The University of Texas at San Antonio
Department of Bicultural Bilingual Studies

BBL 6093  Chicana/Latina Feminist Methodologies

Note:  This Syllabus is provided for informational purposes regarding the anticipated course content and schedule of this course. It is based upon the most recent information available on the date of its issuance and is as accurate and complete as possible. We reserve the right to make any changes deemed necessary and/or appropriate. We will make our best efforts to communicate any changes in the syllabus in a timely manner. Students are responsible for being aware of these changes.

The Chicana feminist has been cautioned to wait to fight for her cause at a later time for fearing of dividing the Chicano movement. Also, it has been recommended that she melts into the melting pot of femaleness rather than divide the women’s movement.

--Ana Nieto Gomez in From Out of the Shadows by V. L. Ruiz (p. 111)

Theory of the flesh means one where the physical realities of our lives—our skin color, the land or concrete we grew up on, our sexual longings—all fuse to create a politic born out of necessity.”

--Cheri Moraga, Bridge Called My Back (p. 23)

Description of course:
This course examines the different frameworks for theory building by Chicana/Latina feminists. Challenging assumptions within social sciences, Chicana/Latina intellectuals have developed a critical theory that interrogates knowledge production. The course emphasizes methodology and how we produce knowledge, the means by which we examine communities, and how we conduct research as insiders/outsiders.

Goals and objectives:
Students will gain knowledge of debates in qualitative research; explore how authors challenge traditional/conventional viewpoints and assumptions about a topic, approach, methods, and paradigms. Using various research approaches and methodologies pertaining to bicultural-bilingual studies, the course will use an interdisciplinary approach to examine feminist arguments in the social sciences and humanities-- any number of fields from education to politics to popular culture. Students will critically examine topical such as: Chicana feminist epistemology and phenomenology; Dual spheres of private and public; Feminist/Insider methodologies and practices; and History/Hystories/Historicism.

Terms under debate:
Role of researchers> positionality, subjectivity, insider/outsider
Forms of knowledge> experiential, local, partial, situated/standpoint
Narrative conventions> chronological, progressive, linear, experimental
Research relations> dialogics, co-participatory
Production of knowledge> ideology, hegemony, oppression, colonialism, racism

Assignments:
1. Reading journal: tracking main ideas, concepts, new terms from their readings; typed and double spaced due on each week therefore prepared for class discussion.
2. Facilitating groups: Students will sign-up to facilitate a discussion of readings during class. Facilitating group presents concepts of the reading through a more active form that takes up main points and concepts found in the readings. Groups should formulate discussion questions/issues/subjects that engage class members.
3. In-class discussion groups are expected to prepare a synopsis of the main points and concepts found in the readings.
4. Critical Reading Response Essays: weekly, due every Wednesday (typed, 3-4 pages, double space, one inch margins) based on the previous weeks reading, lecture and discussions. Follow guidelines of handout. These assignments are designed to be cumulative in the sense that earlier assignments will provide the foundation for later ones.
5. Final assignment: Annotations of 5 essays and one book.

Course Textbooks


Books for group presentation and final critical reading response:


The construction of the course:

**1st part of class >** Lecture> this will cover the main themes and ideas of the work.

Class discussion allows students to raise questions about the topics of the readings:

(Summary)> Examine the title? How does this relate to the chapters, author’s ideas?

What was the main point of the author? Thesis? What evidence was presented to prove the author’s thesis? What examples were given that were interesting to you?

Use idea web>brainstorming, words that identify a topic, what ideas emanate from the topic

**2nd part of class >** Facilitating groups> present concepts of the reading through a more active form> poetry, audio, visual, skit, poster sessions, etc. (be creative) that takes up main points and concepts found in the readings.

(Interpretation) >What is the aim and purpose of the research/study? What is the problem that the study is addressing?

What is the author’s motivation for this study? What is the author’s stakes? Vested interest?

What is missing in the study/essay? What is valued as knowledge?

What concepts is the author engaging> ideology, myths and representation

Key words/concepts/terms> hybridity, syncreticism,

Use k-w-l chart> What we know? What we want to know? What we learned?

**3rd part of class >** In-class groups> students will form groups from two to four people to discuss the readings. The groups will then formulate the focused question on the major paradigms, concepts, theories being challenged.

(Analysis)> What other studies are being referenced/cited? For what purpose? Did the author find the previous studies valuable? Did it support or contest the knowledge? What did the author find missing in those studies? What did author feel was needed to “correct” or elaborate upon in those studies? Who does author cite that he agrees with and disagree with? How did the author claim what was different in her study? Did the author adapt the former research? Did the author radically change the research?

Use main idea chart> main ideas and supporting details

Students will be called on to present the combined report.

(Synopsis)> What is the author attempting to convince you of, to rethink? What does the author
provide as a different way to think about the topic?
What paradigm is being challenged? What conceptual frameworks or theories inform the study?

The following week> Critical reading response due--based on lecture, group presentation and in-class group discussions.