Course Description

This interdisciplinary course focuses on studying and researching the Southern US Border, especially the space along the border wall. Through visuals, interviews, reports, articles, media reports, technical documents related to the wall/fence, we will look at the wall from a visual perspective and analyze it that way, as well as examine the visual images and general media information, representing the limited view/image/understanding most have of the border and the fence. Certainly the concept of “fake news” will help to frame our discussion. Students will conduct primary research in order to find out from people they know/people in our community what they know about the wall, what images help to create that knowledge, how does this info create a reality/perspectives for these viewers. Students will also research/interview people with first-hand knowledge/experience living near the border/crossing the border/having relatives or friends who are separated from others because of the border. This could also include organizations who do work with the immigrant population, ie border patrol agents or groups such as Border Angels who leave water out in the desert for immigrants.

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of the course, a student will be able to

- discuss the concept of New Materialist Rhetoric (NMR),
- analyze information using NMR,
- conduct primary research and present findings.

Put in more everyday, layman terms, students will develop a broad understanding of the definition of NMR, learn to analyze information using NMR, and research and report findings.

Graduate Expectations: Bona fide graduate-school behavior is distinguished in at least five ways:

- Students read assignments on time, completely, to the last page, and come to class with serious responses and a willingness to discuss them.
- Students do not assume that an assignment is legitimate only if it is graded. The work is done for its own sake.
- Students expect to attend every class, and make home arrangements to ensure that this happens.
- Students approach all readings and coursework with an open mind and a spirit of curiosity. They work to understand ideas and texts prior to attacking or dismissing them.
- Students assume that open and equitable discussion is the soul of a graduate seminar. Everyone participates. Rather than expecting the professor or other students to originate or maintain discussion, students take on the responsibility to contribute their share.

Course Texts and Materials

Still Life with Rhetoric: A New Materialist Approach for Visual Rhetorics
By Laurie Gries
Utah State University Press, 2015

Border Angels: The Power of One
By Enrique Morones
San Diego State University Press, 2015

You will probably have to buy this book through Amazon or another outlet as the bookstore probably won’t have it.
We also will use several texts available for free online, and you will make use of our library collection and a number of open source, credible online resources.

Additional expectations for course "materials":
- Active student account to access University resources (network, library, student support)
- Active account @ Microsoft Office 365 (free from University)
- Active account @ Google

Major Course Requirements (How you will earn your grade)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussing/Engaging</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>NMR Analysis</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary Research</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Report</td>
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Technical Requirements
- The course is delivered entirely within the TAMUCC Blackboard system. Blackboard Login [https://bb9.tamucc.edu/webapps/login/](https://bb9.tamucc.edu/webapps/login/)
- It is up to each student to visit the TAMUCC IT Department's Blackboard Technical Requirement's webpage ([https://iol.tamucc.edu/techreq.html](https://iol.tamucc.edu/techreq.html)) to determine the computer requirements for using Blackboard. (FYI, the browser that works best with Blackboard is Chrome.)
- Instructor response to online requests usually occurs within a 24-hour period, but you can expect a response within 3 days.
- Students should check Blackboard on a regular basis for announcements/updates.
- Instructor maintains a consistent web presence and is available to meet either online, video chat or phone.

Student Engagement
Students will practice respect and responsibility as a part of this learning community. Here are some things you can do to exhibit an attitude of respect and responsibility:
- Post assignments on time. Early is even better.
- Work extra hard to get to know other classmates.
- Reach out through email or Blackboard posts to support each other. If you have good info/tips on what is working for you/resource ideas, please share with the group so we can help each other out.
- Respect other classmates by watching what you say.
- Add your opinions to/participate in the discussions.
- Check the assignments every week. Don’t wait until the last minute.
- Be helpful to other students
- Don’t get behind. If you get behind in an online course it is harder to get back on track than it is in a traditional course.
- Stay focused and stay connected.
- Keep up with your assignments and your grades. It is not the teacher's responsibility to tell you what you have or haven’t turned in. Your grades will be available in Blackboard so all you have to do is regularly check to make sure you have grades posted.
- Plagiarism should not be a part of your writing practices. You will be encouraged to rewrite any documents that you need help with. Most often the issue is not that a student is trying to steal another’s work, but rather a lack of experience in how best to incorporate the discussions of others in their own writing. Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor if you feel you need extra assistance in this area.

