



ENGL 2351.110CL

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

Dalel Serda | 16-wk Syllabus | Spring 2024 | 1/16/2024 – 5/8/2024
Tuesday and Thursday | 9:30 am to 10:50 am | LRC Building #8, Room 212B

Associate Professor Dalel Serda, MFA

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Office Phone: (409) 933-8497

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

Monday: 8:30 am – 9:30 am & 12:30 – 2:00 pm

Tuesday: 8:30 am – 9:30 am

Wednesday: 8:30 am – 9:30 am & 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm

Thursday: 8:30 am – 9:30 am & 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

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.

YOU DO NOT NEED TO PURCHASE BOOKS FOR THIS CLASS, BUT YOU WILL NEED TO COME TO MY OFFICE TO CHECK THESE OUT. If you would prefer to purchase them for your own use, you of course may. If you prefer to check them out from the COM library or from your public library, they are likely available there.

Bless Me, Ultima by Rudolfo Anaya

Under the Feet of Jesus by Helena Maria Viramontes

Borderlands/La Frontera by Gloria Anzaldúa (also available electronically on D2L)

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

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.

Assignments and Projects: Course Grade Breakdown

1. Weekly Reading Responses: 250+ words plus peer feedback (2x)	30%
2. Project #1: Extended Literary Analysis: 2+ primary sources: 500-700+ words	15%
3. Project #2: Extended Researched Analysis: 900+ words	15%
4. Project #3: Chican@s in Popular Culture Plus Reflective Analysis: 250+ words	15%
5. Project #4: Reflection on Project #2 and the Course: 400-500 words	15%
6. Project #5: Compressed Talk on Project #2: 5-6 mins	10%
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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 responses each Friday by 11 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 before 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 #2/4, 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 or 30 seconds to a minute if you are making a video to ensure content-oriented comments. All responses to peers are due by Wednesday of the following week. The idea is to engage in as much conversation about the texts as possible throughout the course of the week. I will see all your comments on my grading queue and will be paying attention to your engagement with your class community.

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 coursework makes up a substantial part of the course grade.

I’ve sketched out the bigger projects below. I will provide you with more details as the dates approach.

Project #1: Extended Literary Analysis: This will be a slightly longer essay than your Friday weekly writing and will include at least two primary source texts from the assigned texts thus far. This first extended essay 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. This essay will require literary criticism as secondary sources.

Project #3 Chican@s in Popular Culture Showcase will require a video or traditional analytical essay in which you present us with a new text (a contemporary piece of literature or text in a different mode such as film, TV, music, visual art, a person, or any other kind of text) that complicates our conversation as it relates to Mexican American Literature and the Mexican American experience as represented in modes other than the ones I assigned.

Project #4 Reflection on Project #2 and the Course will ask you to reflect and write about the process you undertook for Project #2, what you gained, and what your experience has been in this course.

Project #5 Compressed Talk on Project #2: The final project will require filming or recording your voice reading your revised Project #4 and reflecting on the class. You will also engage in conversation with at least two of your peers' presentations as a way to conclude the course.

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

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 but only *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 strong, 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** online 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.

Communication Policy: Email me at 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.

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.

Student Learner Outcome	Maps to Core Objective	Assessed via this Assignment
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.	Social Responsibility (SR)	D2L Discussions
2. Analyze literary works as expressions of individual or communal values within the social, political, cultural, or religious contexts of different literary periods.	Personal Responsibility (PR)	D2L Discussions Essays
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the development of characteristic forms or styles of expression during different historical periods or in different regions.	Personal Responsibility (PR)	D2L Discussions Essays
4. Articulate the aesthetic principles that guide the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.	Critical Thinking Skills (CT)	D2L Discussions Essays
5. Write research-based critical papers about the assigned readings in clear and grammatically correct prose, using various critical approaches to literature.	Communication Skills (CS)	Essays Presentations D2L Discussions

Academic Dishonesty:

Any incident of academic policy will be dealt with per college policy and the Student Handbook. Academic dishonesty 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. Using artificial intelligence (AI) technology to produce parts or all of your college work qualifies as academic dishonesty if your instructor didn't explicitly ask you to use it. Please avoid using AI unless your professor says otherwise. When in doubt about whether you can use any technology to help you with your work, ask your professor.

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 appropriate disciplinary action.

Links on Avoiding Plagiarism: 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, Dr. Brian Anderson at 409.933.8186 or banderson@com.edu.

