United State-Mexico International Border (CCS and LATAM 355)
Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies
Center for Latin American Studies
Spring 2015
Schedule Number for CCS 355: 20504
Schedule Number for LATAM 355: 21787

Professor Norma Iglesias-Prieto
Class Days: Tuesday
Class Time: 4:00 to 6:40 PM
Class Location: SH 123

Contact information:
Office hours: M & T 12:00-15:15 PM and
W. by Appointment
Office Location: AL 348
e-mail: niglesia@mail.sdsu.edu (not through
blackboard)
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Course Description from Catalogue:
History, culture, economics, and politics of US/Mexico border region. Theories and policy issues surrounding
development of region; local regional problems and major agencies, institutions, organizations addressing these
problems.

General Course Description:
The U.S.-Mexican border, one of the most dynamic and complex regions in the world, is also an excellent space
for the analysis of the social, economic, and cultural contrasts between two nations. This international border is
recognized as a social laboratory, since it allows us to grasp and understand many of the trends of the development
models in the world. This border—as others found in the so-called “Political Equator”—is a place where
postindustrial societies meet less developed ones. Relations between the United States and Mexico are defined by
an asymmetry, but also by interdependence and integration in areas such as the environment, economy, politics,
and culture. Borders are not only physical or geopolitical (real demarcations of Nation States); they are also
symbolic and have completely different connotations and meaning, depending on which side subjects reside and
their life experiences. In this course, we will discuss the importance of this border for Americans (in general),
Chicanos (in particular), and Mexicans (on both sides of the border).

This course intends to guide students from a transborder perspective into the multidisciplinary and critical
study of the U.S.-Mexican border focusing on five aspects or dimensions of the reality: (1) cultural processes;
(2) environment and space; (3) industry (maquiladora); (4) and immigration.

Basic for the course are students’ participation and class discussion on the assigned readings, lived experiences as
border or transborder residents, as well as any daily and pertinent information from mass media.
Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Define borders from a geopolitical and symbolic perspective.
- Discuss the importance of geopolitical borders in the world, particularly the U.S.-Mexico one, and recognize issues that are playing a central role in their re-conceptualization
- Identify central problems, tensions and potentialities of the U.S.-Mexican border.
- Identify main concepts and theories for the study of the U.S.-Mexican border.
- Discuss differences among border and transborder perspectives
- Identity the importance of cultural and artistic practices in the redefinition of border and transborder practices and perspectives

General Education Goals:

This course fulfills G.E. Requirements (Explorations of Human Experience) in the Social and Behavioral Sciences. Upon completing this area of foundations, you will be able to:

- Explore and recognize basic terms, concepts, and domains of the social and behavioral sciences;
- Comprehend diverse theories and methods of the social and behavioral sciences;
- Identify human behavioral patterns across space and time and discuss their interrelatedness and distinctiveness;
- Enhance your understanding of the social world through the application of conceptual frameworks from the social and behavioral sciences to first-hand engagement with contemporary issues.

Required Readings:

Textbooks (available at SDSU Bookstore):


Bonansinga, Kate. Curating at the Edge. Artists Respond to the U.S./Mexico Border. 2014.

Articles (available on Blackboard and/or websites):


Carrillo and Lara. “Mexican Maquiladoras. New Capabilities of Coordination and the Emergence of New Generation of Companies.” (PDF in blackboard)

Dear, Michael. “Learning from La Línea” (PDF on Blackboard).


