

ENGL 4321.001
Place, Space, and Identity in US Borderlands Literature
Fall 2011

Dr. Cordelia Barrera

Office: 205

Office Hours: Wed. 10 am -12:00 pm; Fri. 11 am - 12 noon, and by appt.

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ENGL 4321. Studies in Literary Topics: Place, Space, and Identity in U.S. Borderlands Literature. This course focuses on counter-narratives of nation-making and identity in Native American, Chicana/o, and Euro-American conceptions of U.S.-Mexico borderland places and spaces to critique the centrality of landscape, human geography, and sustainable patterns of being-in-the-world in terms of national and/or regional identities. In order to uncover complex negotiations within and between competing cultures, societies, and subjectivities along the U.S-Mexico border in the region known as the American Southwest, we will explore foundational borderlands fictions and consider essays and articles that engage current theoretical and critical debates in the field of social and cultural geography, border theory, ecocritical theory, and third space feminism. Questions that will focus our discussion include: How does the Southwestern landscape factor, or fracture identity among different cultures? How is the sense of this region imagined across cultures, histories, and into the globalized present? How do current ecocritical models intertwine with border theory, and third space feminist theories of the body?

Course Goals & Learning Outcomes and Assessment. English 4321 is a writing intensive course that introduces students to representative works by Americans of different cultures in the American Southwest. Students will be able to apply foundational literary concepts such as style, characterization, structure, setting, point of view, tone, etc. and critical strategies/theories such as Cultural Studies, Postcolonial Theory, Deconstruction, Structuralism, Gender Studies, Ecocriticism, and New Historicism to actively read, analyze, discuss, and write about a representative sample of texts. Students will gain an appreciation of how literary texts reflect and inform our human condition regionally, nationally, and globally and the behaviors, ideas, and values of a Southwestern multicultural society. As such, students will challenge their own cultural and personal beliefs while examining cultural differences and developing meaningful relationships through communication with those from different cultures. Final **Assessment** by professor is made on the basis of student essays and participation in class discussion (specifically by use of vocabulary/literary terms); presentation of ideas, theory, and critical analysis in written essays and examinations; thoughtful and coherent presentation of ideas in oral report.

Primary Texts

Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (1997)

Larry McMurtry, *Horseman, Pass By* (1989)

Americo Paredes, *George Washington Gómez* (1990)

Mary Hunter Austin, *Cactus Thorn* (1988)

Ron Arias, *The Road to Tamazunchale* (1987)
 Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (1986)
 Helena Maria Viramontes, *The Moths and Other Stories* (1995)
 Class Course Pack of Readings (available at Copy Center in Student Union)

Secondary Texts (Group Presentations):

Max Crawford, *Lords of the Plain* (1997)
 Ana Castillo, *So Far From God* (2005)
 Edward Abbey, *The Monkey Wrench Gang* (1976)
 Dorothy Scarborough, *The Wind* (1925)
 Luis Alberto Urrea, *The Devil’s Highway* (1995)

Attendance. Regular attendance and participation in class discussion is expected and required. Students must come to class on time and be prepared to discuss the day's readings in depth. Ultimately, students are responsible for all work covered in the course. **6 absences results in an F for the course.** In extreme and/or extended cases of illness or emergency, Please contact the instructor and be prepared to provide the academic dean &/or the Center for Campus Life legitimate documentation. At ten minutes past the hour, the roll sheet will be taken up. If you arrive 10 minutes late, you will be counted absent for the day. 2 tardies = one absence; continued tardiness will not be tolerated. Attendance is valued at 10%:

0-1 absences: A	4 absences: D
2 absences: B	5 absences: F
3 absences: C	6 absences: Failure for Course

Late work. Daily Assignments and **Quizzes due to absence or tardiness will not be accepted**; all other assignments will receive a 10% deduction for each class meeting it is late unless you have made prior arrangements with the instructor regarding an extension; work over one full week late MAY NOT be accepted. Work missed due to observance of a sanctioned holiday follows TTU policy. All papers, assignments, and quizzes are expected in paper form, not via e-mail. Please adhere to this policy and **DO NOT ask to send assignments via e-mail.**

Special accommodations: Any student needing special accommodations or assistance to meet the requirements of this course due to a disability should contact AccessTech (250 West Hall) and notify the instructor as soon as possible.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity: Plagiarism is grounds for failure in this course; for TTU definitions and policies concerning plagiarism and academic dishonesty, check the University Catalog. Please appreciate and help maintain the academic environment of the classroom. Some students might find certain subjects depicted in some texts or films discussed offensive. If you encounter something offensive, feel free to remove yourself from the situation—leaving the room, etc.—and contact the instructor as soon as possible to arrange for alternate assignments. Likewise, please show respect for your fellow classmates in your conduct. This includes listening to whoever is speaking and not interrupting

presentations in progress, including class discussions (or film screenings). ***Please turn off all electronic devices before class begins, and use Laptops wisely and courteously.***

Assignments:

Attendance/Participation	10%
Daily Quizzes/Assignments	10%
Reading Response Papers (2 @ 3-4 pages) Student's choice, primary texts	20%
Critical Paper (7-9 pages)	20%
Oral Presentation	10%
Midterm (in-class essay)	10%
Final (essay and terminology)	20%
TOTAL	100%

