



Toddler peering over border wall by French artist JR; two U.S. border patrol officers stare back at him (npr.org)

History 248
Latinos en las Américas
University of Oregon
Fall 2021 (CRN 17843)
Profesora Julie M. Weise

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24-hr response on weekdays,
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MCK 151
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This course will introduce students to the historical experiences of Latino/a/x groups, while increasing their comfort with and appreciation for a bilingual English-Spanish environment. We spend the most time discussing the numerically largest group (especially in Oregon), Mexicans and Mexican Americans, while comparing and connecting their experiences to those of Caribbean and Central American migrants and citizens.

The things you will learn

The course begins with brief discussions of the initial colonization of the Americas, and then spends most of the quarter discussing the period 1800 to the present. We will investigate the major themes in Latina/o/x history. These include: colonialism, race and racialization, migration, identity, labor, politics, and culture. Students will analyze Latina/o/x migration history through the lens of not only U.S. history but also the histories of Latin American

nations, thus gaining familiarity with the practice of transnational analysis. Finally, the course will consider the histories of Mexicans alongside those of Central Americans and Caribbean migrants, particularly Puerto Ricans and Cubans. The focus on these four groups will enable us to discuss diverse aspects of the Latina/o/x historical experience: Legal inclusion/exclusion (Mexicans), U.S. citizenship and colonialism (Puerto Ricans), and political exile (Cubans and Central Americans).

The study of Latina/o/x immigration has particular urgency in 2021. The presidency of Donald Trump called historians (a designation all students have for the duration of this quarter!) to pay particular attention to the roots and durability of anti-immigrant movements in U.S. history, as well as the ways that Latina/o/xs and their allies have fought against them. Similarly, the disproportionate impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Latina/o/x communities calls upon us to ask why these communities are overrepresented in service, agriculture, and other “essential” professions, and among those without stable health insurance.

This course employs a bilingual pedagogy that will allow students to build their proficiency in Spanish while studying the content outlined above. It is most appropriate for students who have at least basic familiarity with Spanish: two years of high school study or one year of university study, or who grew up in a bilingual household. Fluency in Spanish is neither expected nor required. Indeed, one of the aims of the course is to increase all students’ comfort with the practice of switching between languages as needed, as well as their appreciation for the ways that historical Latina/o/xs have engaged in this very same practice of “code-switching.”

The skills you will learn

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

Liberal Arts/General Education outcomes:

- Write a convincing paragraph with thesis, evidence, and interpretation
- Distinguish between important and unimportant information to take appropriate notes on lecture and discussion

History outcomes:

- Critically analyze a primary historical source
- Identify and explain the historian’s argument in a secondary source
- Formulate and defend their own positions in Latinx/a/o history debates
- Draw on the past to better explain the present

Spanish and linguistics outcomes:

- Derive meaning from Spanish-language texts even if they lack fluency in the language
- Analyze the form of a Spanish, English, or Spanglish document alongside its content to create a more insightful interpretation
- Enjoy greater comfort and proficiency in Spanish speaking and writing as well as the practice of switching between English and Spanish

This class meets in person!

This is an in-person course: that means that, unlike asynchronous online/WEB courses, we will meet during scheduled class meeting times in MCK 151. I will accommodate illness and absences as described below. If you need additional flexibility UO encourages you to consider WEB courses. If you need accommodation related to a medical or other disability, you can set those up through AEC (<https://aec.uoregon.edu>).

What's a “bilingual class” anyway?

Unlike most classrooms, in which students are required to communicate exclusively in one language, ours will be a multilingual classroom, in which Spanish, English, and Spanglish are equally welcome. The goal is to create a playful, non-judgmental environment for students with all manner of Spanish abilities to further their language skills even through the inevitable challenges that language learning entails. While Spanish *comprehension* (mostly written texts, with occasional audio exercises supported by written texts) will figure into students' graded assignments, students who choose to *write* or *speak* in Spanish cannot negatively affect their grade by doing so. Spanish *comprehension* is a required part of the course; examples of additional Spanish exercises students may *choose* to complete include:

- Speaking in Spanish or Spanglish in small groups or all-class discussions
- Writing informal reading responses partially or entirely in Spanish (or writing them in English, then substituting Spanish words you know and teaching yourself some new ones)
- Responding in Spanish or Spanglish on exams

This class meets some Core Education requirements

This course meets requirements for the Social Science area of inquiry as well as the “US: Difference, Inequality, Agency” cultural literacy requirement because it explores power imbalances in U.S. history as expressed by economics, culture, and language, as well as the responses of historical Latina/o/xs to those power imbalances.