Suggested Readings:


Blackboard:

This course uses Blackboard, a web-based course aid. To access Blackboard go to: [http://blackboard.sdsu.edu/](http://blackboard.sdsu.edu/). Blackboard contains an announcement page that I will use to post information, midterm and final study guides, some extra reading assignments, and lecture notes (these after the class). For example, if a class were to be canceled, students will likely find this out about first through Blackboard. Any technical questions regarding Blackboard should be directed to SDSU’s Instructional Technology Services department. Its e-mail is scc@rohan.sdsu.edu and website is: [http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/dept/its](http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/dept/its)

Course Requirements:

- Regular and consistent class attendance (students are responsible for signing attendance sheet every class meeting)
- Complete required reading(s) in time to discuss them in class
- Complete all summaries (cards) on time and in required format
- Complete all quizzes, homework, and in-class collective assignments
- Participate in class (very important for class dynamics)
- One written assignment presented on date specified
- Complete a mental map on date specified
- Midterm exam
- Final exam

Class Dynamics:

The dynamics of the class are essentially those of a traditional lecture. In order to make the dynamics more active and engaging, some videos will be presented; we will also hold group exercises, collective discussions, and presentations by both the class students and guest speakers.

Grades:

Final grade (total of 1,000 points) will be determined through a combination of criteria that includes the following:

1. Summary of assigned readings (200 points, 20 cards, 10 points each)
2. Homework and in-class collective assignments (90 points)
3. Paper – 1,200 words (250 points)
4. Midterm exam (200 points)
5. Border/lands mental map (60 points)
6. Final exam (200 points)

Grading Scale:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>950–1000</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>900–949</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>870–899</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>840–869</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>800–839</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>770–799</td>
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<td>740–769</td>
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<td>D-</td>
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<td>0–599</td>
<td>F</td>
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Summary of Assigned Readings Grade Criterion:

Reading assignments are central for the course. In order to guarantee reading and comprehension of these readings, students will bring a one-page summary of each assigned reading. Around 2/3 of the page will be the summary of the reading (most important arguments, ideas, data, etc.) and the other 1/3 of the page will be a list of the main concepts and definitions given in each reading. The one-page summary will help the lecture and discussion. I will only accept printed summaries. Some one-page summaries will not be graded and returned to the students on time; therefore, the student is responsible for keeping a copy of each. Each card must have the following information: Student’s name, summary number, date, class number and section, complete citation of the source (MLA format), a summary, and a list and definitions of main concepts from the reading (see example). Summaries of assigned readings will comprise 200 points (20% of total grade). There are 20 one-page summaries for this semester, so you will get a maximum of 10 points for each summary that is completed on time. There will be points reduced on incomplete, late, and/or incorrect summaries.

Homework and In-Class Collective Assignments:

Students will have a group assignment. Those written assignments will represent 9% of the grade (90 points). So, don’t miss any classes because you then miss the opportunity for those assignments/points (some exceptions with written justification). Groups will be formed in class and will include from five to six persons per group. In some cases, instead of the group assignment there will be a quiz or personal homework.

Midterm and Final Exams:

These will consist of short essays about the different topics discussed in the course. Students will answer the topic questions using information from the readings, lectures, videos, and group discussions. (Midterm Exam: WEEK 7, 03/11) (Final Exam: WEEK 15, 5/06)

Mental Map:

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Extra space for Summary

Main ideas of the text and main data

Main Concepts and definitions

ASYMMETRY: Pattern but not in equal conditions. Power relations. Relation between a highly developed country and a less-developed one.

SOVEREIGNTY: The notion that any community of people there should be only and source of authority. The recognition of a supreme power of the state. The idea that the state was the ultimate source of authority, law, and legitimate force with its boundaries.

BORDER: A boundary of a state or of the settled part of a country; a frontier district. Concept ideas or groups of items (tangible or intangible) that share specific common features or characteristics.
This assignment consists of the student drawing a map that illustrates how she/he experiences and lives any geopolitical border and/or multiples borderlands/borderism. The student’s challenge is to express on a poster board of about 21 x 32 inches his/her own perceptions of the space and his/her uses and meanings. Students have to graphically respond to: how do you know and use the border and the transborder space? How do you perceive this “side” and “the other side”? What are your experiences of the border? How do you feel when you cross? What are the main places and spaces that you travel through, visit, and use? What memories do you have and what is their importance in your daily life? You have to provide information about the attributes that you associate with different locations of the border or borderlands. (MENTAL MAP DUE DATE: WEEK 14, 4/29)