Daily Quizzes/Assignments Cannot be made up unless accompanied by an EXCUSED absence (sickness with Dr.'s excuse, death of immediate family member, school functions) No exceptions. Assigned quizzes may be turned in early if you know you will not be in class on the due date. Daily work, often done in groups, is counted as a Quiz. Quizzes are either assigned or "pop" quizzes done individually or in groups. Assigned quizzes should be neatly written or typed and follow MLA format if necessary. Two Quiz grades will be dropped. Quizzes/Daily Work is graded holistically:

✓ + = 100% (completes requirements fully: correct MLA format; insightful and critical content; few to no gram/lang. errors)

✓ = 80% (basic requirements fulfilled; MLA format may be lacking; content may lack coherence or insight; gram/lang. errors evident)

✓ - = 60% (incomplete MLA format; errors lead to confusion; incoherent development; formal requirements not met)

- **Reading Responses.** Two valued @ 10% each throughout the semester. See "Reading Response" handout for more information. [Self-Reflection and Critique].
NOTE: The **TTU Writing Center** is located in Room 175. Website:
<http://uwc.ttu.edu/>

Upon completion of Reading Response # 1, you may be asked to visit a tutor and provide proof of your visit.

- **Critical Paper.** Valued @ 20% See "Critical Paper" handout for more info. All students **MUST** turn in a critical paper in order to pass the course. [Critical Thinking/Theroy and Critique

- **Mid Term and Final Exams.** Will be explained more fully during the semester. All students MUST complete both in order to pass the course. [Terminology and Short Essay]

*Course Outline

*subject to change if necessary as course progresses

UNIT ONE: Territory & Space

Week ONE

Aug 24 Introductions; Syllabus
Aug 26 Intro to Unit One

Week TWO

Aug 29 Coursepack: Cabeza De Vaca, “The Account” & La Vere, “The Texas Indians”
Aug 31 *Horseman, Pass By* Prologue and Ch 1 - 7
Sept 2 *Horseman, Pass By* Ch 7 - end;
Coursepack: Mogen, “The Frontier Archetype”

Week THREE

Sept 5 **Labor Day Holiday**
Sept 7 Coursepack: McMurtry, “SW as Cradle” & Culler, Ch 1 and 2 “What is Theory/Literature”
Sept 9 **Discussion of Reading Responses and Forming Groups** (Secondary Texts)

Week FOUR

Sept 12 **SW Collection Tour**
Sept 14 Coursepack: Glotfelty, “Literary Studies in an Age...” & McDowell, “The Bakhtinian Approach...” and Culler, Appendix
Sept 16 *Cactus Thorn* Foreward - Ch 4
Reading Response # 1 Due (*Horseman, Pass By*)

Week FIVE

Sept 19 *Cactus Thorn* Ch 5 - End
Sept 21 *Cactus Thorn* Afterword
Sept 23 Coursepack: Merchant, “The Role of Gender”...(from *Reinventing Eden*)

UNIT TWO Place & Counter Narratives of Nation-Making

Week SIX

Sept 26 **In-class Writing Quiz** (worth 2 quiz grades, cannot be dropped)
Sept 28 *Ceremony* 1 - “The army recruiter had taped...” (about p. 64)
Sept 30 *Ceremony* p. 65 - “NOTE ON BEAR PEOPLE AND WITCHES” (about 131)
Reading Response # 2 Due (*Cactus Thorn*)

Week SEVEN

Oct 3 *Ceremony* p. 131 - “Robert stayed in the big stakebed truck...” (about p. 214)

Oct 5 *Ceremony* p. 215 - end; Coursepack: Silko, “Landscape, History...”
 Oct 7 Coursepack: Abbey, “Cowboys & Indians Part II”

Oct 10 **Fall Break Holiday**
 Oct 12 *Ceremony* Final Discussion
 Oct 14 Group Work (Critical Paper Topic DUE)
Reading Response # 3 Due (*Ceremony*)

Week NINE

Oct 17 Coursepack: Anzaldúa, “*La conciencia de la mestiza*”; Sandoval, “Technologies of Crossing”
 Oct 19 *The Moths*: “The Moths”; “Growing”; “The Broken Web”;
 Oct 21 *The Moths*: “Cariboo Cafe” and Culler Ch 3

UNIT THREE Human Geography & Identity

Week TEN

Oct 24 *Rag Doll Plagues* Book One
 Oct 26 *Rag Doll Plagues* Book Two
 Oct 28 *Rag Doll Plagues* Book Three

Week ELEVEN

Oct 31 Coursepack: Paz, “Day of the Dead” (Works Cited/Outline Crit. Paper DUE)
 Nov 2 Culler, Ch 5, 6 & 8
 Nov 4 Group Work
Reading Response # 4 Due (*Rag Doll Plagues*)

Week TWELVE

Nov 7 **Draft # 1 Critical Paper Due/Peer Review**
 Nov 9 *Road to Tamazunchale* Ch 1 -6 (don’t read Intro till 11/14)
 Nov 11 *Road to Tamazunchale* Ch 7 - 13

Week THIRTEEN

Nov 14 *Road to Tamazunchale* Introduction
Critical Paper Due
 Nov 16 Film: *Maquilopolis*
 Nov 18 Film: *Maquilopolis*

Week FOURTEEN

Nov 21 Group Work
Reading Response # 5 Due (*Road to Tamazunchale*)
 Nov 23/25 **Thanksgiving Holiday**

Week FIFTEEN

Nov 28/30/2 Oral Reports

Week SIXTEEN

Dec 5/7 Oral Reports

Final Exam 10:30 am – 1:00 pm, Wed. Dec 14

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