

# Chicana/o Literature



**Professor Priscilla Ybarra**  
University of North Texas

## Course Description

This course tours Mexican American literature and Chicana and Chicano cultural production. Our studies consist of four units: Place in Mexican American Literature, Early Mexican American Literature, Emergence of Chicana/o Writing, and Contemporary Chicana/o Cultural Production. Course material draws from various genres and historical periods to exhibit the rich contribution that Mexican American and Chicana/o creative voices and lived experiences lend to U.S. and global culture.

## Course Purpose

This course serves to enhance student knowledge of multicultural literatures for a representative education in American literatures overall. Students will gain a familiarity with the development of Mexican American and Chicana/o literature and culture from 1848 to the present period. Assignments and discussions in this course provide a forum for articulating an understanding of foundational works and themes in Chicana/o literature and culture. In pursuing these goals, students will write one literary analysis essay, write regularly scheduled short close-reading analyses, complete reading quizzes, complete in-class writing assignments, complete two exams, and participate in classroom discussion.

## Required Texts:

--subscribe to LatinoUSA podcast:

[www.latinousa.org](http://www.latinousa.org)

-- González, Jovita. Caballero, 1930s, 1996.

-- Paredes, Americo. George Washington Gomez. 1930s. 1990.

-- Rivera, Tomas. ...And the Earth Did Not Devour Him. 1971.

--Castillo, Ana. The Guardians. 2007.

-- Essays, short stories, and poems available on class website

### Expected Learning Outcomes

- Discuss key issues in the development of Chicana/o literature—the literature of a distinctive culture of the United States
- Integrate a discussion of contemporary Chicana/o issues with an array of past and contemporary Chicana/o literature, verbally and in writing
- Identify the varieties of Chicana/o identity demonstrated in Chicana/o cultural production
- Explain the historical context of four stages of Chicana/o literature
- Identify major authors in four periods of Chicana/o literary production

**These expected learning outcomes will be measured by means of the assignments listed below, including grade percentages for each assignment:**

### Grading

- (15%) Close-reading analyses: explicate a passage from a text
- (20%) Reading Quizzes (drop 3 lowest grades)
- (15%) Regular participation in class discussion; including attendance, asking questions, responding to questions, and responding to other students' comments
- (15%) Exam One
- (15%) Exam Two
- (20%) Final Essay (6-8 pages) NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED

<b>SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS</b> (subject to adjustment; come to class everyday to find out)
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## **UNIT A: PLACE IN MEXICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE**

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### First Day

R 08/27

- Course description, goals, schedule of assignments

### Week One

T 09/01

- Mini-discussion: a Wealth of Identity...
- Gonzalez, Rudolfo "Corky." "I Am Joaquin" (online)

R 09/03

- Screen part one of documentary Chicano!: A History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement
- Film quiz & discussion

### Week Two

T 09/08

- Mexican & Mexican American history discussion
- "Narrative," Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca (online)
- Sample explication exercise

R 09/10

- "Earth to Earth," Patricia Preciado Martin (online)

### **Week Three**

T 09/15

- **Explication One due (by midnight)**
- "Four Meditations on the Colorado River" Denise Chávez (online)
- "Voces del Jardín," Pat Mora (online)

R 09/17

- "El Retorno," Gloria Anzaldua (online)

## **UNIT B: EARLY MEXICAN AMERICA**

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### **Week Four**

T 09/22

- Intro to Early Mexican American Literature
- Caballero, Jovita González (Author's Notes, Characters, Glossary, floorplan, Foreward, and pages 3 – 78)

R 09/24

- Caballero, (78 – 134)
- **Explication Two due**

### **Week Five**

T 09/29

- Caballero, (134-214)

R 10/01

- Caballero, (214-260)

### **Week Six**

T 10/06

- Caballero, (260-337)
- **Explication Three due**

R 10/08

- George Washington Gomez (9-58)

### **Week Seven**

T 10/13: No Class; Fall Break

R 10/15

- George Washington Gomez (58-157)

### **Week Eight**

T 10/20

- George Washington Gomez (157-238)

R 10/22

- George Washington Gomez (238-302)
- **Explication Four due**

### **Week Nine**

T 10/27

- MID-TERM EXAM (short answer and essay)

### **UNIT C: EMERGENCE OF CHICANA/O WRITING**

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R 10/29

- Intro to Chicana/o Writing
- ...And the Earth Did Not Devour Him (83-117; “Lost Year” – “First Communion”)

### **Week Ten**

T 11/03

- ...And the Earth Did Not Devour Him (119-152; “The teacher was surprised...” – “Under the House”)
- **Explication Five due**

R 11/05

- “The Sun on Those,” Jimmy Santiago Baca; online
- “Red Wagons,” Ana Castillo; online
- “Daddy with Chesterfields in a Rolled Up Sleeve,” Ana Castillo; online

### **Week Eleven**

T 11/10

- “Beneath the Shadow of the Freeway,” Lorna Dee Cervantes; online
- Selection from Loving in the War Years by Cherríe Moraga; (online)

### **UNIT D: CONTEMPORARY CHICANA/O CULTURAL PRODUCTION**

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R 11/12

- “Little Miracles, Kept Promises,” Sandra Cisneros, online
- HANDOUT FINAL PAPER TOPICS

### **Week Twelve**

T 11/17

- “Bien Pretty,” Sandra Cisneros, online

R 11/19

- Manuel Muñoz short story
- First two chapters of The Guardians

### **Week Thirteen**

T 11/24 – R 11/26 (Thanksgiving holiday)

- NO CLASS; CONFERENCE
- Read The Guardians (3-100)
- **Final Paper Thesis and Outline Due**

### **Week Fourteen**

T 12/01

- The Guardians (101-156)

R 12/03

- The Guardians (156-211)
- **Explication Six due by midnight R 11/26**

**Week Fifteen**

T 12/08

- Last class; Final Essays Due

**FINAL:**  
**(in accordance with final exam schedule)**

**notes**