English 2540.501: Introduction to Chicana/Chicano Literature

Fall 2026
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Asynchronous/Online
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Office Hours: MW 8:00AM – 10:00AM and by appointment

Course Overview

This course will introduce literary studies through Chicano/Chicana Literature, canonical and contemporary. We will examine and interrogate how texts form, circulate, and mitigate by focusing on several zones of contact and discussing the ways in which major and minor genres - folklore, fables, and children's stories, short stories, historical documentaries, poetry, and film – form in relation to Chicana/Chicano culture, literature, and identity. Focusing on how literature produces meaning through the interconnected relations of different Chicano/Chicana artists, historians, and writers, we will build a literary vocabulary necessary for critical literary analysis, supplemented by theoretical literary methods.

First, we will explore multiple literary genres and criticism that will aid you in a robust literary analysis and theoretical reading, as well as historical, cultural, social, and political standing of the texts. Second, we will examine how the complexities of Plot, Character, Setting, POV, Symbolism and Theme inform literary readings and take into consideration a literary history of culture, politics, production, and form.

The class requirements will be in the form of journals, discussions, three short papers, 1-on-1 Zoom meetings, and a final project.

Required Texts

Selections on UNM Canvas: Selections from all texts below will be provided in a folder for their corresponding week. There is no need to purchase the physical texts or rent the films online unless you really want/prefer them.

Rudolfo Anaya, *Bless Me, Ultima*
Mi Familia/My Family (1995)
Blood In Blood Out (1992)
La Llorona - Joe Hayes (text and video)
La Malinche - by Francisco Serrano
Selections from Sandra Cisneros, *Loose Woman* and *Woman Hollering Creek*
Gloria Anzaldua, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Meztiza*
Selections from *Chicano Folklore*
Crash Course Introduction to Native American History with Che Jim
Selections from Jimmy Santiago Baca, *Immigrants in Our Own Land*
Choloani and *Mexica* - Prayers

Course Objectives and Outcomes

1) Students will be able to distinguish among the major literary genres, recognizing form and distinguishing elements between them.
2) Students will be able to perform a robust and concise literary reading that is that engages with the text on a critical level, not only in in-class discussions but graded writing as well.
3) Students will learn multiple methods of interpretation and analysis, both textual (elements the text uses to create meaning) and contextual (elements that are outside the text, but which also influence the analysis. Ex: biographical, historical, cultural, socio-political, etc.).
4) Students will learn basic literary theory that will aid in the reading of texts.
5) Students will be able to construct effective written arguments with claims and evidence.
6) Students will be able to gather, incorporate and interpret secondary source material in their writing using MLA format.

Expectations for the Class

• Read EVERYTHING for the assigned class session. There is a lot of reading in this class and you need to maintain a rigorous reading schedule to stay caught up.
• Arrive to class with a specific passage/scene/stanza from the literary text that you can present to the class in a critical manner. Basically, have something to say about ONE passage.
• If you have any issues (academic or personal) or need anything from me, please come see me during office hours or schedule an appointment with me.
• Have regular access to a computer with a reliable Internet connection and a PDF reader.
• Turn in original work (complete the work yourself and follow the essay guidelines). Make your use of sources clear through proper citation. (See extended note on AI Use below)
• Take intellectual risks with the texts in question.

Specific Course and Program Requirements for ENGL 2540

- **Journal Responses (100 points total/10 points for each response)** - There will be ten (10) short journal responses throughout the semester. These will usually align with the discussion readings or assignments in some way, and are designed to make sure you are keeping up with the readings, discussions, and assignments. Don't worry about being formal or academic in your journals. These are a space to air your thoughts about the material and the assignments, as well as any obstacles you may be having in the course. We can always talk about things from your journal in our 1-on-1 Zoom meetings.
- **Discussions (300 points total /30 points for each discussion)** - There will be ten (10) discussions throughout the semester. For these discussions, you may respond to the readings with the prompts provided (usually I'll provide you with three to five ideas to get you started) or respond with an idea of your own! Then, respond to at least two of your classmate's posts with your thoughts. These discussions are designed to be informal and I encourage you to talk with your classmates and learn from them. Please keep all discussions respectful.

