

HIST 3150.001: Historical and Cultural Development of the Mexican American Community



*Picture of El Asco art collective, a group of artists that pushed the boundaries of art and social critique during the 1970s (from left: Patssi Valdez, Willie Herrón, Glugio 'Gronk' Nicandro, Humberto Sandoval, and Harry Gamboa Jr.

Dr. Manny A. Grajales
Fall 2025

Department of History
University of North Texas

Class Hours: MWF 12 pm-12:50 pm
Office Location: Wooten Hall 241

Class Location: Wooten Hall 121
Email: Manuel.Grajales@unt.edu

Office Hours: Wednesday and Friday, 1:15pm-3:15pm or by appointment

Course Description:

This course introduces the history of the Chicana/o/x community from the 19th century to the present. The goal of this class is to broaden your general and specific knowledge of Mexican History in the United States. There will be a brief review of the pre-nineteenth-century origins of the Mexican people at the beginning of the course. Materials for the class will include lectures and discussions of films, video clips, and readings. If possible, guest speakers will be invited to engage students. A variety of themes will be emphasized, including but not limited to labor, politics, racial formation, education, immigration, gender, and culture. The required course materials will be short readings (academic and public journal articles), videos, and podcasts throughout the semester. However, the instructor reserves the right to revise the syllabus during the semester and will communicate any changes with the class.

Required Text(s):

No Required Texts to purchase. I will provide all materials via Canvas.

NOTE: If you are someone that needs a textbook for general survey purposes, I have a scanned copy of the following textbook that will act as a guide for our course:

+Arnoldo De Leon and Richard Griswold del Castillo. *North to Aztlán: A History of Mexican Americans in the United States*. Illinois: Harlan Davidson Inc., 2006 [1997].

The assigned readings, videos, and podcasts on Canvas are the main assignments that will build our weekly discussions. **These must be engaged with before class day.**

Student Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course:

1. Students will be able to identify the historical and cultural changes of Mexican Americans from the indigenous America until the early 21st century.
2. Students will demonstrate awareness of societal and civic issues affecting Mexican Americans.
3. Students will improve their analytical, discussion, and writing skills.
4. Students will construct projects that uses evidence driven arguments, solid research methods, and employ student creativity to explain the historical and cultural moments in Mexican American History.

Course Requirements:

Attendance/Participation (15%)

It is vital for you all to attend class. I do understand that commitments outside of this class may cause conflicts or personal wellbeing will need to be prioritized. For that, please communicate with the instructor to let me know what is going on so we can plan accordingly. Additionally, you are allowed three unexcused absences during the semester, no questions asked. A class roster will be read at the beginning of each class, or a class roll will be passed around. If you're walking in late to class, be sure and remind the instructor at the end of class that you are in attendance. Otherwise, you may not receive credit for having attended class that day.

It is vital that you contribute to class discussions. Participation includes asking questions you have, sharing your knowledge with the class, and any other participation. I will provide alternatives for those that are nervous about speaking in class to gain participation points. Fridays will be a day when discussion is central to the class: We will finish whatever is left and focus on the exploratory item.

Reflections Assignment (40%)

Spread throughout the semester, students are responsible for **eight** reflection assignments.

The ***first reflection*** (due at the end of week 1) **is a 300–500-word introduction of yourself.** Who are you, what was your journey to college, and what do you know about Mexican American History? If you have limited context, what do you know and what

questions are you wanting to explore in the class or in the future. See this as practice for the weekly reflections and give me insight on who you are and what you know.

Six Reflections will be based on assigned materials throughout the course of the class. In 500 words or more (you are allowed and encouraged to write more if you are excited about the topic) you will offer a specific statement on the importance of the topic you are discussing, the contributions of the people writing about these topics, provide a reflection/reaction to the materials while also analyzing some of the deep issues within the assigned material for the week. You will need to submit your first reading reflection by the end of Week 4 so I can grade and let you see what my expectations are.

I will explain the setup of submitting these reflections each week will work during the first week of class.

The final Reflection Essay is due at the end of the last week of classes. This will be a reflection essay that answers three questions charting your growth from the beginning of the class until now and point out some themes, readings, etc that stood out to you. The length of the reflection piece must be 400-600 words. The prompt will be available on canvas.

***Note:** I am open to alternative ideas to complete the reflections (short Video Logs, visual presentations, etc). You will have to okay this with me if you want to go this route.

Mexican American Public History Project (25%)

The proposal will be worth 5%

The midterm submission is worth 20% and will be three components (bibliography and chart, Reflection essay, final product).

