**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This is an undergraduate-level survey of Mexican American Women’s history from the 20th century to the present. Students will learn about the emergence of the field and gain a broad understanding of its evolving historiography over the last three decades. Students will explore the social, political, economic and cultural trends within the context of Mexican American women’s life experiences. Using the broad themes of the borderlands, immigration, labor, citizenship, sexuality, popular culture, education, and politics students will utilize these in order to better interrogate those experiences. The course is designed to help students better understand the various experiences and perspectives of Mexican American women across space and time. We will also examine the development of a distinctive Chicana identity and feminism that emerged during the Chicano movement and how that shapes what it means to be Chicana today. By the end of the course, it is my fervent hope that you will have become more critical writers and readers and apply some of the course materials to better inform your own scholarly work and understanding of the Mexican American experience in a 21st century context.

A successful experience in this course will depend on your individual commitment and work ethic, as well as your ability to be an active participant. I encourage all students to visit with me regularly throughout the semester, rather than waiting until the end of the semester to ask questions or express concerns. As in most courses, students should be proactive about their work and ready to discuss concepts and share examples during class. Furthermore, a professor who is familiar with their students is better able to help their students accomplish their personal goals, so make yourself known for doing good work, contributing to class discussion, pursuing your professional interests outside of the classroom, and sharing your goals, successes, and challenges with your instructor is critical.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- Trace and interpret major themes in Mexican American Women’s history through the course readings, writing assignments and weekly discussions.
- Apply the concepts of gender, race, class and sexuality as analytical tools for historical interpretation
- Produce narrative and oral/visual interpretations of Mexican American Women’s history based on the course readings and an oral history interview
- Apply themes and elements from readings and course materials in order to produce informational materials for a public audience and to contribute to scholarly discourse

**TEXTS AND/OR SUPPLIES:**

The following textbooks will be required and are available at the TAMU-CC bookstore, TAMU-CC Bell Library or through interlibrary loan.


Excerpts from the following readings will also be assigned and will be made available via the course Blackboard page. Additional readings relevant to the course content may be distributed at the discretion of the instructor.


5. Emma Perez, *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History.* (Bloomington, IN, 1999).


**Course Policies**

**Attendance/Participation Policy:** In-class discussions will coincide with the readings for with additional information and critical contexts, attendance and participation are crucial to this class. Attendance will be taken every class session by sign-in sheet. Missing more than 3 class sessions will result in ONE FULL LETTER GRADE REDUCTION. ‘Excused absences’ are by instructor approval and should be requested ahead of time, if possible.

Participation in class is critical. Short in-class writing responses and group work will not be given a letter grade per se, but will count towards your participation grade. These exercises cannot be made up. Simply being present in class will not earn you full points for the day. I will take into account participation, preparedness, and promptness when assigning daily participation grades. In addition, any disruptive behavior or use of electronic devices (including use of laptops for non-course related work, cell phones) will be noted, resulting in a deduction of daily participation points. I reserve the right to award daily or average points to students who continually surpass classroom expectations. I also reserve the right to deduct daily or average points from students who consistently lack engagement or disregard classroom rules.

**LATE WORK** I will NOT accept late daily work assignments because those assignments are, in essence, part of your attendance and participation grade. There will be no make-ups for missed daily grades. For any major assignment, please email me at least 48 hours before the due date if there are extenuating circumstances that will cause you to miss a due date. You will need to propose a new due date and upon final submission of the assignment, documentation that proves an extension was granted. You will have one week in which to turn in the assignment. However, if you do not meet your own deadline your assignment will be penalized a letter grade each day the assignment is not turned in. This policy includes weekends. NO ASSIGNMENTS RELATED TO THE COURSE WILL BE ACCEPTED OVER EMAIL. NO EXCEPTIONS.

**OFFICE HOURS** Attending office hours is a key to success in higher education, especially in writing intensive courses. I expect that you utilize office hours for one on one feedback on your writing, and to be able to address your learning needs on an individualized basis. Because of FERPA regulations, we cannot discuss grades in the classroom; this must be done during office hours. I am willing to give you feedback on your writing. In order to be fair, please abide by the following guidelines: we can’t spend more than 15 minutes with you during office hours if other students are waiting. Obviously, I am delighted to spend more time with you if our schedules permit. I am happy to answer specific questions regarding writing assignments via email. However, I will not provide any detailed feedback on your writing via email.

**EMAIL COMMUNICATION** Please consider e-mail as official correspondence. Efforts will be made to address your e-mail within 24 hours. If you do not receive an email within 24 hours, please send a follow-up email.

- No email correspondence on the day before a major deadline.

- E-mail communications should be about class business. E-mail is not the place for summaries of lectures, discussions, or readings, however. You will need to avail yourself to scheduled office hours or make an appointment to discuss these.