What your homework will be

Students will be expected to complete about two hours of homework per night; this may include reading primary and secondary sources, watching a documentary, and/or listening to a podcast. When the assignment is to watch a documentary or listen to a podcast, students should take notes on the content as though it were a classroom lecture. They will be held responsible for this material on exams and should be prepared to discuss it in-depth the next day in class.

All videos and podcasts, as well as a few reading assignments, are linked on Canvas. Most readings, however, are in the packet.

In addition to materials provided on Canvas, students must purchase one small course packet available at The Duck Store. It is essential for students to have this paper packet with them at each class session.

How we will communicate with each other

The best way to get a quick response is to write me via Canvas—that way, your message doesn't get lost in my general inbox. I will respond to your messages within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours on weekends or over Thanksgiving break. I also strongly encourage you to meet with me for a one-on-one chat (in person or virtual) if you have questions, want to review course material, or just want to get to know each other better. I have regular office hours after class on Mondays and additional office meeting times that you sign up for at my [calendly](#) link.

I will also reach out to you, as a group or individually, via Canvas, and I expect you to check these messages on the same time frame – every 24 hours during the week, every 48 hours on the weekend. You can even ask Canvas to notify you about messages via text (check and adjust your settings under Account > Notifications).

We will take a break from devices, most of the time

We have spent a lot of time on our electronic devices this past year! Research shows this is not very good for our brains. Research also shows that *students who take notes by hand perform better than those who take notes on their laptops* (see studies posted on Canvas). Therefore, our classroom will utilize technology deliberately, not indiscriminately. At times, particularly during lectures, the instructors will mandate a device-free oasis from distraction, during which we focus on the material at hand, the professor and our classmates. We will discuss note-taking strategies to ensure that students are able to benefit from this policy even if it is a change of pace for them. *On the other hand, research also shows that electronic devices can enhance the quality of group work.* To that end, we will often utilize laptops and university-issued iPads to consult course materials, engage in collaborative assignments, and conduct further research.

Students who believe that the policy of no laptops during lectures and discussions will cause them undue hardship, whether due to disability or for another reason, may contact the professor to ask for an exception. If you are working with the Accessible Education Center (AEC), they will contact me automatically to request exceptions on your behalf and you do not need to come talk to me about it.

How I will calculate your grade

Attendance (10% of grade)

This is an active-learning class in which interaction with peers is at least as important as interaction with the professor. At the same time, it is essential that students stay home if they are feeling Covid-19 symptoms. I encourage you to come to class every day if you are feeling well! But, you are allowed three absences during the term with no questions asked. If you need further excused absences, please reach out to me directly and we will make an arrangement appropriate to your situation.

Reading/video/podcast and reading response for all class meetings (20% of grade)

On Canvas, the instructor poses a comprehension question for each night's homework. Students should respond in a single paragraph that contains strong analysis with specific examples from the reading, but their responses need not be grammatically perfect. Responses may be in English, Spanish, or Spanglish. Responses are due via Canvas by 1 pm on each class day. Late

responses are not accepted unless you have spoken with the instructor for an accommodation, but students may skip three reading responses per term with no excuse needed and no penalty to their grade.

Individual participation in all-class discussions (10%)

We take advantage of the intimate size of our course to engage in all-class discussions. Your grade in this area will reflect not only the frequency of your contributions, but also the extent to which you respond thoughtfully to other students, encourage others to speak, and adhere to the classroom “ground rules” that you and your peers will set during the first week of class. A student who participates with moderate frequency, but displays these other qualities consistently, can still earn an “A” in this area even if they are not the one who speaks up the most. I will provide feedback on your participation halfway through the quarter.

Individual participation in group work (15%); group work products and worksheets (10%)

We will spend much of our class time engaged in analyzing bilingual primary sources in small groups. I will assign grades for individual participation in group work based on my own observations of your participation as well as peer evaluations that your classmates will fill out.

