

**WS 560 Chicana Feminism**  
Course Syllabus

Class time: MW 1:30-3:18

Classroom: -----

Instructor: Professor Guisela Latorre

Office: -----

Phone: 247-7720

Email: latorre.13@osu.edu

Office Hours: -----

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### **Course Description**

This course will provide students with a general background on Chicana feminist thought. Chicana feminism has carved out a discursive space for Chicanas and other women of color, a space where they can articulate their experiences at the intersection of race, class, gender, sexuality, among other considerations. In the process, Chicana feminists have critically challenged Chicano nationalist discourse as well as European and North American feminism. This challenge has placed them in a unique albeit isolated position in relationship other established discourses about liberation and decolonization. Through this class, we will address the diversity in thinking and methodology that defines these discourses thus acknowledging the existence of a variety of *feminisms* that occur within Chicana intellectual thought. We will also explore the diversity of realms where this feminist thinking is applied: labor, education, cultural production (literature, art, performance, etc.), sexuality, spirituality, among others. Ultimately, we will arrive at the understanding that Chicana feminism is as much an intellectual and theoretical discourse as it is a strategy for survival and success for women of color in a highly stratified society.

Each class will be composed of a lecture and discussion component. During the lecture I will cover some basic background information on Chicana feminism to provide students with the proper contextualization for the readings. After the lecture we will engage in a seminar-style discussion about the readings and their connections to the lecture material. For this reason, it is critically important to the intellectual flow of every class session that all students in the class come prepared to engage in discussion having completed the assigned readings before coming to class.

### **Required Texts**

Gabriela F. Arredondo ... [et al.], *Chicana Feminisms: A Critical Reader*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2003.

Carla Trujillo, ed. *Living Chicana Theory*. Berkeley: Third Woman Press, 1998.

Alma M. García, ed. *Chicana Feminist Thought: The Basic Historical Writings*. New York: Routledge, 1997.

CARMEN Readings

## Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will gain:

- \* a basic understanding of several core concepts, theories, and methods in Chicana feminist theory;
- \* basic knowledge of Chicana/o history and activism;
- \* an understanding of the meaning, significance, and construction of gender, class, and race in the United States;
- \* the ability to recognize the interplay of social influences on the development of identity, especially within cultural institutions;
- \* improved skills in critical reading, critical observation of society, and effective communication of ideas, with a focus on the concepts, theories, and methods of the humanities and social sciences;
- \* a general improvement in writing skills.

## Notes on Language and Etiquette in Class Discussion

Even though knowledge of Spanish is not required for this class, you will find that many Chicana feminist writers use code-switching in their writing, that is, they utilize both English and Spanish as part of their intellectual vocabulary. Translations or explanations of Spanish words will be provided in class as the need arises. Nevertheless, you will be expected to familiarize yourself with a few words in Spanish that have become critical components of Chicana feminist discourse (like *machismo*, *la frontera*, *Aztlán*, etc.)

As many courses on feminism, gender and ethnic studies do, this class deals with numerous controversial and sensitive issues that often elicit heated discussion. I expect that a number of you will disagree with the opinions expressed in the class readings and discussion. I certainly expect you to express your honest opinion. Nevertheless, all in-class dialogue needs to happen within an atmosphere of civil intellectual exchange and mutual respect. Personal attacks, loud speaking and cutting people off before they are done talking will not be permitted.

## Disability Accommodations

The Office of Disability Services, located in 150 Pomerene Hall, offers services for students with disabilities. They can be reached at 292-3307. If you wish to have a disability accommodation, be sure to let me know right away.

## Course Requirements

- 1) Participation and attendance (20%) – This course will be dependent on your active participation in class discussion. Given that these requirements compose a large percentage of the course grade, it goes without saying that you will need to come prepared for every meeting by having completed the readings before you come to class.

Your knowledge of these texts coupled with a critical engagement of the material will be the lifeblood of the discussion portion of every class.