- **Three (3) Short Literary Papers (300 points total/100 points each)** – In addition to your major research literary project, you will complete three short papers that will be 2 pages each. You will have options for each paper. I have listed the due dates for the short essays on the class schedule below. Each essay should be completed in MLA format. The three options areas as followed:

  1) Close Reading: For this option, you will choose a brief selection from the text in question and analyze it for form and content (no outside sources).
  2) Historical/Social Context: For this option, you will need to do some outside research and present an argument about the text in question that relates directly to its positioning within its historical and/or socio-political moment or context, or how aspects of its historical context relate to our contemporary understanding of the text.
  3) Theoretical: For this option, you will do a reading of the text in question through a theoretical lens that we have went over in class.

- **1-on-1 Zoom meetings (100 points total/50 points each):** We will have two weeks during the semester where you must schedule a meeting with me. One of these weeks is the week of Labor Day/September 7th. The other week is the week of November 30th. I will send out a sign up sheet when these dates get closer, we not have assignments or readings due that weeks and we won't usually have Discussions.

- **Final Project (200 points):** You will have three choices for your final project:

  1) A Research Paper of 4-6 pages (~3000 words). You will need to turn in an abstract of the paper and an annotated bibliography before the final paper.

  2) A Digital Memorial: A multimedia Essay using a separate software like PowerPoint, Prezi, Slides, Adobe Spark, etc. This will include choosing an issue related to American Literature, choosing five visual media assets related to the topic, 2000 words of text, a final digital exposition, and a works cited page.

  3) Archive Dive: This will include finding one online archive regarding Chicano/Chicana Literature to look at and analyze the content, crafting a well-supported historical/literary argument, and create an archival presentation of 2000 words of text. (If you do this project, I can help you find an archive)

FOR EACH OF THESE OPTIONS: You can use your short literary papers from class as the basis /inspiration or this final project. You will also need to write up a short 1-2 page reflection about your final project and your progress in the class.

Grading Standard: There are 1000 points possible in this class.

100 (Journals) + 300 (Discussions) + 300 (Short Literary Papers) + 100 (Zooms) + 200 (Final Project) = 1000 possible points.
Final grades will be determined on a traditional percentage system, with the appropriate plus or minus sign: 100-90% = A, 89-
80% = B, 79-70% = C, 69-60% = D, 59% and below = F.

Policies and Procedures

Late Papers

I do not accept late assignments unless you speak with me on Zoom and make arrangements with me two weeks prior to the due date.
There's a lot of reading and writing in this course, so please don't let yourself fall behind—it will be very hard to catch up.

Accessibility and Special Needs

In accordance with University Policy 2310 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to the instructor's attention, as I am not legally permitted to inquire. Students who may require assistance in emergency evacuations should contact the instructor as to the most appropriate procedures to follow. Contact Accessibility Resource Center at 277-3506 or arcsrvs@unm.edu for additional information.
UNM is committed to providing courses that are inclusive and accessible for all participants. As your instructor, it is my objective to facilitate an accessible classroom setting, in which students have full access and opportunity. If you are experiencing physical or academic barriers, or concerns related to mental health, physical health and/or COVID-19, please consult with me after class, via email/phone or during office hours. You are also encouraged to contact Accessibility Resource Center at arcsrvs@unm.edu or by phone 277-3506.

Title IX

Title IX prohibitions on sex discrimination include various forms of sexual misconduct, such as sexual assault, rape, sexual harassment, domestic and dating violence, and stalking. Current UNM policy designates instructors as required reporters, which means that if instructors are notified (outside of classroom activities) about any Title IX violations, they must report this information to the Title IX coordinator. However, the American Association of University Professors' (AAUP) "Statement on Professional Ethics" requires that Professors protect students' academic freedom and "respect[s] the confidential nature of the relationship between professor and student." Therefore, as a Professor I have pledged to honor student confidentiality and will strive to respect your wishes regarding reporting; I will only report with your consent. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted and would like to receive support and academic advocacy, there are numerous confidential routes available to you. For example, you can contact the Women's Resource Center, the LGBTQ Resource Center, Student Health and Counseling (SHAC), or LoboRESPECT. LoboRESPECT can be contacted on

their 24-hour crisis line, (505) 277-2911 and online at loborespect@unm.edu. You can receive non-confidential support and learn more about Title IX through the Title IX Coordinator at (505) 277-5251 and http://oeo.unm.edu/title-ix/. Reports to law enforcement can be made to UNM Police Department at (505) 277-224.

