

# Sul Ross State University

Fall 2015

## MAS 2301: Introduction to Mexican American Studies

Professor: Filemon Zamora

Office Hours: 8:00 -10:00 daily or by appt.

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Classroom and class time: MAB 207, M & W 11:00-12:15

**Required Texts:** *North to Aztlán: A History of Mexican Americans*, second edition by Arnolando de León and Richard Griswold del Castillo

*Pocho* by Jose Antonio Villarreal

*Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya

You must buy the books at once, we will definitely use them.

**Course objective:** Our approach to Mexican American Studies will be mainly through history. History will help us understand broadly the situation of Mexican Americans through time, thus we will be informed about their situation in labor, education, politics, race-relations, and immigration. To help us understand how Mexican Americans have experienced their life in the United States we are going to read two novels: *Pocho* and *Bless Me, Ultima*.

The ultimate goal of this course is for students to understand and be aware of the obstacles Mexican Americans have found in the United States to achieve a better life. We will explore how they reacted toward those obstacles in their path. Also, we will talk about their contributions to U.S. society.

It is expected that through our readings in history, literature, and use of audiovisual materials (documentaries, movies, music, etc.) and discussions about Mexican Americans, we will gain an inter-cultural understanding of our multicultural society.

### Primary Learning Objectives:

1. The student will be able to learn basic information about the history of Mexican Americans in the United States.
2. The student will be able to understand issues that have affected Mexican Americans, such as discrimination, segregation, immigration, etc.

3. The student will be able to critically assess reasons for Mexican Americans to have fallen behind in education, economic progress, etc.
4. The student will gain an appreciation of Mexican American contributions to U.S. society in many areas such as economic progress.
5. The student will gain an appreciation of the culture of Mexican Americans in literature, paintings, music, etc.

**Course Requirements:** Students are expected to attend all classes, participate consistently and complete all reading assignments. It is absolutely imperative that students read all the material assigned and be ready to participate in class discussions. Students must pay attention during lecture time and when watching audiovisual material. **Cell phones should be put aside; I don't want students to use them in any form and I don't want to see them on the desk or in your lap. Backpacks or purses should not be on the desk. Also take care of your personal needs before class (go to bathroom, drink water, etc.) so that you don't leave the classroom in the middle of lecture or discussions.**

**Course evaluation:**

- Quizzes-----10%
- Mid-term Exam-----20%
- Reflection papers-----5%
- \*Participation-----20%
- Final Exam-----25%
- Book Exams (2) -----20%

**Quizzes:** We will have several quizzes throughout the semester. Some will be announced, some others will be unannounced ("pop quizzes ")

**\*Participation** is graded using the criteria below. The criteria focus on what you demonstrate in the classroom through your participation. A good participation consists in your contribution to make class a more enriching educational experience. I want you to be generous by sharing your thoughts. We learn from each other. You will be evaluated in every class.

## Grade Criteria

- 0 Absent.
- Present.
- 3-4%
- Seems apathetic and reluctant to participate.
  - Not focused in class.
  - **Leaves classroom often**
  - Tries to respond when called on but does not offer much. Needs more preparation in general.
- 5-8%
- Shows some interest in class but demonstrates very infrequent involvement in discussion.
- 9-10%
- Demonstrates some preparation when called on, but answers are vague.
  - Checks on book to answer questions. Needs a more adequate reflection on the material being discussed.
  - Does not volunteer to participate
- 11-14%
- Demonstrates some preparation: knows basic case or reading facts, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them.
  - Offers straightforward information (e.g., straight from the case or reading), without elaboration or very infrequently (perhaps once a class).
  - Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on.
  - Demonstrates sporadic involvement.
- 15-17%
- Demonstrates good preparation: knows case or reading facts well, has thought through implications of them.

- Offers interpretations and analysis of case material (more than just facts) to class.
  - Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds to other students' points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way, offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion.
  - Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement.
  - Demonstrates excellent preparation: has analyzed case exceptionally well, relating it to readings and other material (e.g., readings, course material, discussions, experiences, etc.).
  - Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of case material, e.g., puts together pieces of the discussion to develop new approaches that take the class further.
- 18-  
20%
- Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps analysis focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributes to the cooperative argument-building, suggests alternative ways of approaching material and helps class analyze which approaches are appropriate, etc.
  - Demonstrates ongoing very active involvement.

