Course Overview

What is early Chicana/o/x literature? Does it look like later Chicana/o/x literature? What does “Chicana/o/x” mean anyway? We will tackle these questions and more this quarter, beginning with how we might think about Pre-Columbian and colonial Mexican literature as Chicana/o/x. We will explore how Mexican and U.S. history inform each other during the 19th century, asking why their conflicts form the basis of contemporary Chicana/o/x identity. We end with the Mexican Revolution, which brings increased migration north, as well as the full-scale proletarianization and racialization of Mexicans in the United States. By the end of the quarter you will have a basic understanding of the historical forces shaping Chicana/o/x culture, the literary ways in which Chicanas/os/xs have responded to these forces, and a solid grounding for further courses in Chicana/o/x Studies.

Books

The following books are available for purchase at Ackerman:

- The Lieutenant Nun, Catalina de Erauso (Beacon Press, 1997)

CCLE

We will be using CCLE this quarter. You can access the site through MyUCLA by clicking on the course title in your study list. Readings not included in the above books, lecture slides, podcasts, and other media are available there.
Assignments and Grading

Midterm Close Reading (Due Week 4; 20% of your final grade): This essay is a 3-4 page close reading of a passage drawn from a text assigned in weeks 1-4 of our syllabus. You will develop an interpretation of the text based on the detailed analysis of concrete examples. Further guidance is available on the course website and from your TA.

Final Essay (Due Week 10; 30%): Your final essay is 6-8 pages in length. It will be on a topic of your own choosing, but you must compare two texts from our syllabus, one of which may be the text you chose for your midterm essay. Your final paper may thus be a revision and expansion of your midterm close reading. Further guidance is available on the course website and from your TA.

Final Exam (Thursday 12/13; 25%): Our final exam will be cumulative (weeks 1-10) and will include matching, identification, and essay questions.

In-Lecture Work (5%): Expect occasional, in-class, graded pop quizzes. These quizzes will help us help you stay on top of the reading while also preparing you for the kinds of questions you’ll see on the final.

Section (20%): TAs will design their section rubrics individually, and this will count towards your final grade.

A word about plagiarism: It goes without saying that you should not do it, which means you should not present someone else’s words or ideas as your own. In this class it will result in an F for the assignment and, possibly, further disciplinary action. Plagiarism can be tricky, though. How do you know if you’re doing it? Please ask if you have any questions or concerns. Your TAs and I are here to help you; and we certainly don’t want to discourage you from doing your own secondary research – that’s what learning’s all about!

Map of Mexico in 1821

Your success in this class is important to us.

We will all need accommodations at some point because we all learn differently and lead complicated lives. If there are aspects of this course (or your life) that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let us know as soon as possible. Together we’ll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course.

You might find the following resources helpful: The Center for Accessible Education (http://www.caе.ucla.edu/); Disabilities and Computing Program (http://www.dcp.ucla.edu/); The Undergraduate Writing Center (http://wp.ucla.edu/wc/); Links to a host of non-academic resources at UCLA including mental health, food security, and the Economic Crisis Response Team (http://www.brc.ucla.edu/Resources).
Course Schedule

Week 1

- M 10/1 Course Introduction
- W 10/3 Online: Selections from Ancient American Poets (Nezahualcoyotl’s poems # 1, 2, 7, 11, 12, and 13)

Week 2

- M 10/8 Online: Selections from The Broken Spears (chapters 1, 5, 9, 10, and 14)
- W 10/10 Online: “Apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe”

Week 3

- M 10/15 Cabeza de Vaca, 3 – 47 (through chapter 19)
- W 10/17 Cabeza de Vaca, 47 – 91 (chapters 20 - 38); and 150 – 159 (from A Brief Account, by Las Casas); Online: Selections from “The Second Democrats,” Ginés de Sepúlveda

Week 4 Paper 1 Due

- M 10/22 Erauso, chapter 1 – 11 (pp. 3-40)
- W 10/24 Erauso, chapters 12 – 26 (pp. 41-80)
Week 5

- M 10/29 Online: Selected poetry by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

- W 10/31 Online: “Indian Life at San Luis Rey;” “An Indian in California”

Week 6

- M 11/5 Online: Selections from Testimonio: Early California Through the Eyes of Women

- W 11/7 Ruiz de Burton, 1 – 86 (chapters I – IX); Online: Selections from the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo

Week 7

- M 11/12 VETERAN’S DAY - NO CLASS!

- W 11/14 Ruiz de Burton, pp. 86 – 157 (chapters X – XVII); Online: Selections from the California Constitution Debates

Week 8

- M 11/19 Ruiz de Burton, pp. 158 – 254 (chapters XVIII – XXVII)

- W 11/21 Happy Thanksgiving – NO CLASS!

Week 9

- M 11/26 Ruiz de Burton, pp. 255 – 375 (chapters xxviii – Conclusion)

- W 11/28 Online: Selections from A Texas-Mexican Cancionero

Week 10 Paper 2 Due

- M 12/3 Online: Mena, “John of God, Water Carrier,” “Doña Rita’s Rivals” Recommended reading [online]: Selected writings of Ricardo Flores-Magón; John Kenneth Turner’s “The Slaves of Yucatan”

- W 12/5 No reading for today - Final Review

Finals Week Final Exam Thursday 12/13, 3 – 6 pm in 169 Humanities