Undocumented Students

As an educator, I fully support the rights of undocumented students to an education and to live free from the fear of deportation. I pledge that I will not disclose the immigration status of any student who shares this information with me unless required by a judicial warrant, and I will work with students who require immigration-related accommodations.

Course Materials Access (for Albuquerque-based undergraduate students)

Your required digital course materials are available through My Shelf in Canvas. To access them, log in to Canvas on a browser, click Account in the left navigation menu, and select My Shelf. If your course requires physical materials, such as textbooks or lab/studio kits, they can be picked up at the UNM Bookstore on central campus. To simplify access to your course materials, you are automatically enrolled in the Complete option of the UNM Course Materials Access program at a flat rate of $279 per semester, which will appear on your Bursar account. The Complete option includes all required course materials for your Albuquerque campus courses, including any graduate-level courses you may be taking. (Course materials for branch campuses are billed and provided separately.) If you prefer to purchase only selected digital or print course materials, or if you wish to opt out of the program entirely, you may change your enrollment through My Shelf in Canvas. Changes must be made by the Registrar's Last Day to Drop Without a "W" Grade to receive a 100% tuition refund. Additional information about cost and the options for Complete (automatic enrollment), Select (take action), and Opt-out (take action) can be found in this video and at the Course Materials Access website

Respectful Conduct Expectations

I am committed to building with you a positive classroom environment in which everyone can learn. I reserve the right to intervene and enforce standards of respectful behavior when classroom conduct is inconsistent with University expectations [and/or classroom community agreements]. Interventions and enforcement may include but are not limited to required meetings to discuss classroom expectations, written notification of expectations, and/or removal from a class meeting. Removal from a class meeting will result in an unexcused absence. [Insert number] or more unexcused absences may result in permanent removal and a drop from the course (see attendance policy). The University of New Mexico ensures freedom of academic inquiry, free expression and open debate, and a respectful campus through adherence to the following policies: D75: Classroom Conduct, Student Code of Conduct, University Policy 2240 – Respectful Campus, University Policy 2210 – Campus Violence.

Thriving and Finding Support

Students are especially successful at UNM when they take advantage of support and get involved in campus and academic life. The Student Life tab on the student and instructor MyUNM login

page provides direct links to well-being resources, including financial capability, mental health, food, jobs, and resource centers. The Student Life tab on MyUNM will help you identify academic resources like peer tutoring and opportunities like study abroad. You can contact academic advisors and resource advisors for information and guidance via Student Hub on MyUNM. I look forward to providing you with information about academic opportunities related to our class and to helping you find support resources.

Responsible Learning and Academic Honesty

Cheating and plagiarism (academic dishonesty) are often driven by desperation, lack of time, or lack of knowledge about how to identify a source. Communicate with me and ask for help, even at the last minute, rather than risking your academic career by committing academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty involves claiming that work created by another source is your own original work. It is a Student Code of Conduct violation that can lead to a disciplinary procedure. When you use a resource in work submitted for this class, document how you used it and distinguish clearly between your original work and the material taken from the resource.

This course is meant to help you develop and demonstrate key knowledge and skills without the support of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools for submitted work. Using generative AI to complete submitted coursework in this course will interfere with the advantages in learning and understanding that this course offers you. You are expected to complete submitted work without any generative AI assistance. Prohibited generative AI use includes tools such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot, Grammarly's generative AI features, AI image generators, AI video or audio generators, AI code generators, AI paraphrasing tools, AI presentation generators, AI design tools, and similar technologies.

The purpose of this course policy is educational, not punitive. The assignments in this course are aligned with specific learning processes and outcomes that support your future learning and expertise. Submitting AI-generated or AI-assisted in this course is inconsistent with course expectations and may violate UNM's academic integrity standards and Student Code of Conduct. If AI use is suspected, I will use submitted coursework, assignment directions, conversations with you about your work and process, and this syllabus to determine whether academic misconduct occurred.

