PHL 316/REL 316
Intellectual Issues of Mexico & Mexican Americans
Four Credits

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Office hours: Mondays 3:30-5pm

Description
This course examines the struggle by intellectuals and activists to define Mexican, Latin American, and Chicana/o cultural identity over the past five hundred years. We will begin with Mexico, studying the ways in which Mexican indigenous peoples understood their world. Then we examine how the European Conquest of the Americas framed the discourse of race, culture, and human rights and changed both the societies of Europe and the Americas. We will then proceed to look at how the concept of Arielismo came to influence Latin American thought and form the basis of an attitude challenging the United States dominance in the Americas. Finally, we will examine how the language of mestizaje has influenced Mexican Americans to frame their cultural identity and create a bridge to the people of Latin America.

There are no pre-requisites for this course.

Required Texts:
*Latin American Philosophy*, Susana Nuccetelli
Selected Readings are available on Blackboard.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Our learning outcomes for this course include being able to:

1. Identify and analyze characteristics of a cultural tradition outside of European/American culture.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of how perspectives can change depending on cultural or historical contexts.
3. Describe aspects of Non-Western culture that influence or contribute to global cultural, scientific, or social processes.

Class Protocols
This course is conducted on the principle of cooperative learning. This means that participation in class discussion is expected and is part of your final grade calculation.
Cooperative learning means that students will be expected to offer their views on the readings and possibly to revise them upon reexamination with other views. This class will be structured to make sure that all our opinions are geared toward helping others understand better and that input is taken seriously by all of us in a respectful and civil environment. Cooperative learning also means that students come on time to class and do not leave early.

**Bring books and articles to all class sessions.** We will refer to key passages frequently during class and students will be asked to interpret them in discussion. Obviously, we will need our books and articles for close reading.

**Come prepared for class.** Being prepared means that students have read the assigned material for the day and are prepared to discuss it or have questions about it. Don’t be deceived by the length of some of these readings—philosophy can be very demanding reading. Try to read the assignments at least twice before class and again after class discussion for maximum comprehension.

**Please turn off all cell phones and other portable electronic devices during class discussion.** Please do not text or read other materials during class; if you are caught disrupting class this way, I will ask you to put away your device, book, or newspaper until the end of the class period.

**Do not use your personal computers during class unless you have cleared it with me first.** Lectures and class discussions may not be recorded without prior approval.

Students with disabilities who have accommodations approved through Disabilities Access Services are responsible for contacting me during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098.

**Grades and Assignments**

Final grades will be calculated according to the following guideline. Each assignment is worth a certain percentage of the overall final grade. Factors such as increased participation and signs of improvement in your written work will definitely be taken into account.

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation:</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Reading Journals:</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>First Paper:</td>
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<td>Final Paper:</td>
<td>30%</td>
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**Participation:** An important component of your grade will be class discussion participation. Students will be expected to listen, learn, and respond to the ideas of class
colleagues and, in general, to maintain, the integrity and flow of the conversation. Participation means more than just showing up for class and hoping that students can get answers from the professor or from the students who talk a lot. It means coming prepared to class, having done the reading, and ready to share ideas and questions. In general, individual participation is based on the following criteria:

**Individual Participation**

A= Student attends class regularly and frequently contributes to class discussion, either by offering an interpretation of the reading or asking questions; listens carefully to others and responds to them, building on their remarks or asking them to clarify their ideas.

B= Student attends regularly and occasionally contributes to class discussion either by offering an interpretation of the reading or asking questions; listens carefully to others and occasionally responds to them, builds on their remarks or asks them to clarify their ideas.

C= Student attends occasionally; or regularly, but hardly ever contributes to class discussion either by offering an interpretation of the reading or asking questions; listens carefully to others, but hardly ever responds to them, builds on their remarks or asks them to clarify their ideas.

D-F= Student attends sporadically and hardly ever contributes to class discussion either by offering an interpretation of the reading or asking questions.

Here are questions that you might think of to help you prepare for class discussion: (you may, of course, have others. Asking questions of the class to clarify your understanding is part of participation):

1) What are the main concepts, ideas, and arguments of the readings?
2) What or to whom does the author seem to be responding to/arguing against?
3) What does the author seem to want to accomplish with his or her writing?
4) How does the reading relate/connect to previous readings?
5) What critiques/questions do you have the readings?

**Reading Journals:** You will be required to keep a reading journal on selected texts. This requirement is explained in more detail at the end of the syllabus. Journals are graded on a point system basis and are **due in class on the day that we are to discuss the selected text. They may not be submitted by email. Late journals will not be accepted.**

**Papers:** You will be required to write two papers, one shorter (no more than 5 pages), one longer (no more than 10 pages). Paper topics and due dates will be announced on Blackboard. Guidelines for writing papers are located at the end of the syllabus.

