

**Universidad of San Diego**  
**Fall 2014**  
**Spanish 194D: Narratives of the Mexico/US Border**  
**Dr. Amanda Petersen**



*Coatlicue: Diosa de la tierra. / Coatlicue: Goddess of the Earth*  
*Mural by Michael Schnorr and Susan Yamagata; Chicano Park, San Diego, CA.*

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**Class:** Serra Hall 314, Tuesday and Thursday: 2:30 – 3:50pm

**Office:** Founders Hall 144C

**Office hours:** Tuesdays: 1:15-2:15, 4:00-5:00, and 7:00-8:00pm, Thursdays 12:15-2:15 and by appointment

**Telephone:** (619) 260-4237

**Email:** [apetersEn@sandiego.edu](mailto:apetersEn@sandiego.edu)

## **Course Guidelines**

### **Description and Course Objectives**

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*Narratives of the Mexico-US Border* is preceptorial class that serves as an introduction to cultural production from the borderlands and the Spanish major. The course forms part of the Intersections Living Learning Community (LLC).

This class meets the Diversity (D) requirement for USD's Core Curriculum as a large focus on the movies and texts we will read are written from and about border cultures and its socio-historical context. In addition, the students will be required to attend cultural and academic events organized by the Intersections LLC, the CID (Center for Inclusion and Diversity), and the TBI (Trans-Border Institute). As this will be conducted in English, this class does not satisfy the foreign language core curriculum requirement.

During the semester, the student will study the following topics, among others:

- A selection of works (movies, essays, short stories, and critical theory) by authors from northern Mexico and the US border region.
- The political, social, and historical contexts behind the above cultural and literary texts.
- The urban spaces of the border primarily in Mexico, California, and Texas.
- Social movements and their history in these regions.
- Direct community engagement with San Diego, Tijuana, and their activist and community service organizations in the region.

The learning objectives for the course include:

- learning to critically read and reflect on literary and cultural border-related texts and film
- becoming familiar with the notions and theories of the border
- developing the student's communicative competency in analyzing and understanding privilege and diverse forms of discrimination
- examining different cultural phenomena in the border regions and the challenges associated with them
- reflecting on and analyzing the geographic proximity of Mexico (in the US) and of the US (in Mexico), their often contentious relationship with each other, and the importance understanding this complexity in the past and present

### Required Texts

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- Supplementary texts (and topics for discussion for the course) are found in the course blog (<http://intersectionsborder.wordpress.com/>). The student is required to bring a copy of the reading material to class. (Electronic copies are *not* allowed.)

### Bibliography of Critical and Primary Texts and Movies

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- Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands. La frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco, CA: Ante Lute, 1987. (selection).
- Byrd, Bobby, John William Byrd, and Luis Humberto Crosthwaite. *Puro Border: Dispatches, Snapshots, Graffiti from La Frontera*. El Paso, TX: Cinco Puntos Press, 2003.
- Castillo, Ana, ed. Goddess of the Americas = *La diosa de las Américas: Writings of the Virgen de Guadalupe*. NY: Riverhead Books, 1996. (selection)
- Castillo, Debra and María Socorro Tabuenca Córdoba. *Border Women: Writing from the Frontera*. Minneapolis and London: U of MN P, 2002. (selection)
- Campbell, Federico. *Tijuana: Stories on the Border*. Trans. Debra A. Castillo. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
- Di-Bella, José Manuel, Sergio Gómez Montero, and Harry Polkinhorn, eds. *Mexican / American Border Writing: Proceedings of the First Conference of Writers from the Californias*. San Diego: Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias. 1987. (selection)
- Hernández-Gutiérrez, Manuel de Jesús, and David William Foster. *Literatura chicana, 1965-1995: An Anthology in Spanish, English, and Caló*. Garland Reference Library of the Humanities. New York: Garland, 1997. (selection)
- Hicks, Emily D. "Deterritorialization and Border Writing." Di-Bella, José Manuel, Sergio Gómez Montero, and Harry Polkinhorn, eds. *Mexican / American Border Writing: Proceedings of the First Conference of Writers from the Californias*. San Diego: Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias. 1987. 70-77.
- Kun, Josh, and Fiamma Montezemolo. *Tijuana Dreaming: Life and Art at the Global Border*. Durham and London: Duke UP, 2012. (selection)
- Madrid, Alejandro L., ed. *Transnational Encounters: Music and Performance at the US-*