In general terms, students are expected to "demonstrate a high level of maturity, self-direction and ability to manage their own affairs" and to "conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty" (Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi General Academic Policies and Regulations). Instances of plagiarism will be handled in accordance with Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi General Academic Policies and Regulations as listed in the current catalog.

Late work is generally not accepted. I expect you to handle issues that come up as a professional would. If you post a little past midnight on due dates, as long as the work is there by the time I review the work it’s not an issue. You should handle the situation as much as you can, and not feel like you need to email me about every little detail. When things happen beyond your control, communicate with me as a professional so that the burden of taking care of the situation rests on you. Activity assignments will not be accepted late. If you do not get the work turned in when it is due you will not receive credit for that work. As long as you turn your work in on time, you will be given opportunities to rewrite any work that needs extra attention, so turning your work in on time works very much to your advantage.
Also, for major projects, work will not be accepted for projects that the student has not turned in drafts over the course of the semester. In other words, if you turn in a major project at the end of the semester on the day it is due and have never submitted drafts of the work prior to that time, the work will not be accepted.

Discussion Forum

- Review the discussion threads thoroughly before entering the discussion
- Try to maintain threads by using the “Reply” button rather than starting a new topic
- Do not make insulting or inflammatory statements to other members of the discussion group
- Be patient and read the comments of other members thoroughly before adding your remarks
- Be positive and constructive in group discussions
- Respond in a thoughtful and timely manner

Course Policies

**Classroom/professional behavior:** Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. This applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

More specifically, in this course, I want our community of learning to be a “Safe Zone”: Professional etiquette and civility are expected. Respect the diversity of the classroom. Personal attacks or hate speech are unacceptable on any grounds, including (but not limited to) race, gender, class, sexual/affectional orientation, religion, age, or disability.

**Graduate Student Academic Integrity Statement:** English graduate students are expected to “conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty” (Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Graduate Catalog). The Student Code of Conduct defines Academic Misconduct as cheating, plagiarism, multiple submissions, complicity, fabrication, falsification, and misrepresentation; in addition to “any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion” (Student Code of Conduct, Article III, 1. Academic Misconduct). Academic misconduct is a serious offense that will result in the professor assigning a serious penalty, possibly including failure for an assignment, failure in a course, or recommendation for dismissal from a program (TAMUCC Graduate Catalog, Academic Honesty). For each Academic Misconduct case, the faculty member must file a record, including a description of the disciplinary action taken, along with any materials involved, with his or her college dean, who will forward a copy to the Office of Student Affairs. Further information regarding the judicial process is available on the website of the Office for Student Affairs

**Graduate Advising:** The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

Upon entering the MA in English Program, each student is assigned a faculty mentor by the Graduate Coordinator. You should make an appointment to meet with your faculty mentor every semester to develop a degree plan and monitor your progress toward graduation. Your faculty mentor can also answer questions and provide valuable information about the comprehensive examination, other degree requirements, Ph.D. programs, and career opportunities. To finalize your degree plan and register for graduation, you must also meet with the Graduate Student Academic Advisor in the Academic Advising Center for the College of Liberal Arts. This office is located in Driftwood 203E and can be reached at (361) 825-3466.

**Dropping a Class:** I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. **Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course.** Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. June 15, 2018 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of "W" this term.

**Grade Appeals:** As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to
demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, *Student Grade Appeals*. These documents are accessible online at: [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, [http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html).

**Disabilities Accommodations:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Statement of Academic Continuity:** In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

**Required Statements**

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Provisional Course Outline

Week One

- Read and Respond
- Analysis
- Discussion
  - Online synchronous meeting – Time TBA

Week Two

- Read and Respond
- Analysis
- Discussion
  - Online synchronous meeting – Time TBA

Week Three

- Read and Respond
- Conduct Primary Research
- Discussion
  - Online synchronous meeting – Time TBA

Week Four

- Read and Respond
- Conduct Primary Research
- Discussion
  - Online synchronous meeting – Time TBA

Week Five

- Final Research Report
- Final exam