- 2) In-class reading presentation (15%): Each student will be selected to lead the discussion of the readings given on a particular day. This student will be charged with briefly summarizing the content of the readings and posing questions or raising critical issues to the larger collective for discussion. Your thoughts and perspectives on the assigned texts will fuel that day's in-class dialogue.
- 3) Midterm Exam (20%): Consisting of two to three large essay questions, the midterm exam will test your knowledge of the first half of the quarter.
- 4) Final Exam (20%): Following the same format as the midterm, the final exam will test you on the second half of the quarter.
- 5) Final Paper (25%): You will write a report on the ideas, questions and issues you raised in class as well as the ensuing class discussion. In addition, you will include any further thoughts and reflections you may have developed since you presented on the material in class. Required length: 12-15 pages.

A note on plagiarism and academic dishonesty: Plagiarism is a serious offense that is strictly forbidden. Use of another's work without proper documentation, intentional or not, is tantamount to plagiarism and thus unacceptable. For information on plagiarism and how to avoid it, see the following link: [http://cstw.osu.edu/writingCenter/handouts/research\\_plagiarism.cfm](http://cstw.osu.edu/writingCenter/handouts/research_plagiarism.cfm)

### Letter Grade Breakdown:

100-93	= A	82-80	= B-	69-68	= D+
92-90	= A-	79-78	= C+	60-67	= D
89-88	= B+	77-73	= C	59 and below	= E
87-83	= B	72-70	= C-		

### Course Calendar:

#### WEEK 1

January 4 - Introduction and general overview
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No readings

#### WEEK 2

January 7 - Chicanas in the Chicano Movement (Part I)
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“El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán,” *Essays from the Chicano Homeland*. CARMEN.

Elvira Zaragoza “La Mujer in the Chicano Movement” (p.77), Anna Nieto Gómez “La Feminista” (pp. 86-92), Adaljiza Sosa Ridell “Chicanas and El Movimiento” (pp. 92-94), Anna Nieto Gómez “Sexism in the Movimiento” (pp. 97-100) in *Chicana Feminist Thought*.

Maylei Blackwell “Contested Histories: *Las Hijas de Cuauhtémoc*, Chicana Feminisms, and Print Culture in the Chicano Movement,” pp. 59-89, from *Chicana Feminisms*.

Elizabeth Martínez, “ ‘Chingón Politics’ Die Hard: Reflections on the First Chicano Activist Reunion,” (p.123-135) in *Living Chicana Theory*.

January 9 – Chicanas and the Chicano Movement (Part II)
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Ramón Gutierrez, “Community, Patriarchy and Individualism: The Politics of Chicano History and the Dream of Equality,” *American Quarterly* 45:1 (March 1993): 44-72. CARMEN.

Angie Chabram-Dernersesian, “I Throw Punches for my Race, but I don’t want to be a man: Writing Us—Chica-nos (Girl, Us)/Chicanas – Into the Movement Script,” in *The Chicana/o Cultural Studies Reader*, ed. Angie Chabram-Dernersesian (Routledge: New York and London, 2006): 165-182. CARMEN.

**WEEK 3**

January 14 – Chicanas and “White” Feminism
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Beatriz M. Pesquera and Denise A. Segura “There is No Going Back: Chicanas and Feminism” (pp.95- 111) in *Chicana Critical Issues*, eds. Norma Alarcón [...et al]. CARMEN.

Enriqueta Longeaux Vasquez “!Soy Chicana Primero!” (pp.97-99), Velia García “La Chicana, Chicano Movement and Women’s Liberation” (pp. 199-201), and Marta Cotera “Feminism: The Chicano and Anglo Versions—A Historical Analysis” (pp.223-231) in *Chicana Feminist Thought*.

Chela Sandoval, “Feminism and Racism: A Report on the 1981 National Women’s Studies Association Conference,” in *The Chicana/o Cultural Studies Reader*. CARMEN.