*Mexico Border*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011. (selection)

- Martínez, Julio A., and Francisco A. Lomelí. *Chicano Literature: A Reference Guide*. Westport, CT: Greenwood P, 1985. (selection)
- Sanmiguel, Rosario. *Under the Bridge: Stories from the Border / Bajo el puente: Relatos desde la frontera*. Houston: Arte Público P. 2008. (selection)
- Saenz, Benjamín Alire. *Everything Begins and Ends at the Kentucky Derby*. El Paso: Cinco Puntos P. 2012. (selection)
- Villa, Raúl Homero. *Barrio-Logos: Space and Place in Urban Chicano Literature and Culture*. Austin: U of TX P. 2000.
- Movies: *Touch of Evil* (1958), *Zoot Suit* (1987), *La Misión* (2008), *Miss Bala* (2011), *Sleep Dealer* (2008), *Maquilapolis* (2012)

### **Webpage for the course**

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During the semester, we will have a wordpress.com blog (<http://intersectionsontheborder.wordpress.com/>) where the professor and students will propose topics of discussion, maintain a detailed calendar, and post all necessary information to complete assignments. The page is private and the student will receive invitations to join the blog by email. The student is responsible for entering into the page and reviewing the posts frequently. The student will also contribute to the blog; these contributions will form part of his/her participation grade.

### **Methods of Evaluation**

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Attendance and preparation for class .....	10%
Participation, reading quizzes, and blog comments/questions .....	10%
Community Service Learning reflection paper .....	10%
Participation in on campus events beyond class events .....	5%
Critical response blog entries .....	20%
Midterm exams (2) .....	35%
Final class project .....	20%

### **Course Requirements**

1. *Attendance* (10%): Attendance is essential for this course. The student is allowed two absences for any reason (including illness or emergencies). After two absences, the student's *final* grade will be reduced 1% for each additional absence.
2. *Participation, reading quizzes, and blog comments/questions* (10%): Participation is a necessary and integral part of the learning process. Your *active* presence is required in the classroom. Active presence means written and oral engagement with the required readings, materials, and lectures related to the class. The students will be assigned days for proposing discussion questions on the course blog. Reading quizzes may be given in class meetings and are used to assess your understanding of the reading materials for the class.
3. *Community Service Learning or additional critical response paper with presentations* (10%): Students are required to either participate in community service learning at

Southwest Key or to write an additional critical essay on the book *Enrique's Journey*. Details are found on CSL's website and will be discussed on the first day of class. <http://www.sandiego.edu/documents/csl/sharingnarswk090413.pdf>. The *mandatory* orientation is Thursday, September 18<sup>th</sup> from 12:30-1:30 in Maher 222.

- Tues. 9/23 12:30-2pm
- Mon. 9/29 6-7:30pm.
- Tues. 10/7 12:30-2pm SWK @ USD
- Mon. 10/13 6-7:30pm
- Attend **mandatory** Reflection Session: Thurs. 10/14 12:30-2pm (Maher 222)
- Tues. 10/21 12:30-2pm
- Mon. 10/27 6-7:30pm
- Tues. 11/4 12:30-2pm
- Mon. 11/10 6-7:30pm
- Tues. 11/18 12:30-2pm. SWK @ USD
- Mon. 11/24 6-7:30pm
- Tues. 12/2 12:30-2pm.
- Sat. 12/6 10am-1pm: **Mandatory** End of the Year Celebration @ SWK

The commitment for students is a minimum of two visits to the site and the end of the semester celebration.