The Mexican American Public History Project allows students to explore Chicana/o/x and Mexican American History by developing a creative project based on the topics we are learning throughout the semester or something that interests you (topics, theme, etc).

Breakdown of the project:

The proposal (due end of Week 4) will state your choice of topic (person, event, theme, etc), why you are interested in this project, choice of medium, 2-3 guiding questions you hope to address, and a works cited page. Your proposal will be between 200 to 300 words and the works cited must include five sources. One of those sources has to be a primary source. You will submit this via Canvas.

Mediums could include:

Mini Podcast; Video Presentation (multiple formats); Oral History Project; (For aspiring teachers)-Create a class day lesson plan; Painting (abstract, mural, etc); Poem; a Song; Mini documentary; Animation; X/Twitter Thread; Social Media Reel; 3D model; Exhibit (Museum)

Other: Basically, pitch a medium. (If you are a poet, song writer, graphic artist, do something with those skills).

More information on topics will be discussed in class and available on Canvas

After submitting your proposal, the submission of your Public History project (due week 10) will have the following components:

- Complete Bibliography (Chicago/Turabian. If you are a non-history major you can use MLA or APA but must ask my permission) and Chart showing the time you devoted to the project (for instance, hours for searching primary sources + hours creating an animation, etc.).
- Reflection essay (600-750 words in which you describe the intent behind your public-history project, what you learned while researching it, and your self-evaluation of how well you succeeded in creating it.
- The Final product.

More details about the project will be available on Canvas

Final Project: Research Paper (15%)

You will submit a final paper at the end of the semester (due day of our course's scheduled finals). Focusing the paper on the major theme or story that inspired your un-essay project, you will develop a research based, argumentative essay about the significance of that topic to Mexican American History. The length of the Research Paper is 2100 to 2400 words.

Citation style is negotiable based on what discipline you are coming from, but History Majors will use Chicago/Turabian. The paper itself is worth 20%.

More information on this will be provided on Canvas and during the first week of class.

Percentage Breakdown

Attendance/Participation-**15%**

Reflections-**40%**

Reflection Essay (Who are you and what did you learn?)

Six Reading Reflections

Final Reflection, Week 14 (What did you Learn?)

Mexican American Public History Project-**25%**

Proposal

Project

Final Research Paper-**15%**

Assignment Due Dates and Important Dates

Important Dates

Labor Day-No Class, September 1st
Final Day to Drop Course, November 7th
Request an Incomplete, Start on November 8th
Thanksgiving Break, November 24th to 30th

Reflections:

1st Reflection (Who are you? What do you know?), August 24th (11:59pm)

***Note for Reflections 2 through 7: This is final due date to get at least two submitted. If you submit, they must be submitted the Sunday before class week.**

I'll explain more on the first week of class

2nd Reflection-September 7th (End of Week 4)
3rd Reflection-September 28th (End of Week 7)
4th and 5th Reflection-November 2nd (End of Week 11)
6th and 7th Reflection November 23rd (Day before Thanksgiving Break officially starts)

UnEssay Project:

Proposal-September 21st (11:59pm)
Unessay Product-October 24th (11:59pm)
Final Essay (based on project topic)-December 5th (11:59pm)

Final Assignment:

Final Reflection Essay (December 10th)

Course Outline and Readings.

ReThe instructor has the right to make adjustments. However, I will make sure to address any changes with you all prior to our class if possible:

Week 1 (Aug 18-22) Syllabus and Introduction

Understanding Mexican American History

8/23: How to use Library resources from Mr. Doug Campbell (Reference Librarian for history);
More discussion on project

Friday Exploratory Item

A Promising Problem (8 pages) by Carlos K. Blanton (University of Texas)

Week 2 (Aug 25-29): Indigenous America and Clash of Cultures

North to Aztlán: Chapter 1 (1-19), Native American and Spanish Settlement

Article: We Wait to be True People, Christians: An Idolatry Confession in Zapotec. By David Tavarez (Vassar College, note, only read the first seven pages)

Article: The Passion according to the Wooden Drum: The Christian Appropriation of a Zapotec Ritual Genre in New Spain. By David Tavarez (Vassar College)

Friday Exploratory Item:

Video- The Tarascan/Purépecha Empire: The Forgotten Empire of Mexico (*Ancient Americas*)