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 is related to self-determination 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 own subjectivity. We will acknowledge that to be good humans, 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 see myself as both a teacher and student. Both identities allow me to be particularly sensitive to what works and does not work in the traditional and virtual 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 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.

Success Tips for Students: Mechanics and The Tutoring Center – ICB 104:

I am interested foremost in the sharing of ideas through dialogue (that is, dialogue in form of reading, writing, research, discussion, etc.); because of this, I will not spend **too** much time working on grammar and mechanics while in class though I will cover MLA style formatting rules and citation conventions **during** most class meetings for English 1301. We **will** spend **SOME** time on grammar and mechanics outside class during the first half of the semester through the Grammar and Mechanics Homework, and I expect you to self-monitor and guide your progress. That said, I encourage you to become well acquainted with The Tutoring Center (ICB 104), **to use your A Pocket Style Manual handbook with greater regularity than the syllabus course calendar dictates**, and to actively use The OWL at Purdue

Web site (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>) because I will hold you responsible for mastery of all of these related concepts. **In sum, be a true college student: Take the initiative. Be resourceful.**

Closely consider our evolving English language conventions and reinforce them each time you speak, read, or write for this class and all other speaking or writing instances. *As a college student, have dictionary.com on your computer and phone to actively expand your vocabulary. Make this a private endeavor.

The Tutoring Center (ICB 104) is staffed with tutors. Let them be a part of the team that helps you become the best communicator possible. Additionally, your peers and I will also be available to help you. I am specifically here to help you, so don't be shy; use the office hours I offer to your advantage. **Visit <https://com.mywconline.com/> to schedule a tutoring appointment with The Tutoring Center. Students come back raving about how helpful the center is. Take advantage.**

The GCIC Academic Symposium: COM's GCIC Academic Symposium is an opportunity for students to showcase their best academic and creative projects. To learn more, visit: com.edu/symposium. Participation in the symposium helps develop your professional skills, widens your professional networks, and should be noted on your resume/CV. This academic year, the symposium is on Friday, March 22, 2024, from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the ICB building. The abstract submission deadline is Thursday, Feb. 15, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. Please speak with me if you are interested or have questions.

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

Course Outline/Calendar

**English 2351 | Spring 2024 | 16-Week Calendar
1/16/2024 – 5/8/2024
(Tentative/Subject to change with notice)**

For most weeks when major projects are not due, students will write 250+ word short essays that include debatable, analytical thesis-driven responses to the assigned readings. Students will also write meaningful 50+ word comments or record 30 second to 1-minute responses for two or more peers each week. Please read, listen to, and/or watch all assigned materials listed below and consider engaging with anything in the weekly folders that isn't listed below since the lists here are not comprehensive. In other words, the folders have supplemental material that will further enhance your understanding and knowledge but they are, as stated here, supplemental and not required texts. 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 11 am on D2L for your posts and projects. Comments for peers are due by Wednesday of the following week.**

Contextualizing Our Pending Journey with Mexican American Literature

Week 1: Class Overview: What does it mean to be a Chican@?

Day 1:

Introductions

Review syllabus, Honors Contracts, GCIC Academic Symposium

Discuss how to academically write about literature

Discuss it means to develop a debatable thesis

And what does it mean to be a Chican@? <https://www.dailychela.com/chicano-meaning/>

“Chicano: Origin and Meaning” by Edward R. Simmen and Richard F. Bauerle (1969)

Day 2:

“The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo” (1848)

Friday post due by 11am.

Week 2: A Critique

Day 1:

Vasconcelos

Day 2:

From *The Labyrinth of Solitude* by Octavio Paz (1914-1998)

In class if time permits:

Watch part of lecture on Paz (optional)

Watch mini-doc on Zoot Suit Riots

Watch 1981 film excerpts of *Zoot Suit* by Luis Valdez

Friday post due by 11am.

Week 3: Identity and A Raised Fist

Day 1:

“Coatlicue’s Rules: Advice from an Aztec Goddess” by Pat Mora

“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

Day 2:

“I am Joaquin” by Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales

“La Loca de la Raza Cosmica” by La Chrisx

Friday post due by 11am.

Week 4: Desde La Tierra

Day 1:

The Bracero Agreement (1942): <https://www.farmworkers.org/bpaccord.html>

“We Shall Overcome” by Cesar Chavez

“What is Democracy” by Cesar Chavez

Two poems by Jimmy Santiago Baca

Day 2:

From *With His Pistol in His Hand* by Americo Paredes, Chapter II, “The Legend”

Friday post due by 11am.