- Please use the subject line in a way that indicates the content of the message. Please use professional language and include your full name and a complete inquiry in the body of the message. Unprofessional emails will result in non-response.

**GRADED EVENTS:** If you feel that you were graded unfairly & disagree with a grade that you earned, please follow these steps: 1.) Read the rubric or assignment description and consider; did you follow all of the guidelines? 2.) Look over your
writing for my specific, typed/written comments…do these shed any light? 3.) Next, come see me during office hours or schedule an appointment to see me to discuss your concerns. If you are disappointed in your performance, and believe that the assignment you turned in is not representative of your best work, please come and see me as well. I am open to discussing ways to help you improve the grade you earned. You must observe a 24-hour waiting period and meet with me personally to discuss these options.

Islander Email Account/ Blackboard: It is VERY IMPORTANT that you activate your Islander Email account and log onto Blackboard, as it will serve as my primary means of correspondence with you. Throughout the semester, I will be sending emails sharing important information relating to the course and I want to ensure that you receive this information. For quick questions or minor issues, you may contact me via e-mail. For more complicated concerns or questions, please make use of my office hours or make an appointment to meet with me. I am always willing to make myself available to help you succeed in this course. I advise you to identify and remedy any concerns as early as you can during the semester – the more time we have to address it – the more likely it is we will be able to resolve it in a way that allows you to be successful. If you wait until the end of the semester, there is little I can usually do to help at that point.

Laptops, Cell Phones & Other Technology: Please turn off your cell phones or turn them to silent, and put them away, before class begins, out of respect for your peers and me. Laptops and other electronic devices are permitted for particular activities as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Assignments:

Attendance and Participation- (10%) See description above.

Your Personal Statement – (5%) Students will be required to submit a personal academic essay where you will discuss your decision to study history, the fields within the discipline you are most interested in and your future career goals. An additional handout will be provided with more details at a later date.

Reading Responses– (30%) Students will be required to submit bi-weekly reading electronically via Blackboard. Essay topics will be assigned one week prior to due date. The essays should demonstrate critical thinking regarding the given topic by engaging classroom material (lecture, films, visuals) and reading material, with your original ideas and when appropriate, your personal experiences. You will be assigned eight of these responses over the course of the term, your lowest 2 scores will be dropped.

Group Readings Facilitations (15%) Students will be responsible for leading class discussion to better help contextualize the readings and topics for your colleagues. Each group discussion should consist of: 1) each group will lead a discussion 25 minutes in length 2) a formally prepared list of discussion questions for the class 3) a brief statement of what each group member was responsible for, and your group MUST incorporate a visual that coincides with the reading. This will account for 15% of your final grade. DUE DATE: Varies according to group. We will sign up for topics and discussion dates in September.

Oral History Project (20%) Students will develop a research project that explores in-depth one or more facets of Mexican American Women’s experiences (i.e. politics, labor, migration, education, sexuality). In addition to gathering traditional sources in your area of interest, students will find one person to interview whose personal experiences speak to the research topic. The project will be developed over the semester through a series of steps (i.e. proposal, interview plan, working bibliography, etc.). The final project should include 1) a 3 page paper combining your analysis of the scholarly sources with analysis of your interview, 2) a Bibliography, 3) a current photograph of you and your interviewee. A separate handout explaining the assignment in more detail will be distributed at a later date. More information will be provided in the form of class discussion.

Group Research Presentations (15%) As part of your learning experience, you will complete oral/visual presentation, in which you will present your Oral History Research project research and your conclusions to your colleagues and instructor. Research topics/interviewees will be chosen in October. For this project, you will work with three or four students in our class whose research connects to your own, based on key ideas presented in the course. Together, you will create a formal, academic research presentation. You will need to make many composing decisions about content and format in collaboration with your group members. Given that this presentation is based on academic research, you will not be allowed to present unless you have submitted all of the Oral History Project deliverables on the assigned due dates. Your goal is to share what you have
learned with your colleagues in a way that they will find interesting and engaging. An additional handout will be provided with more details at a later date.

Final Course Reflection (5%) Your final reflection is an in class essay in which you will share your experiences and “takeaways” from the course this semester. In doing so, this reflection will overlap the personal with academic writing so that the reader may get a glimpse of what your semester within the course has been like and how what you learned will shape the work you will do in your chosen profession. An additional handout will be provided with more details at a later date.