Week 3 (Sept 1-5): Nueva España and the Colonization of La Frontera

Labor Day: No Class Monday

North to Aztlán: Chapter 2 (20-40) The Spanish/Mexican Northern Frontier

Essay: The Paradox of Friendship: Loyalty and Betrayal on the Sonoran Frontier (2014). By Ignacio Martínez (UTEP)

Friday Exploratory Item:

Casta Paintings

Week 4 (Sept 8-12): Through Revolution: The Creation of the Mexican Peoples

Article: The Complicated History of Texas Revolutionary Hero Juan Seguín (Texas Highways).
By Roberto Andrade Franco (Journalist, ESPN)

Article: Tejanos role overlooked at the Alamo (mySanAntonio) by Vianna Davila

Friday Exploratory Items:

El Plan de Iguala/Plan of the Three Guarantees

General Manuel Mier y Teran's statement about American settlement

Week 5 (Sept 15-19): Natives in a Foreign Land: The Impact of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the creation of Mexican Americans

*North to Aztlán: Chapter 3 (41-62) Natives in a Foreign Land

Essay: Gender, Race, and Culture: Mexican Women in the Historiography of Frontier California (1990). By Antonia Castañeda (Professor Emeritus)

Essay: “For Our Own Best Interests”: Nineteenth-Century Laredo Tejanos, Military Service, and the Development of American Nationalism (2011). Alex Mendoza (UNT)

Friday Exploratory Item:

Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (excerpts)

Week 6 (Sept 22-26): La Frontera in Transition

*Supplemental Reading: North to Aztlán: Chapter 4 (63-84) The Borderlands in Transition

Article: Remembering the Birthday of Juan Cortina, The 'Robin Hood of the Rio Grande (NBC News) by Reynoldo Leanos Jr.

Essay: Rooted in Place, Constructed in Movement: Transnational Labor Solidarities in the Texas-Mexico Borderlands. By Sonia Hernández (Texas A&M University)

Friday Exploratory Items:

Primary Document: Las Gorras Blancas Platform

Video: Nightline (October 2020): Mexican Americans are still fighting for Land they were Promised generations ago.

Week 7 (Sept 29-Oct 3): Migration and Violence

*North to Aztlán: Chapter 5 (85-109) The New Colonias: Development, Dispersal, and Diversification, 1910-1930

Video: The Dark History of “Gasoline Baths” at the Border (Vox)

Interview: Fronteras: Massacre in a West Texas Border Town by Texas Public Radio (2018). Interviewees: Monica Muñoz Martínez (University of Texas) and Arlinda Valencia (descendant of Porvenir Massacre victim Longino Flores)

Friday Exploratory Item:

Refusing to Forget Project (More on this during first week)

Week 8 (Oct 6-10): Depression and Belonging

(North to Aztlán: Chapter 6 (110-134) Communities under Stress: Depression and War)

Essay: “In a Race all of their Own”: The Quest to make Mexicans Ineligible for U.S. Citizenship (2010). By Natalia Molina (University of Southern California)

Essay: Peloteros in Paradise: Mexican American Baseball and Oppositional Politics in Southern California, 1930-1950 (2003). By José Alamillo (California State University)

Friday Exploratory Item-

Article: Teen Vogue-Mexican Repatriation During the Great Depression, Explained. By Araceli Cruz

Week 9 (Oct 13-17): A World at War

Podcast: Tales from the Moon Tower, Episode 13: Felix Longoria: Civil Rights Legacy of a Fallen Soldier (21 Minutes)

Book Chapter: Tejanas on the Home Front: Women, Bombs, and the (Re)Gendering of War in Mexican American World War II Literature by Patricia Portales (San Antonio College)

Article: Fighting the Peace at Home: Mexican American Veterans and the 1944 GI Bill of Rights by Steven Rosales (University of Arkansas)

Friday Exploratory Items:

Oral Histories: Mexican American World War II Vets and Braceros (I will provide a list)

Video: Valentia: Mexican Americans in World War II – (PBS KVIE)

Week 10 (Oct 20-24): Research Week

Use time to finish the Un-essay project

Week 11 (Oct 27-31): Origins of Mexican American Civil Rights

North to Aztlán: Chapter 7 (135-157) Mexican Americans in Postwar America

+Article: Community resistance and Conditional patriotism in Cold War Los Angeles: The battle for Chavez Ravine by Ronald Lopez II (Sonoma State University)

Friday Exploratory Items-

Documentary: Adiós Amor: The Search for María Moreno (Streamable through UNT Library)