Paper:
The essay will be a take-home assignment using supplemental texts and at least three sources to support your critical analysis. The use of these sources should be evident in the text. In the case of Internet sources, it is important to value their academic seriousness. The essay will be a critical analysis of border reality, using your own experience(s) as a border or transborder resident as the main source of information. The objective of the essay is to characterize border life. In order to move from description (a simple journal) to an analytical level (a critical essay), you must support and explain your arguments and ideas by using data, concepts, and theory. In other words, you have to conceptualize your experience. The purpose of the three (minimum) academic sources is precisely to provide you with data, concepts, and theory in order to explain your experience(s). (PAPER DUE: WEEK 11: 04/08)

Paper Structure:
(A) Title (it should be creative and summarize the content of the paper). (B) Introductory paragraph (objective and relevance), body (development of the main idea or the central topic), and conclusions. (C) Include proper quotations/citations of relevant sources. (D) Bibliography and/or notes. (E) Length of the document (5 pages, double space, maximum 1,200 words).

Paper Grade Criterion:
Extra Credit Policy:
There will be extra credit opportunities in the course. Each student could earn a maximum of 50 points in extra credits, and each extra credit assignment could get a maximum of 25 points (depending on quality of written report). In order to earn the points, students have to write (type) one or two pages of critical comments per extra credit.

Cheating and Plagiarism:
There is zero tolerance in this class for cheating and plagiarism. Plagiarism can be described as taking another person’s ideas or writings (as well as material from the Web) and presenting them as your own through unethical or unauthorized behavior. If you quote material—either paraphrasing or direct quotes—you must follow appropriate MLA formatting. Cheating includes any unethical behavior while completing any type of assignment. Plagiarism and cheating will result in a grade reduction and/or course failure. Both will not be tolerated in this class. For more information, visit current SDSU General Catalog or go to [http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/srr/cheating-plagiarism.html](http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/srr/cheating-plagiarism.html)

**Laptops in the Classroom:**

The use of laptops is allowed, but strictly for taking class notes. If student is found using the laptop for anything else (chatting, surfing the web, shopping, etc.), he/she will be penalized 25 points. In addition, the student will no longer be allowed to use a laptop for the remainder of the semester. Any other electronics, including cell phones, must be turned off and put away; these are not to be placed on top of the desk.

**Student with Disabilities:**

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need special accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.

**Weekly Schedule (Assigned Readings):**

### WEEK 6: 3/03
**Border Environment and Sustainable Development.**


### WEEK 7: 3/10
**Midterm Exam**

### WEEK 8: 3/17
**Border and Industry. Maquiladoras I.**

Video: Jalisco Silicon Valley, *Work Rhythms*.

Reading Assignment: (Card #11) Carrillo and Lara. “Mexican Maquiladoras. New Capabilities of Coordination and the Emergence of New Generation of Companies” (PDF on blackboard). (Card #12) Iglesias-Prieto, Norma. *Beautiful Flowers of the Maquiladora*. Students with last name from A-L (Introduction and Chapters 1 to 4) and last names from M-Z (Chapters 5 to 8).

### WEEK 9: 3/24
**Border and Immigration.**


### WEEK 10: 3/31
**No class Spring Break**

### WEEK 11: 4/07
**(PAPER DUE)**

**Border Culture. Definition and Main Characterization.**


### WEEK 12: 4/14
**Border Art.**


### WEEK 13: 4/21
**Border Culture and Social Representations**

Iglesias-Prieto, Norma. (Card #20) Bonansinga, Kate. Chapters 10 & 11. Pp. 175-211

### WEEK 14: 4/28
**(MENTAL MAP DUE)**

**Mental Map Presentations (By Students)**

Review.

### WEEK 15: 5/05
**Final Exam**

### WEEK 16: 5/12
**Class Conclusion**

NOTE: The above schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change.