Mexican American Literature: From the Canon

Week 5:

Day 1 and 2: From *...y no se lo trago la tierra/...And the Earth Did Not Devour Him* by Tomas Rivera

Friday post due by 11am.

Week 6:

Day 1: *Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya – Chapters 1-5

Day 2: *Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya – Chapters 6-10

Friday post due by 11am.

Week 7:

Day 1: *Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya – Chapters 11- 16

Day 2: *Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya – Chapters 17- 22

Introduce Extended Literary Analysis Project #1; due Sunday of Week 9.

Friday post due by 11am.

Week 8:

Day 1: *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* by Gloria Anzaldua: Chapters 1, 2

Day 2: *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* by Gloria Anzaldua: Chapters 5,7

Friday post due by 11am.

SPRING BREAK: March 11 – March 15: No school or homework. Please be sure to be ready for class next week. Please read Chapter 1 from *Under the Feet of Jesus* by Helena Maria Viramontes.

Week 9:

Day 1: *Under the Feet of Jesus* by Helena Maria Viramontes, Chapter 1

Day 2: *Under the Feet of Jesus* by Helena Maria Viramontes, Chapter 2

Extended Literary Analysis Project #1 due to D2L on Sunday night because of the GCIC Academic Symposium. Please attend the GCIC Academic Symposium.

Week 10:

Day 1: No class scheduled. Instead, read the rest of *Under the Feet of Jesus* by Helena Maria Viramontes and prepare to discuss all of it on Thursday of this week in class. I'll be available in my office.

Day 2: *Under the Feet of Jesus* by Helena Maria Viramontes – Final discussion

Introduce Research Project #2, #4, and #5

Friday post due by 11am.

Week 11:

Day 1: From *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros and Library Literature Research Review

Day 2: From *Woman Hollering Creek* by Sandra Cisneros

Friday post due by 11am.

Contemporary Voices

Week 12:

Day 1: From *Sabrina & Corina* by Kali Fajardo-Anstine

Day 2: Chapter 1 from *The Devil's Highway* by Luis Alberto Urrea

Friday post due by 11am.

Week 13:

Day 1: Secondary sources for the research project article approvals this week.

Introduce Project #3 Chicanos in Popular Culture project.

Day 2:

From *Hunger of Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez*, "Part 1: Aria" by Richard Rodriguez

From *Brown: The Last Discovery of America*, "Preface" by Richard Rodriguez

Friday post due by 11am.

Week 14:

Day 1: Work Day for Project #2. Bring a laptop or other necessary materials.

Day 2: Peer Review for Project #2. Bring one printed copy of your draft.

Project #2 is due Friday. No peer comments are necessary for Project #2.

Personalizing Our Mexican American Literary Journey

Week 15:

Day 1: Project #3 Chicanos in Popular Culture Day Work Day.

Day 2: Projects #3, #4, and #5 Work Day. Sign up for Project #5 Compressed Talk on Project #2 times.

Please complete the course evaluation

Project #3 is due Friday. No peer comments are necessary for Project #2

Week 16:

Day 1:

Project #4 is due by the end of today.

Presentations of Project #5

Please complete the course evaluation.

Day 2:

Presentations of Project #5

Thank you for your participation in this course! May you have a fruitful break!

College of the Mainland Institutional Policies and Guidelines

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://www.com.edu/student-services/docs/Student_Handbook_2023-2024_v2.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.*

Academic Success & Support Services: College of the Mainland is committed to providing students with 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. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is located in the Student Success Center.

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.

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 1st 8-week session is February 28. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is April 22. The last date to withdraw for the 2nd 8-week session is May 1. The last date to withdraw for spring mini session is May 29.

FN Grading: The FN grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The FN 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 FN grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an FN grade.

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.

Resources to Help with Stress:

If you are experiencing stress or anxiety about your daily living needs including food, housing or just feel you could benefit from free resources to help you through a difficult time, please click here <https://www.com.edu/community-resource-center/>. College of the Mainland has partnered with free community resources to help you stay on track with your schoolwork, by addressing life issues that get in the way of doing your best in school. All services are private and confidential. You may also contact the Dean of Students office at deanofstudents@com.edu or communityresources@com.edu.