



**ENGL 2351.102CL Introduction to Mexican American Literature:  
A Story of Struggle, Protest, and Reclamation**

Dalel Serda | 16-wk Syllabus | Spring 2023 | 1/17/2023 – 05/11/2023  
Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30-10:50 am, LRC, Building #8 Room 212B

**Associate Professor Dalel Serda, MFA**

**Campus Email:** [dserda@com.edu](mailto:dserda@com.edu)

**Communication Policy:** Email me at [dserda@com.edu](mailto:dserda@com.edu) using your COM email, please. I do not check D2L messages with daily frequency. I only use that function to send your major project comments. You may of course also call me during office hours and/or leave me a voicemail. Lastly, I highly recommend you message me via COM's Office 365 Microsoft TEAMS as it is convenient, and we can often dialogue quickly through it. I recommend you download the TEAMS app.

**Communicating with your instructor:** ALL electronic communication with course instructors must be through your COM email and COM's Microsoft Office 365 TEAMS. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means.

**Office Phone:** (409) 933-8497

**College of the Mainland Office:**

Learning Resource Center (LRC), Building #8, Suite B Rm #241  
Humanities Department

**Student Hours/Conference/Office Hours:** LRC Suite B Rm. #241 Humanities Dept.

Monday through Thursday: 8:30 am-9:30 am

Friday: 8:30 am - 12:00 noon

These are f2f and online Teams hours. I can also make myself available to you via Teams outside these hours pending our arrangements.

NOTE: Regarding Microsoft Teams, access it through the COM homepage. Access it through the "Office 365 & Email" button next to the "D2L" button. "Teams" is one of the apps available through Office 365. There is no cost as a result. It is my preferred mode of communication for its ease and speed.

**Require Books You'll Need to Purchase or Check Out at a Library:**

*Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya

*Under the Feet of Jesus* by Helena Maria Viramontes

NOTE: I will provide PDFs of all other course readings. They will be available on D2L and when possible, in print during class. You are welcome to print off of D2L for the purposes of marginal annotations.

**Textbook Purchasing Statement:** A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer such as Amazon, Half Price Books, etc. You can also elect to not purchase the handbook for this class. Using the OWL at Purdue site is a good alternative.

**ENGL 2351 Mexican American Literature:** A survey of Mexican American/Chicanx literature from Mesoamerica to the present. Students will study literary works of fiction, poetry, drama, essays, and memoirs in relation to their historical, linguistic, political, regional, gendered, and cultural contexts. Texts will be selected from a diverse group of authors, literary movements, and media forms. Topics and themes may include the literary performance of identity and culture, aesthetic mediation of racialization, struggle and protest, and artistic activism.

**Course Prerequisite:** English 1301 with a C or better.

#### **Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) Student Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Identify key ideas, representative authors and works, significant historical or cultural events, and characteristic perspectives or attitudes expressed in the literature of different periods or regions.
2. Analyze literary works as expressions of individual or communal values within the social, political, cultural, or religious contexts of different literary periods.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the development of characteristic forms or styles of expression during different historical periods or in different regions.
4. Articulate the aesthetic principles that guide the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
5. Write research-based critical papers about the assigned readings in clear and grammatically correct prose, using various critical approaches to literature.

#### **Assignments and Projects: Course Grade Breakdown**

1. Weekly Reading Responses: 250+ words plus peer feedback (2x)	25%
2. Project #1: Extended Literary Analysis: 2+ primary sources, 500-700+ words	10%
3. Project #2: Extended Researched Analysis: 900-1100 words	15%
4. Pop Culture or Current Events Roundtable Participation:	10%
5. Researched Project Class Reading and Discussion: 5-6 mins	15%
6. Close Reading, In-Class Discussion Participation, and Question(s): Daily	25%

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TOTAL:

100%

I will provide a brief explanation of each of the course breakdown items below and then provide a more detailed handout for all major projects.

**Weekly Reading Responses:** Students will submit a 250+ word reading response each Friday by 8 am. All work will be submitted to D2L's Discussion Board. The reading response will engage analytically with one or more of the week's readings. All writing can always make use of assigned texts (written or otherwise) that were assigned prior to the week though all Weekly Reading Responses must engage at least one of the week's readings also.