January 16 – Chicanas and the Labor Movement
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Anna Nieto Gómez “Chicanas in the Labor Force” (pp.126-129) in *Chicana Feminist Thought*.

Denise A. Segura, “Chicana and Mexican Immigrant Women at Work: The Impact of Class, Race, and Gender on Occupational Mobility,” *Gender and Society*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Mar., 1989), pp. 37-52. CARMEN

Margaret Rose “Traditional and Nontraditional Patterns of Female Activism in the United Farm Workers of America, 1962 to 1980” (pp. 202-220) in *Chicana Leadership*, eds. Yolanda Flores Niemann [...et al]. CARMEN.

**WEEK 4**

January 21 – Martin Luther King Day
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No classes

January 23 – Education

Anna Nieto Gómez “The Chicana—Perspectives for Education” in *Chicana Feminist Thought*.

Denise Segura “Slipping through the Cracks: Dilemmas in Chicana Education” (pp. 199-216) in *Building with Our Hands: New Directions in Chicana Studies*, eds. Adela de la Torre and Beatriz M. Pesquera. CARMEN.

Gilda Laura Ochoa, “Let’s Unite So That Our Children Are Better Off Than Us’: Mexican America/Mexican Immigrant Women Organizing for Bilingual Education” (pp.113-126) in *Chicanas & Chicanos in Contemporary Society*, ed. Roberto M. De Anda. CARMEN.

**WEEK 5**

January 28 – Creative Expressions: Visual Art

Amalia Mesa-Bains, “*Domesticana: The Sensibility of a Chicana Rasquachismo*” (pp. 298-315) in *Chicana Feminisms*.

Jennifer González, “Response: Invention as Critique: Neologisms in Chicana Art Theory,” 316-323, in *Chicana Feminisms*.

Chela Sandoval and Guisela Latorre, “Chicana/o Artivism: Judy Baca’s Digital Work with Youth of Color,” *Learning Race and Ethnicity: Youth and Digital Media*, ed. Anna Everret (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 2007): 81-108. CARMEN.

January 30 – Creative Expressions: Literature

Norma Klahn, “Literary (Re)Mappings: Autobiographical (Dis)Placements by Chicana Writers” (114-145), from *Chicana Feminisms*.

Pat Mora, *House of Houses* (Beacon Press: Boston, 1997), *excerpt*. CARMEN.

Sandra Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street* (Houston: Arte Público Press, 1985), *excerpt*. CARMEN.

Mary Helen Ponce, *Hoyt Street: An Autobiography* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993) *excerpt*. CARMEN.

**WEEK 6**

February 4 – Creative Expressions: Performance

Yolanda Broyles-González “The Living Legacy of Chicana Performers” (pp. 59-73) in *Chicana Leadership*, eds. Yolanda Flores Niemann [...et al]. CARMEN.

Olga Nájera-Ramírez, “Unruly Passions: Poetics, Performance and Gender in the Ranchera Song” (pp.184-210) from *Chicana Feminisms*.

Michelle Habel-Pallán, “ ‘No Cultural Icon’ Marisela Norte and Spoken Word—East L.A. Noir and the U.S./Mexico Border,” in *Loca Motion: The Travels of Chicana and Latina Popular Culture*(New York and London: New York University Press, 2005): 43-80. CARMEN.

February 6 – **Midterm Exam**

No Readings

**WEEK 7**

February 11 – Creative Expressions: Film

Rosa Linda Fregoso, “Reproduction and Miscegenation on the Borderlands: Mapping the Maternal Body of Tejanas” 324-348, from *Chicana Feminisms*.

Ann DuCille, “Response: The Sterile Cuckoo *Racha*: Debugging *Lone Star*,” 349-353, from *Chicana Feminisms*.

Rosa Linda Fregoso, “*Born in East L.A.* and the ‘Politics of Representation’,” in *The Chicana/o Cultural Studies Reader*: 245-260. CARMEN.