- Graduate students: You will be required to do the same assignments as undergraduates. However, your final paper will be longer paper on a topic of your choosing (in consultation with me) Please talk to me about this assignment.
The School of Philosophy, History, and Religion follows the university rules on civility and honesty in academic work.

a) Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty is defined as an act of deception in which a Student seeks to claim credit for the work or effort of another person, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic work or research, either through the Student's own efforts or the efforts of another.

b) It includes:

(i) CHEATING - use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids, or an act of deceit by which a Student attempts to misrepresent mastery of academic effort or information. This includes but is not limited to unauthorized copying or collaboration on a test or assignment, using prohibited materials and texts, any misuse of an electronic device, or using any deceptive means to gain academic credit.

(ii) FABRICATION - falsification or invention of any information including but not limited to falsifying research, inventing or exaggerating data, or listing incorrect or fictitious references.

(iii) ASSISTING - helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes but is not limited to paying or bribing someone to acquire a test or assignment, changing someone's grades or academic records, taking a test/doing an assignment for someone else by any means, including misuse of an electronic device. It is a violation of Oregon state law to create and offer to sell part or all of an educational assignment to another person (ORS 165.114).

(iv) TAMPERING - altering or interfering with evaluation instruments or documents.

(v) PLAGIARISM - representing the words or ideas of another person or presenting someone else's words, ideas, artistry or data as one's own, or using one's own previously submitted work. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to copying another person's work (including unpublished material) without appropriate referencing, presenting someone else's opinions and theories as one's own, or working jointly on a project and then submitting it as one's own.

c) Academic Dishonesty cases are handled initially by the academic units, following the process outlined in the University's Academic Dishonesty Report Form, and will also be referred to SCCS for action under these rules.

In addition, behaviors disruptive to the learning environment will not be tolerated and will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action.

"The goal of Oregon State University is to provide students with the knowledge, skill and wisdom they need to contribute to society. Our rules are formulated to guarantee each student freedom to learn and to protect the fundamental rights of others. People must treat each other with dignity and respect in order for scholarship to thrive. Behaviors that are disruptive to teaching and learning will not be tolerated, and will be referred to the Student Conduct Program for disciplinary action. Behaviors that create a hostile, offensive or intimidating environment based on gender, race, ethnicity, color, religion, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation will be referred to the Affirmative Action Office."
Reading Schedule

Please note that this is a tentative schedule and is subject to change. It is your responsibility to find out if there are any alterations to these dates and readings.

**Week One: Introduction to Mexican and Mexican-American Identity**
- Syllabus Introduction
- Octavio Paz, “Sons of La Malinche” (Blackboard—BB)
  Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales “Yo Soy Joaquin/I am Joaquin” (BB)

**Week Two: In xochitl, in cuicatl (Flower and Song)**
- “Songs of Nezahualcoyotl” (BB)
- *Florentine Codex* (Latin American Philosophy, LAP), pps 24-33
- James Maffie, “Aztec Philosophy” (BB)

**Week Three: Is Aztec Thought Philosophy?**
- Miguel Leon-Portilla: “The Birth of Philosophy Among the Nahuas”, LAP, pp. 8-23
- Susana Nuccetelli, “Knowledge and Reason in Pre-Columbian Cultures” (LAP) pp. 1-4
  Alejandro Santana, “Did the Aztecs Do Philosophy?” (BB)

**Week Four: European Conquest and the Birth of Human Rights**
- Juan Gines de Sepulveda, “Prologue to the Members of the Congregation” (LAP) pp. 39-41.
  Gaspar Perez de Villagra, “Attempts to Justify the Conquest of Acoma” (BB)
- Bartolome de Las Casas, “Selections” (LAP) 42-54
  Sor Juana Inez de la Cruz, “You Men” (BB)

**Week Five: Building a Just Society in the Americas**
- Thomas Jefferson, “Declaration of Independence” (BB)
  Toussaint L’Ouverture, “Letter to the Directory” (BB)
- Simon Bolivar “The Jamaica Letter”; (LAP) 105-119.
  Jose Maria Morelos “Sentiments of the Nation” (BB)

**Week Six: Our America and Theirs**
- Joel Poinsett, “The Mexican Character”, BB
  John O’Sullivan, “Manifest Destiny” BB
  “Letter from James Buchanan” BB
• Mark Twain, Anti-Imperialist Writings, BB
José Martí, “Our America”; (LAP) 232-238

Week Seven: Arielismo
• Jose Enrique Rodo, “Ariel” (LAP) 219-226
• Jose Vasconcelos, “The Cosmic Race” (BB)

Week Eight: Philosophy of Liberation
• Paulo Freire, “The Pedagogy of the Oppressed” (BB)
• Rigoberta Menchu, “I, Rigoberta Menchu” (BB)