The reading responses should include the original questions that prompted your thinking, your reflections and analysis, directly quoted and summarized and/or paraphrased aspects of the texts you're analyzing with proper attributions, and there should be a clearly intended, supported, and articulated thesis. When possible, include the citations for the sources you're using. Other than when we are working on Project #2, the research analysis paper, the bulk of your reading responses should refer to the secondary and primary sources assigned in this course. If you wish to make use of sources and are not sure of their relevance or reliability, please consult with me via Teams or email (I prefer Teams for its convenience).

Students will also dialogue with at least two peers. Each response with peers needs to be at least 50-words long to ensure content-oriented comments.

I encourage students to deepen inquiry threads from week to week. There is no such thing as exploring one subject, question, theme, or line of thinking too much.

This part of the course work makes up a substantial part of the course grade.

**Project #1: Extended Literary Analysis:** This will be a slightly longer essay that will include at least two primary source texts and will be around 500-700+ words in length. The intention is to keep the work in this class "light" while also requiring meaningful, deep, personally-significant reflection and analysis.

**Project #2: Extended Researched Analysis:** This essay will be an important one because we will be sharing it aloud with the entire class in an end-of-semester in-class reading and discussion. It will only be 900-1100 words in length because we will not allocate more than six minutes to each student in our final week's in-class reading and discussion, so the short researched paper will need to be an exercise in precise, concise writing.

The **Pop Culture or Current Events Roundtable** will be a day when we get to share the outcomes of the research we do that gets us thinking about how Chican@s are represented in current life.

**Researched Project Class Reading and Discussion:** The final week will be spent sharing revised versions of Project #2, the Extended Researched Analysis. We will share our essays and engage in academic discourse in reaction to each student's work.

**Close Reading, In-Class Discussion Participation, and Question(s):** This is a class that requires your active, daily participation. The inquiry and academic discourse we build here will help us move forward and connect with the work in earnest. Because I value your daily participation so much, this portion of the work you do will make up a significant portion of the course grade.

**Grading Rubric for all writing:**

95+ = The writing/project is insightful, thought-provoking, and well-composed. There is a well-developed, debatable, analytical thesis. The work pushes the class conversation forward in surprising ways. The student successfully connected multiple class readings to generate and support complex ideas when appropriate. All evidence is explained well and cited correctly.

90+ = The writing/project is insightful, thought-provoking, and for the most part, composed well. There is a well-developed, debatable, analytical thesis. The work attempts to push the class conversation forward; these feel somewhat original and new to the class conversation. When appropriate, the author connected more than one of the class readings to attempt to generate complex ideas. All evidence is explained well and cited correctly.

80+ = The writing/project is a solid response though not overly original; it may have some grammatical and/or mechanical errors. The author may have connected more than one of the class readings to attempt to generate interesting claims and ideas. The evidence may or may not be cited correctly.

70+ = The writing/project is on time and meets minimum expectations. There is often no properly cited evidence in this work. There may or may not be efforts to connect multiple texts. NOTE: Late posts can earn up to a 75% if they are very high quality.

60+ = This work show minimal effort; though, on time, the work is below average in content, grammar, and mechanics. There is rarely properly cited evidence in these.

50+ = This work is likely submitted late, and the content is at least average.

0-40+ = This work is submitted late, and the content is below average.

**Grading Scale:**

**A 90-100%** = Excellent work; superior in both style and content.

**B 80-89%** = Good work; solid content

**C 70-79%** = Average work; **meets the minimum requirements**

**D 60-69%** = Below average work; does not meet the requirements

**F 50-59%** = Failing work; deficient in mechanics, style, and content; all late work will lose half credit at least

**F<sub>N</sub> Grading:** The F<sub>N</sub> grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The F<sub>N</sub> grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the F<sub>N</sub> grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an F<sub>N</sub> grade.

**Grade Appeal Process:** Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook. <[https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student\\_Handbook\\_2019-2020v5.pdf](https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student_Handbook_2019-2020v5.pdf). *An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor's professional judgment of the quality of the student's work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.*  
[https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student\\_Handbook\\_2019-2020v5.pdf](https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student_Handbook_2019-2020v5.pdf)

**Academic Success & Support Services:** College of the Mainland is committed to providing students the necessary support and tools for success in their college careers. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

**ADA Statement:** Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact Kimberly Lachney at 409-933-8919 or [klachney@com.edu](mailto:klachney@com.edu). The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is located in the Student Success Center.