AI Uses Not Permitted in This Class

These uses are inconsistent with human-centered and trust-centered learning because they misrepresent student work, bypass the learning process, compromise privacy, fabricate evidence, or create risks to others.

As a student in my class, you may **NOT** use generative AI to:

- Violate course instructions;
- Complete an assignment in place of your own work;
- Generate a signification portion of the draft and submit it as your own;
- Submit AI-generated or AI-assisted work without acknowledgment;
- Use AI to bypass a learning process the assignment is designed to develop;

• Complete quizzes, exams, reflections, clinical tasks, fieldwork, or other assessments when human work is required;
• Summarize or analyze assigned materials without reading, viewing, listening to, or otherwise engaging with those materials and ideas yourself;
• Rely on AI-generated images, "art," citations, legal claims, scientific claims, medical claims, historical claims, or factual assertions without independent verification;
• Fabricate citations, sources, quotations, data, images, visual evidence, audio, video, or other media;
• Create misleading, deceptive, or manipulated images, figures, charts, audio, video, or visual evidence;
• Generate or substantially alter images, slides, diagrams, figures, code, audio, video, or other media and submit them as unaided work when the assignment requires you to do the work independently;
• Create, edit, imitate, or manipulate images, voices, likenesses, or identifiable attributes of real people without explicit permission;
• Enter private, confidential, regulated, or sensitive information into unapproved AI tools, including student records, health information, research participant data, confidential institutional data, private chat logs, nonpublic community data, or images and recordings of real people.

TL;DR: USE AI = AUTOMATIC FAIL

Part of this class' purpose is to engage with history, language, and identity. Another part of what this class will do is help you to develop your critical thinking and discernment skills, express your thoughts and ideas coherently and legibly, and learn research methods to find answers for the deep questions you have.

AI cannot do any of this for you.

The answers are within you.

They always have been.

Course Schedule ENGL 2540 Introduction to Chicano/Chicana Literature

Date	Readings	Discussions	Assignments
Week 1 — August 17	Syllabus and Get Familiar with Canvas	**Discussion #1** Introductions/ Introducciónes!	Syllabus Quiz and Canvas Quiz
Week 2 — August 24	Journal #1	**Discussion #2** What interests you?	
Week 3 — August 31	Journal #2	**Discussion #3** Language and Storytelling	Introduction to Assignment #1
Week 4 — September 7 (Labor Day on Monday, DON'T WORK on Monday!)	Journal #3	**Discussion #4** La Historia or a Short Version of a Long Story	Work on Assignment #1
Week 5 — September 14	Journal #4	**Discussion #5** Choloani, Mexica, and What it Means to be a Cholo	Work on Assignment #1, Attend Office Hours with Mr. C
Week 6 — September 21	Journal #5	**Discussion #6** La Malinche and La Llorona	**Assignment #1 DUE FRIDAY!**
Week 7 — September 28	Journal #5	**Discussion #7** Chicana Literature	Introduction to Assignment #2 and Introduction to Final Project
Week 8 — October 5th (FALL BREAK DON'T WORK THURS/FRI!)	Journal #6	**No Discussions**	Reading Quiz
Week 9 — October 12	Journal #7	**Discussion #8** Música Chicana	**Assignment #2 DUE FRIDAY!**
Week 10 — October 19	Journal #8		Introduction to Assignment #3
Week 11 — October 26	Journal #9	**Discussion #9** Cinema Discussion #1	
Week 12 — November 2		**Discussion #10** Cinema Discussion #2	
Week 13 — November 16	Journal #10	Discussion #11 - OPTIONAL, final project workspace	
Week 14 — November 23 (Thxgvg Break, DON'T WORK THIS WEEK!)	No Readings	No Discussions	No Assignments Due

Date	Readings	Discussions	Assignments
Week 15 — November 30	1-on-1 Zooms, no readings	1-on-1 Zooms, no discussions	1-on-1 Zooms, Work on your Final Projects!
Week 16 — December 7	No Readings	No Discussions	**Final Projects DUE FRIDAY DECEMBER 11!**