4. *Participation in on-campus events and Center for student Success Workshops (5%)*: Students are required to attend 1 USD events, such as an LLC activity, and 2 student Success workshops. For the student success workshops, you must complete the reflection form for the session and turn in two weeks after the session or on the last day of class, whichever is sooner. (The form for reflections is found here: [http://www.sandiego.edu/usdcss/programs/workshops/session\\_reflection/](http://www.sandiego.edu/usdcss/programs/workshops/session_reflection/)).

Recommended sessions are:

- Study Strategies: Sept 30, Nov 5
  - Time Management: Oct 28, Nov 11
  - Balancing Multiple Demands: Sept 23, Oct 30, Nov 18
  - Exam Strategies: Oct 8, Dec 9
5. *Critical response short essays and blog entries (20%)*: The student will be responsible for posting a 600-word critical response to an assigned text, movie, or cultural event. For the blog post, the post must be made public 48 hours before class. The entire class is responsible for reading the entries and a group of students will be assigned to respond to a blog commentary before class. [More specifics on Wordpress starting the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of class.]
6. *Midterms (35 points total)*. There are two midterm examinations in this class. Midterm 1 is worth 15 % and Midterm 2 is worth 20%. This in-class midterm includes short essay questions. Students are asked questions designed to engage class lectures, videos, readings, and guest lectures. Midterms are October 16<sup>th</sup> and December 9<sup>th</sup>.
7. *Final Class Project: (20%)*. Students will write a research-length paper on a critical topic of their choice. The project will be managed in various stages, with outlines and topic

statements before the final paper and presentations. **These final projects will be presented during the final day of class and your final on December 18th.**

For final grades, it is expected that an A = 93%-100%, A- = 90%-93%; B+ = 87-89%, B = 83%-86%. B- = 80-82%; C+'s = 77-79%, C = 73%-76%, C- = 70%-72%, D+'s = 67%-69%, D = 63%-66%, D- = 60%-62% and F's for any score less than 60%.

### **Other Requirements and Expectations:**

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1. Be aware that some of the topics we cover are of a sensitive nature. In spite of their sensitive nature, it is important that these topics be addressed in an open and respectful manner. A willingness to use a dictionary for occasional words in Spanish will be helpful with certain readings. Movies will frequently be in Spanish with English subtitles.
2. Please read all assigned material prior to class meetings. You will be asked to discuss readings on many occasions, and often will form the basis of in-class exercises. You will be required to complete homework on the reading in order to guide your observations and critical analysis. Bear in mind that there will be exam questions based on material covered only in the readings. When the subject for a course is a movie, the student can watch the movie at the showing for the class or alone. Please be aware not all movies are easily accessible.
3. Please act respectfully and courteously toward all members of the class. This means not reading newspapers during class, not using cell phones (cell phones and other electronic devices should be turned off during class meetings); not engaging in conversations with your classmates unless told to do so, not sleeping, and so forth. The professor reserves the option of deducting points from your participation grade for persistent disrespectful behavior.
4. Be aware that academic misconduct may result in severe penalties, including a zero on the assignment or exam in question, as well as further sanctions from the provost such as censure, suspension, or expulsion. Academic misconduct—plagiarism—will be treated as a serious offense. Plagiarism includes the presentation of the work or ideas of others as your own. You are expected to know and understand university policy regarding academic misconduct and your rights under the academic misconduct code. <http://www.sandiego.edu/as/resources/policy.php>
5. Students with disabilities that may affect their ability to participate fully in the class or to meet all course requirements should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss appropriate accommodations. (Students with disabilities must be registered with Disability Services prior to receiving accommodations in this course.) For more information please see: <http://www.sandiego.edu/disability/> Students whose first language is not English should discuss any concerns or needs with the instructor as soon as possible.
6. Students who need to miss a class session because of a religious holiday, a university-sponsored activity (e.g., a scholarly competition or an academic field trip), or a legally required activity (e.g., emergency military service, jury) should contact me in advance regarding absence from class. All travel letters from Athletic Academic Services are due to me no later than September 11<sup>th</sup>. *Failure to notify me of conflicts or provide letters means absences will be marked unexcused and missing assignments will receive a score of 0 –no exceptions.*