**Make-Up /Late Work Submission Policy:**

If you submit anything late but within twenty-four hours after the assignment is due, you will automatically lose *some* credit *up to* a letter grade. If you submit your work past twenty-four hours, I will accept it for half credit in most cases, though if the work is exceptional, I might credit the work up to 75%. What this means, is always aim for high-quality writing even if the work is late. The last day I will accept any work will be Monday night (11:59 pm) of the last week of class. I will not provide feedback for any work that is submitted late after the first deadline or for work that fails to meet minimum requirements though I will assign a grade.

**Attendance, Participation, & Drop by Instructor Policy: Participation contributes to your Daily Grade average.** This is a **participation-heavy** course. The success of the course depends on the community we build; thus, your presence on D2L and in class is vital. I *reserve* the right to drop you after four **consecutive** missed assignments and/or four missed classes without notice from you. In sum, your active engagement is key.

**IT'S BEST TO COMMUNICATE WITH ME IF YOU KNOW YOU'LL BE UNABLE TO FINISH ASSIGNMENTS or if you are going to be absent.**

**A Note from The Tutoring Center - ICB 104:** The Tutoring Center provides free tutoring services to students, staff and faculty seeking assistance for writing, reading and oral presentations for academic and job-related assignments and projects. The Tutoring Center provides face-to-face and online sessions. Appointments can be made in person, by phone (409-933-8703) or by clicking on the Tutoring Center icon on the COM website, and then the hyperlink: Schedule online tutoring sessions at [com.mywconline.com](http://com.mywconline.com).

**Withdrawal Policy:** Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a “W” grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw from the 1<sup>st</sup> 8-week session is March 1. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is April 24. The last date to withdraw for the 2<sup>nd</sup> 8-week session is May 3.

**About Me: My Teaching Philosophy:**

Learning is fluid. Learning takes place both inside and outside the classroom. It continues long after we leave school. In this course, we will think of ourselves as creators of meaning. We will also regard ourselves as active learners and contributors. I specify “active” because I want to foster a sense of inquiry, reflection, communication, and interaction. All these lead to *autonomy* which relates to self-reliance and self-realization. In other words, I hope to help you become selfishly aware of what the world offers you and in turn, what you can offer the world.

Additionally, we will work to think objectively while valuing our subjectivity. We will acknowledge that to be engaged, conscious citizens, we must be able to be objective and subjective in tandem. Yet, before we go off on our unique paths toward self-actualization, I ask that we learn to work together to bring what we learn from the outside in and take what we learn here outside.

I am both a life-long teacher and a student. Both identities allow me to be particularly sensitive to what works and does not work in the classroom. Additionally, I push myself to make connections between what I learn and teach in a course and the life that continues outside it. Bridging the two makes what I do in school, as both a teacher and student, much more relevant and meaningful for me. I hope to encourage you to seek those connections also.

Moreover, I recognize you have been a student for a long time. You will join this course with a wealth of experience, wisdom, and knowledge, and because I understand your importance, this will be a student-centered course where we will push boundaries together.

**Early Alert Program:**

The Counseling Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Warning Program. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Warning Program, you will be contacted by someone in the Counseling Department. As student success and retention is very important to us, someone from the Counseling Department will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer for you to meet your academic goals.

**Classroom Conduct Policy:**

College of the Mainland requires that students enrolled at COM be familiar with the Standards of Student Conduct, which can be found in the online Student Handbook.

[https://www.com.edu/student-services/Student\\_Handbook\\_2020-2021\\_v3.pdf](https://www.com.edu/student-services/Student_Handbook_2020-2021_v3.pdf) Students should always act professionally. Disruptive students will be held accountable according to college

policy. Any violations of the Code of Conduct will result in a referral to the Office for Student Conduct and may result in dismissal from this class.

### **Academic Dishonesty:**

Any incident of academic policy will be dealt with per college policy and the Student Handbook. Academic dishonesty – such as cheating on exams – is an extremely serious offense and will result in a **grade of zero** on that exam, assignment, or project, and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for the appropriate disciplinary action.

### **Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas and claiming them as your own. Plagiarism is a very serious offense. **Plagiarism includes paraphrasing someone else's words without proper citation and attribution, copying directly from a website, and pasting it into your paper, and/or using someone else's words without quotation marks.** Any assignment containing any plagiarized material will receive a grade of zero, and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for the appropriate disciplinary action.