When the product due is a worksheet, each student will fill out their own worksheet and submit it to the instructor (instructions for this will be provided in class). When the product is a posting on an electronic shared document, the instructor will evaluate it and assign the same grade to all group members who were present that day.

Students may miss two of these group assignments with no penalty to their grade. Worksheets will be posted after class on Canvas and can be made up within one week of a student’s return to class after absence via hard copy or in the Canvas “missing worksheets” folder. Other types of group work missed due to absence cannot be made up, but falls within the “two free to skip” policy. If you feel you need additional accommodations beyond this due to Covid-related absences, please contact the instructor.

Small group members are responsible for helping each other out in the case of absence from class due to quarantine, covid symptoms, and other reasons. Please exchange contact info, get to know each other, and seek and receive help filling in the gaps when someone misses class.

Two midterms (10% each) and one final exam (15%)

Rather than one big midterm, there are two shorter ones. There will be one midterm after Units 1-2, a second midterm after Units 3-4, and then a final exam.

Both midterms follow the same three-part format:

- I. Part 1 (Take-home): an essay due via Canvas. Canvas will randomly select one “guiding question” from the unit outlines’ “Guiding questions” and you will have 45 minutes to answer it. Students will be expected to reference all relevant lectures, discussions, documentaries and readings in their answers. Students are allowed to use any book, note, and internet resource they like, and are encouraged to prepare for exams in groups.

However, during Part I *they are strictly prohibited from communicating in any way with any human being, classmate or otherwise, while they have the exam open.* Essays must have a thesis and back it up with evidence, but grammar per se is not evaluated and you may write in English, Spanish, or Spanglish.

- II. Part 2 (in class): Students will *individually* (on worksheets provided by the professor) answer a series of questions that draw upon their knowledge of the historical period to analyze a primary document in Spanish and/or Spanglish. The sources are already available in your readings packet but the questions will only be provided once you arrive to class. The time limit is 35 minutes.
- III. Part 3 (in class): Students will have the opportunity to confer with other members of their group, and may add to/revise their original answers for Part 2 based upon this discussion. The time limit is 20 minutes.

Each exam grade will be one-third take-home essay, one-third individual document analysis, and one-third revised document analysis from group time.

The final exam will follow the same pattern as the midterms with one difference: there will be two take-home essays, one covering Unit 5 and one covering the entire course as a whole, followed by a similar primary source assignment and then a group discussion/revision during our assigned exam slot.

Covid-19 and our class

We will be following the UO's [Covid Containment Plan](#) for classes. Masks are required in classrooms at all times. If you need to remove your mask to take a drink of water or have a snack, feel free to excuse yourself and leave the classroom; you don't have to ask permission.

Please be considerate of everyone's health: don't come to class if you have Covid [symptoms](#), or of course, an exposure that requires [quarantine](#). The professor will make either audio or video recordings of class lectures available to you and your group mates will help fill you in on what you missed.

Class policies

Late work, missed class and exams, and university-approved excuses

In addition to the attendance and deadline policies detailed above:

Students who have experienced illness or injury, or the death, injury, or serious illness of an immediate family member, or other significant disruptions to self or family (eg. divorce, immigration-related challenges, Covid-19-related challenges), are encouraged to discuss these legitimate excuses, at which time the professor will set an alternate deadline with no penalties. Mental health challenges are considered the same as other medical challenges.

Make-up exams must be scheduled as far in advance as foreseeable, and will be offered only for one of the preceding reasons or due to unavoidable religious observances, jury duty or government obligation, or official university activities (intercollegiate athletics, etc.). Since it is not possible to make up the group portion of the exam, the individual in-class portion will count for half of your

exam grade and the take-home essay will count for the other half, if you discuss with the professor in advance an approved reason for missing an in-class exam.

Students who miss an exam without discussing this in advance with the professor will receive a zero on the portion of the exam that they miss.

Cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct

All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course; Building on work from a previous course may be permissible but will constitute plagiarism if not discussed with the professor in advance. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, and paraphrases) must be properly cited (see Canvas for course citation policies), and anything not inside quotation marks must be substantively paraphrased. Additional advice for avoiding plagiarism is available at <<https://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism/plagiarism>>.