Essay: An Unladylike Strike Fashionably Clothed: Mexicana and Anglo Women Garment Workers against Tex-Son, 1959-1963. By Lori A. Flores (Stony Brook University, State University of New York system)

Week 12 (Nov 3-7): The Chicano Movement and Impact

North to Aztlán: Chapter 8 (158-181) Aztlán Rediscovered: The Chicano Movement

Essay: ¡Medicina Sí Muerte no!: Race, Public Health, and “the Long War on Poverty” in Mathis, Texas, 1948-1971 (2013). By Felipe Hinojosa (Baylor University)

Podcast: Making Contact-Frontline East LA: The Chicano Moratorium, 50 Years Later

Video: El Asco Interviews

Friday Exploratory Item:

Video: No Más Bebés (Documentary, Available to stream through UNT Library)

Week 13 (Nov 10-14): Legacies of the Chicano Movement and the end of the 20th Century

North to Aztlán: Chapter 9 (182-206) Latinos and the New Immigrants

Online Journal: *Inheriting a Path: Rosie Castro's Influence on Julian and Joaquin* by Tiffany Jasmin González (University of Kansas)

Video: P'URHÉPECHA MIGRANTS IN NORTH CAROLINA: A SAINT DAY FESTIVAL (Video, 7 minutes). By Yuridia Ramírez (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)

Friday Exploratory Items

Essay: Selena Quintanilla's Legacy as a Mexican American Superstar (Teen Vogue). By Ella Cerón

Video: I AM DENVER Documentary | Chicanas: Nurturers and Warriors?

Week 14 (Nov 17-21): Dilemmas and Promises of the New Millennium

North to Aztlán: Chapter 10 and Chapter 11 (207-232) The Dilemmas and Promises of the New Millennium & Community, Diversity, and Culture: Some Conclusions

Video: Sports Illustrated: Yehimi Cambrón's Murals for Atlanta's Super Bowl LIII (6 minutes)

Essay: Blue Beetle & the Missing City: El Paso by Anthony R. Ramirez (University of Houston-Downtown)

Article: How "America's Team" Became South Texas's Team (Texas Monthly) by Cecilia Ballí

Friday Exploratory Item

Guest Speaker: Colton Campbell, PhD Student, University of New Mexico (UNT Alum)

Meet with him and his Chicana Studies class on Zoom. More details available during semester

Thanksgiving Break November 24th to 30th

NO CLASS! NO ASSIGNMENTS DUE! REST!

Week 15 (Dec 1-4):

Finish up!

Finals Week: December 6th to December 12^h

Campus Resources

Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UIT Help Desk: [UIT Student Help Desk site \(Links to an external site.\)](http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm) (<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>)

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940-565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130

Walk-In Availability: 8am-9pm

Telephone Availability:

- Sunday: noon-midnight
- Monday-Thursday: 8am-midnight
- Friday: 8am-8pm
- Saturday: 9am-5pm

Laptop Checkout: 8am-7pm

Rules of Engagement

Rules of engagement refer to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors. Here are some general guidelines:

- While the freedom to express yourself is a fundamental human right, any communication that utilizes cruel and derogatory language on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law will not be tolerated.
- Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in any communication online or face-to-face, even when their opinion differs from your own.
- Ask for and use the correct name and pronouns for your instructor and classmates.
- Speak from personal experiences. Use “I” statements to share thoughts and feelings. Try not to speak on behalf of groups or other individual’s experiences.
- Use your critical thinking skills to challenge other people’s ideas, instead of attacking individuals.
- Avoid using all caps while communicating digitally. This may be interpreted as “YELLING!”
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm in emails or discussion posts as tone can be difficult to interpret digitally.
- Avoid using “text-talk” unless explicitly permitted by your instructor.
- Proofread and fact-check your sources.
- Keep in mind that online posts can be permanent, so think first before you type.

See these [Engagement Guidelines \(Links to an external site.\)](https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips) (<https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips>) for more information.

ADA Accommodation Statement: The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability

is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](http://www.unt.edu/oda) website (<http://www.unt.edu/oda>). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Course Technology & Skills

Minimum Technology Requirements

Provide a list of the minimum technology requirements for students, such as:

- Computer
- Reliable internet access
- Speakers
- Microphone
- Plug-ins
- Microsoft Office Suite

Computer Skills & Digital Literacy

Provide a list of course-specific technical skills learners must have to succeed in the course, such as:

- Using Canvas
- Using email with attachments
- Downloading and installing software
- Using spreadsheet programs
- Using presentation and graphics programs