**Links on Avoiding Plagiarism:** [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/avoiding\\_plagiarism/index.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/avoiding_plagiarism/index.html)

### **Concerns/Questions Statement**

If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please contact me using the contact information provided at the top of the first page of this syllabus. If, after discussing your concern with me, you continue to have questions, please contact the Humanities Department Chair, Brian Anderson at 409.933.8186 or [banderson@com.edu](mailto:banderson@com.edu).

### **College of the Mainland Technology Outage Policy**

If College of the Mainland's technology experiences problems that impede you from submitting work on deadline, contact me as soon as possible. You will have twelve hours from the time you emailed or called me to submit your work provided the technology is restored. You will receive no penalty if I have evidence that you attempted to submit work but faced difficulties outside your control.

**The GCIC Academic Symposium:** COM's GCIC Academic Symposium is an opportunity for students to showcase their best academic and creative projects. I chair this event and am therefore especially motivated to help you gain knowledge concerning it. Speak with me if you'd like to learn more and/or visit: <http://www.com.edu/symposium>. Participation in the symposium helps develop your professional skills, widens your professional networks, and should be noted on your resume. This academic year, the symposium is Friday, March 31, 2023 from 9 am to 3 pm. The abstract submission deadline is Thursday, Feb. 23, 2023, at 11:59 pm. I will award extra credit for presentations that emerge from our class or for general audience participation.

I will offer extra credit to all students who attend as active audience members and more to students who participate as presenters. Ask me more about this in class or during office hours.

**Attendance, Participation, & Drop by Instructor Policy: Participation contributes to your #6 Course Grade average.** This is a **participation-heavy** workshop course. The success of the course depends on the community we build; thus, your presence in class and on D2L is vital. I *reserve* the right to drop you after **FOUR consecutive** missed assignments and/or missed classes without notice from you. In sum, your active engagement is key.

**IT'S BEST TO COMMUNICATE WITH ME IF YOU KNOW YOU WILL BE ABSENT OR IF YOU'LL BE UNABLE TO FINISH ASSIGNMENTS ON TIME. Reference the Late Work Submission Policy above.**

**Course Outline/Calendar**  
**English 2351 | Spring 2023 | 16-Week Calendar**  
**01/17/2023 – 05/11/2023**  
**(Tentative/Subject to change with notice)**

Each week, students will write 250+ word debatable, analytical thesis-driven responses to the assigned readings unless otherwise noted by me. Students will also write 50+ word meaningful comment for two or more peers each time they post. Please include at least one original discussion question (DQ) with each post. Please read, listen to, and/or watch all assigned materials listed below. They are in labeled weekly folders in the Content tab on D2L. Time permitting, we will watch supplemental material located in the weekly folder while in class if I didn't specify it assigned reading before class. **All deadlines are Friday at 8 am on D2L.**

Week 1 Day 1: 1/17/23 - 1/20/23: Class Overview: What does it mean to be a Chican@?

Introductions/Syllabus/Calendar/Required Books/Co-Authored Discussion Questions:  
Co-Author Labor Contracts (reading, writing, class discussion, research, absence policy)  
Class goals and expectations

Read/Discuss:

1. <https://www.dailychela.com/chicano-meaning/>
2. "Chicano: Origin and Meaning" by Edward R. Simmen and Richard F. Bauerle (1969)

**Contextualizing Our Pending Journey with Mexican American Literature**

Week 1 Day 2: 1/17/23 - 1/20/23: Geo-Political Context  
"The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo" (1848)

Week 2 Day 1: 1/23/23 – 1/27/23: Philosophical Context  
"The Cosmic Race" by Jose Vasconcelos (1882-1959)

Week 2 Day 2: 1/23/23 – 1/27/23: A Critique  
From *The Labyrinth of Solitude* by Octavio Paz (1914-1998)  
Watch part of lecture on Paz  
Watch mini-doc on Zoot Suit Riots  
Watch 1981 film excerpts of *Zoot Suit* by Luis Valdez



Week 3 Day 1: 1/30/23 – 2/3/23: Contextualizing from the Inside  
“Coatlicue’s Rules: Advice from an Aztec Goddess” by Pat Mora  
Watch mini-documentary on Coatlicue  
“Malinche’s Tips: Pique from Mexico’s Mother” by Pat Mora  
“Consejos de Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe: Counsel from the Brown Virgin” by Pat Mora