Week Nine: Chicana/o Arielismo
• Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales, “Arizona State University Speech” (BB)
• Armando Rendon, “The Chicano Manifesto” (excerpts) (BB)

Week Ten: Mestiza Consciousness and the Latin@ Future of the US
• Gloria Anzaldúa, Borderlands/La Frontera (BB)
• Cesar Chavez, “What is Democracy?”
  Elizabeth Martinez “Don’t Call This Country “America”” (BB)

Assignment Guidelines:

Reading Journals:

For those assigned readings that are highlighted in bold on the reading schedule, students will be required to write a reading journal of no more than two pages. Longer entries will not be counted. All entries must be typed, 10-12 point font, double spaced, and proofread. Each journal entry must contain the following:

Identify the title and author of the reading.

1) Select passages: Record at least two significant passages from the reading. Choose passages that seem to you to be important from the reading, i.e. that raise important issues or questions.

2) Responses: For each passage that you have recorded, write down a question you had about the specific passage, or a statement/thought you had about it.
3) **Analysis:** Respond to the reading as a whole in two or more paragraphs. Use the following guidelines for ways to think of the reading:

*Making connections:* “This text reminds me of…”
“Even though it’s not explicit, I think the text is saying…”
“I think what connects the ideas in this text is…”
“I can/can’t relate to this because…”
“This shapes the world today because…”

*Recognizing a problem:* “I got confused by…”
“I’m not sure of…”

*Summarizing:* “Up to this point, I think the big idea is…”

*Arguing with ideas:* “I agree/disagree with the text because…”
“I think that…voices are being left out of this discussion because…”

The grading system for journal entries is as follows:

3 points: entry shows particularly unusual insight or high level of engagement with ideas; asks particularly detailed or sophisticated questions of passages; is able to raise theoretical concepts within the analysis, and demonstrates well the importance or relevance of the reading to contemporary concerns or to other readings (rarely given)

2 points entry shows normal, expected, level of insight or intellectual engagement with ideas; asks some theoretical questions of passages but not detailed; is able to raise some theoretical concepts within the analysis, and generally makes some reference to their relevance to contemporary concerns or to other readings, but is not necessarily detailed. (frequently given)

1 point entry shows substandard level of engagement with ideas; asks random questions, or ones that do not seem clearly connected to passages; does not raise theoretical concepts or attempt to reference the relevance of the reading to contemporary concerns, or to other authors within the analysis. (infrequently given)

21-27=A range; 14-20=B range; 7-14=C range; 3-7=D range ; 0-3=F

**Paper Guidelines** Your papers must be typed, 10-or12 point font, doubled-spaced, proofread, and “spell-checked.” Use in-text citations for sources from class—(Anzaldua, 125), for example. If you use outside sources, please provide a bibliography page.

- Please refer and use to the American Philosophical Association guidelines for nonsexist use of language in your papers. The guideline is on Blackboard.

- An excellent guide to help you polish your written work for this class is the Philosophy Writing Guide. It is also on Blackboard.
• If you are caught engaging in academic dishonesty, you will receive a failing grade for that assignment and a report will be filed with Student Conduct Office.

• You will be graded on the organization, content (your level of detail and use of specific examples), and style of your paper, as well as on writing mechanics, such as spelling and grammar. The following is a rough guide to how papers are evaluated.

A Paper= Paper is excellent work: represents outstanding comprehension of the subject matter; paper is very well organized and argument is logical; writer uses very specific and well-cited examples and evidence to support claims; language is sophisticated and flows very well; almost no spelling or grammar errors.

B Paper= Paper is good work; represents very good comprehension of the subject matter; paper is organized and argument is mostly logical, with perhaps some tangents or missing steps; writer uses some examples and evidence to support claims (but are not as detailed or well-cited as an A paper); language is well chosen and flows well; some spelling or grammar errors, but not enough to detract from the overall quality of the paper.

C Paper= Paper is average work; represents some familiarity with the subject matter but is missing some important key themes or concepts; paper may have some gaps in organizing the logical progression of the argument or includes tangents that are not related to the paper’s main points; writer uses very few examples or evidence to support general claims; language is sometimes general or vague; spelling or grammar errors that detract from the overall quality of the paper.

D Paper= Paper is poor work; represents very little familiarity with the subject matter and may be confused as to the key themes or concepts; paper may have serious gaps in organizing the logical progression of the argument or be self-contradictory; paper is written in generalities with no examples or evidence to support claims; language is very general, vague, and stilted; serious spelling or grammar errors that detract from the overall quality of the paper.

F Paper= Paper represents hardly any familiarity with the subject matter and has almost no grasp of key themes or concepts. Also given in cases of plagiarism and other academic malfeasance. You don’t want to go there!