**Midterm:** There will be a mid-semester exam (October 9), and it will cover all we have studied up to that point; it will include the audiovisual component.

**Reflection papers:** You will write a reflection paper at the end of class (3 pages). You will write about what you have learned from this class in general (from class discussions, readings, audiovisual materials, etc.) In addition I may ask you to write a reflection paper on any audiovisual material we have seen in class.

**Final Exam:** Final exam will be comprehensive. It will include multiple choice questions, true or false statements, matching and essay questions about what we covered from beginning till the end of semester.

**Attendance and punctuality:** Besides losing points from participation, after one absence I will take off 1% of your total grade for every absence. After 3 absences we need to talk I may ask you to drop the class. If you do not miss classes I WILL ADD 2% to your final grade; if you miss only one class I will add 1%. If you are late three times it will count for one absence.

**Please do not bring food to class (beverages is okay), do not chew gum or tobacco. Sit straight, do not sleep, take off your hat or hood**

**Notice of Disability:** *Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the American With Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Grace Duffy in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-171, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, TX 79832. Telephone: 432-837-8203.*

## **Calendar**

(This calendar is **subject to change**)

**August 24:** Introduction to course. Assessment test. Video: *Chicano! History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement*.

**Homework:** read Preface of *North to Aztlán* and answer questions located in blackboard. Do not submit questions, just come ready to share your answers to the class. Come prepared to discuss documentary. Start reading Chapter 8.

**August 26:** Discussion of documentary *Chicano!* And Preface. We continue watching *Chicano!*

**Homework:** Finish reading Chapter 8 of *North to Aztlán*. Answer all questions.

**September 2:** Discussion of Chapter 8 and *Chicano!*

**Homework:** Read first half of Chapter 1 of *North to Aztlán* and answer first half of questions

**September 7:** Discussion of Chapter 1 and documentary *Chicano!*

**Homework:** Finish reading Chapter 1. Answer second half of questions.

**September 9:** Discussion of chapter 1 and documentary *Chicano!*

**Homework:** Read first half of Chapter 2. Answer first half of questions.

**September 14:** Discussion of chapter 2.

**Homework:** Finish reading Chapter 2 of *North to Aztlán* and answer second half of questions.

**September 16:** Discussion of Chapter 2 of *North to Aztlán*. Documentary: *U.S.-Mexican war*

**Homework:** Read chapter 3. Answer first half of questions.

**September 21:** Chapter 3 of *North to Aztlán*. Documentary: *U.S.-Mexican War*

**Homework:** Answer second half of questions. Read first half of chapter 4.

**September 23:** Discussion of chapter 4 of *North to Aztlán*. Movie: *The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez*.

**September 28:** Chapter 4 of *North to Aztlán*. Movie: *The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez*

**September 30:** Chapter 4.

**October 5:** Chapter 5.

**October 7:** Chapter 5. Movie: *The Lemon Grove Incident*

**October 12: Midterm**

**October 14:** Read *Pocho*

**October 19:** Continue discussing *Pocho*.

**October 19:** *Pocho* Book Exam

**October 21:** Chapter 6

**October 26:** Chapter 6. Movie: *The Lemon Grove Incident*.

**October 28:** *Bless me Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya

**November 2:** *Bless me Ultima*

**November 4:** *Bless me Ultima*

**November 9:** *Bless me Ultima* book exam

**November 11:** Chapter 7. Movie *Salt of the Earth*

**November 16:** Chapter 7

**November 18:** Chapter 9. Movie: *The Zoot Suit*

**November 23:** Chapter 9

**Thanksgiving holiday November 25-27.**

**November 30:** Reflection Paper due.

**December 1:** Review for Final Exam

**December 3 and 4:** Dead Days

**Final Exam:** December 7-10. I will let you know as soon I find out