Week 3 Day 2: 1/30/23 – 2/3/23: Identity and A Raised Fist  
“I am Joaquin” by Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales  
“La Loca de la Raza Cosmica” by La Chrisx

Week 4 Day 1: 2/6/23 – 2/10/23: Desde La Tierra  
“The Bracero Agreement” (1942): <https://www.farmworkers.org/bpaccord.html>  
“We Shall Overcome” by Cesar Chavez  
“What is Democracy” by Cesar Chavez

Week 4 Day 2: 2/6/23 – 2/10/23:  
*From With His Pistol in His Hand* by Americo Paredes, Chapter II, “The Legend”

#### **Mexican-American Literature: From the Canon**

Week 5 Day 1: 2/13/23 – 2/17/23:  
From *...y no se lo trago la tierra/...And the Earth Did Not Devour Him* by Tomas Rivera

Week 5 Day 2: 2/13/23 – 2/17/23: No class:  
Please read and post your reading response for Friday.  
*Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya Day 1 of 5

Week 6 Day 1: 2/20/23 – 2/24/23:  
*Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya Day 2 of 5

Week 6 Day 2: 2/20/23 – 2/24/23:  
*Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya Day 3 of 5

Week 7 Day 1: 2/27/23 – 3/3/23:  
*Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya Day 4 of 5

Week 7 Day 2: 2/27/23 – 3/3/23:  
*Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya Day 5 of 5  
Introduce Extended Literary Analysis Project #1

Week 8 Day 1: 3/6/23 – 23/10/23:  
From *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* by Gloria Anzaldua

Week 8 Day 2:  
Extended Analysis Paper Workshop

For Friday, post a rough draft of your work-in-progress.

SPRING BREAK: 3/13/23 – 3/17/23

Week 9 Day 1: 3/20/23 – 3/24/23

*Under the Feet of Jesus* by Helena Maria Viramontes Day 1 of 4

Week 9 Day 2: 3/20/23 – 3/24/23

*Under the Feet of Jesus* by Helena Maria Viramontes Day 2 of 4

Extended Literary Analysis Project #1 Due to D2L on Friday by 8 am.

Week 10 Day 1: 3/27/23 – 3/31/23

*Under the Feet of Jesus* by Helena Maria Viramontes Day 3 of 4

Week 10 Day 2: 3/27/23 – 3/31/23

*Under the Feet of Jesus* by Helena Maria Viramontes Day 4 of 4

Introduce Research Project #2

No post this Friday because of the GCIC Academic Symposium (9 am – 3 pm)

Week 11 Day 1: 4/3/23 – 4/7/23:

From *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros

Week 11 Day 2: 4/3/23 – 4/7/23:

From *Woman Hollering Creek* by Sandra Cisneros

No post is due Friday.

### Contemporary Voices

Week 12 Day 1: 4/10/23 – 4/14/23:

From *Sabrina & Corina* by Kali Fajardo-Anstine

Week 12 Day 2: 4/10/23 – 4/14/23:

From *The Devil's Highway* by Luis Alberto Urrea

Week 13 Day 1: 4/17/23 – 4/21/23:

“Documented/Undocumented” by Guillermo Gomez-Pena

Secondary sources for the research project approval day

Week 13 Day 2: 4/17/23 – 4/21/23:

From *Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez*, “Part 1: Aria” by Richard Rodriguez

From Brown: The Last Discovery of America, “Preface” by Richard Rodriguez

**Introduce Chicanos in Popular Culture Day project**

Week 14 Day 1: 4/24/23 – 4/28/23:

Work day and/or conference day for research paper

Week 14 Day 2: 4/24/23 – 4/28/23:

Peer review of research paper (Project #2)

Submit the research paper by 8am.

**Personalizing Our Mexican American Literary Journey**

Week 15 Day 1: 5/1/23 – 5/5/23:

Conference/Work Day – Serda research paper feedback and preparation for Chicanos in Popular Culture Roundtable Showcase

Week 15 Day 2: 5/1/23 – 5/5/23:

**Chicanos in Popular Culture Day: Roundtable Showcase**

Homework: Revise Project #2 Extended Researched Analysis paper for class reading and discussion next week

Please complete the course evaluation

Week 16 Day 1: 5/8/23 – 5/12/23:

Researched Project Class Reading and Discussion Day #1

Week 16 Day 2: 5/8/23 – 5/12/23:

Researched Project Class Reading and Discussion Day #2