February 13 - Chicana Feminist Icons: Virgen de Guadalupe

Carla Trujillo, “La Virgen de Guadalupe and Her Reconstruction in Chicana Lesbian Desire,” 214-231, in *Living Chicana Theory*.

Sandra Cisneros. “Guadalupe the sex goddess,” in *Goddess of the Americas* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1997): 46-51. CARMEN.

Gloria Anzaldua. “Coatlalopeuh, she who has dominion over serpents,” in *Goddess of the Americas* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1997): 52-55. CARMEN.

**WEEK 8**

February 18 - Chicana Feminist Icons: La Malinche and Sor Juana

Adelaida R. Del Castillo, “Malintzin Tenepal: a preliminary look into a new perspective,” 122-126, in *Chicana Feminist Thought*.

Norma Alarcon, “Traddutora, traditora : a paradigmatic figure of Chicana feminism.” *Cultural Critique*, No. 13 (Autumn 1989): 57-87. CARMEN.

Alicia Gaspar de Alba, “The Politics of Location of the Tenth Muse of America: An Interview with Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz,” 136-165, in *Living Chicana Theory*.

February 20 – Sexuality and Queer Identities

Patricia Zavella, “*Talkin’ Sex*: Chicanas and Mexicanas Theorize about Silences and Sexual Pleasures,” 228-253, in *Chicana Feminisms*.

Aída Hurtado, “The Politics of Sexuality in the Gender Subordination of Chicanas,” 383-428, in *Living Chicana Theory*.

Gloria Anzaldúa, “To(o) Queer the Writer—Loca, escritora and chicana,” 263-276, in *Living Chicana Theory*.

Emma Pérez, “Irigaray’s Female Symbolic in the Making of Chicana Lesbian *Sitios y Lenguas* (Sites and Discourses),” 87-101, in *Living Chicana Theory*.

### **WEEK 9**

#### February 25– Gendered Violence

Yvette Flores-Ortiz “La Mujer y la Violencia: A Culturally Based Model for the Understanding and Treatment of Domestic Violence in Chicana/Latina Communities” in *Chicana Critical Issues*, eds. Normal Alarcón [...et al]. CARMEN.

Antonia I. Castañeda, “History and Politics of Violence Against Women,” 310-319, in *Living Chicana Theory*.

Rosa Linda Fregoso, “Toward a Planetary Civil Society” (pp. 1-29) *meXicana encounters*. CARMEN.

#### February 27 – Mestizaje and Borderlands

Gloria Anzaldúa, “The Homeland, Aztlán” (pp.23-35) and “*La conciencia de la mestiza/ Towards a New Consciousness*” (pp.99-120) in *Borderlands/La Frontera* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1989), CARMEN.

Chela Sandoval, “Mestizaje as Method: Feminists-of-Color: Challenge the Cannon,” 352-370, in *Living Chicana Theory*.

Emma Pérez, “Sexing the Colonial Imaginary: Engendering Chicano History, Theory, and Consciousness,” 3-30, in *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999). CARMEN.

### **WEEK 10**

#### March 3 - Spirituality

Lara Medina, “Los Espíritus Siguen Hablando: Chicana Spiritualities,” 189-213, in *Living Chicana Theory*.

Laura Pérez. “Spirit Glyphs,” 17-49, *Chicana Art: the Politics of Spiritual and Aesthetic Altarities* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007). CARMEN.

#### March 5 – Chicanas and Post-Modernity – **FINAL PAPER DUE**

Paula M. L. Moya, “Chicana Feminism and Postmodernist Theory,” *Signs*, Vol. 26, No. 2. (Winter, 2001), pp. 441-483. CARMEN.

Chela Sandoval, “New Sciences: Cyborg Feminism and the Methodology of the Oppressed,” in *The Cybercultures Reader*, 374-390. CARMEN.

**FINAL EXAM: Wed, March 12, 1:30 PM - 3:18 PM, 291 Journalism Building**