PROVISIONAL COURSE OUTLINE:

***This syllabus is subject to change, at the discretion of the instructor.***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>COURSE MATERIAL TO BE DISCUSSED</th>
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**Week 1**
- Tuesday (8/28) Introduction to the course
  Handout/Discuss Syllabus
- Thursday(8/30) Brief Overview of Terms and History
  Joan W. Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis”

**Week 2**
- Tuesday(9/4) Emergence of Chicana Feminism (Readings available via Blackboard)
- Thursday (9/6) Emergence of Chicana Feminism, continued
  Rosaura Sanchez, “History of Chicanas: A Proposal for a Materialist Perspective”
  Sign up for Reading Facilitations

Reading Response #1 due via Blackboard

**Week 3**
- Tuesday (9/11) **Migration**
  Vicki Ruiz, “Border Journeys” Read Chapter 1 From Out of the Shadows
  *For participation, bring in an article or news-story on Mexican women and migration to share and discuss with the class.
- Thursday (9/13) **Assimilation**
  Vicki Ruiz, “Confronting America” Read Chapter 2 From Out of the Shadows

**Week 4**
- Tuesday (9/18) **Labor Activism**
  Vicki Ruiz, “With Pickets, Baskets, and Ballots” Read Chapter 4 from Out of the Shadows
- Thursday, 9/20 **Labor & Migration**

**Reading Response #2 due via Blackboard**

**Week 5**

**Tuesday, (9/25)**

**Education and Activism**

Vicki Ruiz, “La Nueva Chicana: Women and the Movement” Read Chapter 5 From Out of the Shadows

Gloria Anzaldúa, “How to Tame a Wild Tongue”

**Thursday, (9/27)**

**Education and Activism continued**


Denise Segura, “Navigating Between Worlds, The Labyrinth of Chicana Intellectual Production”

**Week 6**

**Tuesday, (10/2)**

**Political Familialism**

Vicki Ruiz, “Claiming Public Space” Read Chapter 6 From Out of the Shadows

Maylei Blackwell, “Spinning the Record: Historical Writing and Righting”

Motherhood and Activism

**Thursday, (10/4)**

**Agents and Icons**

Catherine Ramirez, Read Preface-Introduction and Chapter 1 “Domesticating the Pachuca” of The Woman in the Zoot Suit

*(Zoot Suit film)*

**Reading Response 3 due via Blackboard**

**Week 7**

**Tuesday, (10/9)**

**Agents and Icons, continued**

Ramirez, “Black Skirts, Dark Slacks, and Brown Knees: Pachuca Style and the Spectacle during World War II”, Read Chapter 2 of the Woman in the Zoot Suit

*For participation, bring in an article or news-story on the Pachuca/chola aesthetic to share and discuss with the class

**Thursday, (10/11)**

Ramirez, Read Chapter 3 of the Woman in the Zoot Suit

* Oral History Interviewee proposal due

**Week 8**

**Tuesday, (10/16)**

**Moving from the Visual to the Individual**

Ramirez, Read Chapter 4 of the Woman in the Zoot Suit

**Thursday (10/18)**

Ramirez, Read Epilogue
Reading Response #4 due via Blackboard

**Week 9**

Tuesday (10/23)  
Anzaldúa “La herencia de Coatlicue/ The Coatlicue State”; “Entering Into the Serpent”  
Sandra Cisneros, “Guadalupe the Sex Goddess”

Thursday(10/25)  
Cisneros “Little Miracles, Kept Promises”; “Anguiano Religious Articles Rosaries Statues…”

* Preliminary oral history interview questions and working bibliography due via Blackboard

**Week 10**

Tuesday, (10/30)  
Memorializing the Past  
Deborah Paradez, *Selenidad* Read the Introduction

Thursday (11/1)  
Paradez, *Selenidad* Read Chapter 1

Reading Response #5 due via Blackboard

**Week 11**

Tuesday, (11/6)  
Soundtracks of *Selenidad*  
Paradez, *Selenidad* Read Chapter 2

Thursday, (11/8)  
Paradez, *Selenidad* Read Chapter 3

**Week 12**

Tuesday, (11/13)  
Deborah R. Vargas, “Cruzando Frontejas: Remapping Selena’s Tejano Music ‘Crossover’”;

Deborah Paredez, *Selenidad* Read Chapter 4

Thursday, (11/15)  
Gender & Sexuality  
Deborah Paredez, *Selenidad* Read Chapter 5 ;  
“La conciencia de la mestiza/ Towards a New Consciousness” ;  
“Movimientos de rebeldía y las culturas que traicionan”; Gloria Anzaldua, “To(o) Queer the Writer—Loca, escritora y chicana”

Reading Response #6 due via Blackboard

**Weeks 13**

Tuesday, (11/20)  
Group Research Presentation Team Meetings with instructor

Thursday (11/22)  
Thanksgiving

**Week 14**

Tuesday (11/27)  
Group Research Presentations

Thursday (11/29)  
Group Research Presentations

**Week 15**

Tuesday (12/4)  
Final Oral History Projects due via Blackboard

Final Exam Period: Tuesday, December 11th Final Reflections due
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.

Academic 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.

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. The last day to drop a course for the Fall semester is Friday, November 9th.

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. 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.