The University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express written permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the student's obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act.

Accessibility

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Everything is subject to change

Usually I treat the syllabus as a contract on both sides, but this term is different. As the university community adjusts and readjusts to the COVID-19 pandemic, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to change. I will be mindful of the many impacts the unfolding events related to COVID-19 may be having on you. During this unusual time, I encourage you to talk with me about what you are experiencing so we can work together to help you succeed in this course.

Schedule

Assignments are listed on the date they are due (always at 1 pm unless otherwise indicated).

Introduction

9/27: Introduction to the course

9/29: Professor is out, *class does not meet in person*

Online asynchronous lesson reviews syllabus and expectations (complete by Sunday 10/3 at noon)

Unit 1: Colonialisms through 1910

- 10/4: Complete online lesson quizzes and student survey by Sunday 10/3 at noon
- 10/6: Watch PBS Latino Americans Episode 1: Foreigners in their Own Land (entire episode)
- 10/11: Watch PBS Latino Americans Episode 2: Empire of Dreams (minutes 0-21)
Watch youtube linked video, “What’s with the X in Latinx?”
Read linked article about “Latinx” terminology
- 10/13: Read Spanish-language primary sources on U.S. imperialism

Unit 2: Revolution, Migration, Deportation: 1910-39

- 10/18: Watch PBS Latino Americans Episode 2: Empire of Dreams (minutes 21-end)
Read assigned Manuel Gamio Spanish-language life history three times
- 10/20: Listen to “Nuestro South” podcast, episodes #0, 1, and 2
- 10/25: Watch “The Lemon Grove Incident” film on Youtube
Read section of “De Nuestros Lectores” primary source

Take-home portion of Midterm #1 will be posted on Canvas after class on 10/25 and is due on Canvas by 10/27 at 1 pm.

Unit 3: War, liberalism, economic growth and civil rights: 1939-91

- 10/27: Complete take-home section of the exam, prepare primary document for class
- 11/1: Watch Sifuentez interview on UO Today
Read Sifuentez, “Now I can hold my own with anybody” (in packet)
Class meets at Knight Library Special Collections (up the main stairs to second floor)
- 11/3: Watch PBS Latino Americans Episode 3: War and Peace (entire episode)
Nuestro South podcast, episode #3
Assessment #1 of peer group members due
- 11/8: Watch PBS Latino Americans Episode 5: Prejudice and Pride (entire episode)
Watch PBS Latino Americans Episode 4: The New Latinos (minutes 1-20 and 34-41)
- 11/10: Listen to Nuestro South podcast, Episode #4
Read Rachel Tijerina primary source (in packet)

Unit 4: Cold War Latinos, 1954-91

11/15: Watch PBS Latino Americans Episode 4: The New Latinos (minutes 20-34 and 41-end)
Watch Episode 6: Peril and Promise (beginning through minute 12)

11/17: Watch PBS Latino Americans Episode 6: Peril and Promise (minutes 12-24)
Watch video, "Safe Haven: The Sanctuary Movement"
Read/listen to Central American immigrant activist oral history

Take-home portion of Midterm #2 will be posted on Canvas after class on 11/17 and is due on Canvas by 11/22 at 1 pm.

Unit 5: The ubiquitous Latino (1991-present)

11/22: Complete two take-home sections of midterm, prepare primary document for class

11/24: Day before Thanksgiving, *class does not meet in person* but online response still due
Watch PBS Latino Americans Episode 6: Peril and Promise (minute 24-end)
Listen to Nuestro South podcast, Episode #5

11/29: Listen to "The Battle of 187" podcast (Episodes #1, 2, and 3)
Watch "Thank you Pete Wilson" video
Read short newspaper article on Trump announcing his candidacy (on Canvas)
(more homework than usual due to class cancellation the day before Thanksgiving)

12/1: Assignment TBD on Latina/o/xs, Covid-19 and current events
Assessment #2 of peer group members due

Take-home portion of final exam will be posted on Canvas after class on 12/1, and will be due via Canvas by 2:30 pm on Monday, December 6. The in-person portion will be held live in our classroom at 2:45 pm on Monday, December 6.