, November 5th

Thursday, November 7th
In-Class Activity #4: Expanding Border

Week Thirteen: Holiday
T/TH November 19th & 21st- No Class

Week Fourteen: Modern Borderlands

Tuesday, November 26th

Thursday, November 28th

Week Fifteen: The Wall and the “Migration Crisis”

Tuesday, December 3rd
Explore USA Today’s interactive website “The Wall” https://www.usatoday.com/border-wall/ Choose at least four “stories” to read and take notes on. Come to class ready to discuss the modern borderlands
In-Class Activity #5: Defining Borderlands (Round 2)
Final Day: This is the last day for response papers and extra credit assignments
Thursday, December 5th

**Due:** Borderland Essays
Review for Final Exam

**Final Exam:** Tuesday, December 10th 10:00am