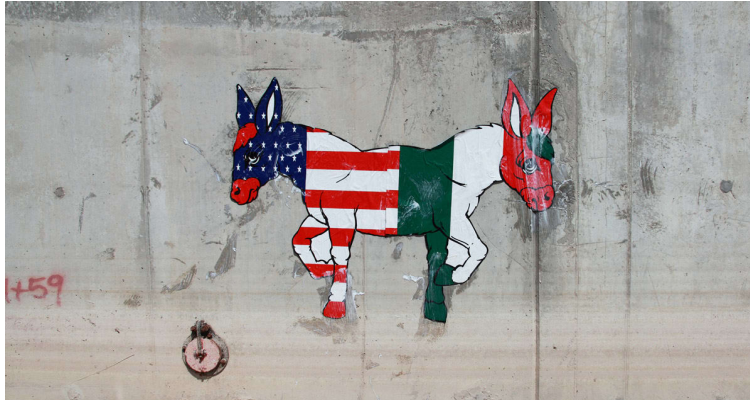


AAEC 4325: The US-Mexico Border Economy



Ron English, New York street artist

My name is Robin Grier. Here's how to get in touch with me:

Office: 169D Administration

Email: robin.grier@ttu.edu

Office Hours: 1:00-2:00 Fridays but appointments are also always welcome!

There are 3 TA's for the course! Their names and contact information are Justin Callais (justin.callais@ttu.edu), Florence Muhoza (fmhuoza@ttu.edu), and Silvio Simonetti-Neto (silvio-livio.simonetti-neto@ttu.edu). Feel free to contact them as well with questions.

What we are going to learn about this semester:

This course examines the evolution of the U.S.-Mexico border economy from colonial times until today. We will not limit ourselves to only looking at economic phenomena but rather use sociological, environmental, and political insights to help illuminate this complex and fascinating region. You will leave this course with a new understanding of the border and our two countries' intertwined histories as well as improved writing skills that will help you for the rest of your studies and beyond.

What we will be reading:

Much of the reading for this course will be from the following three books:

Dewey, A.M., 2014. *Pesos and Dollars: Entrepreneurs in the Texas-Mexico Borderlands, 1880-1940*. Texas A&M University Press.

Díaz, G.T., 2015. *Border contraband: A history of smuggling across the Rio Grande*. University of Texas Press.

St. John, Rachel, 2011, *Line in the Sand: A History of the Western U.S.-Mexico Border* (Princeton University Press).

There are several ways to read the books for the class. The first two are available as e-books through the library and physical copies are on reserve. They are also available from Amazon, but if you can find them cheaper elsewhere, all the better!

We will also be watching a movie called *The River and the Wall*. You can rent the movie on YouTube or Amazon Prime, as well as several other places.

Prerequisites: ECO 2302, Principles of Macroeconomics

Expected Learning Outcomes

Upon course completion, students will be able to:

- Describe the historical evolution of the border economy over the last two centuries;
- Discuss the role of agriculture, manufacturing, and trade in the evolution of the border economy;
- Identify and assess potential economic and environmental problems in the area;
- Write about complex topics in an articulate and persuasive manner.

We will assess your learning this semester in 4 ways:

1. Homework assignments

There will be a variety of homework assignments throughout the semester. Any email that I send to the class about reading and assignments will also be posted on Blackboard.

Homework will be graded using a check system:

- ✓+ (110%) For assignments that show outstanding thought and engagement with the course content. I will not assign these often.
- ✓ (95%) For assignments that are thoughtful, well-written, and show engagement with the course content. This is the expected level of performance.
- ✓- (50%) For assignments that are either hastily composed, too short, and/or only cursorily engages with the course content. This grade signals that you need to improve next time. I will hopefully not assign these often.

I will average your highest 7 scores.

2. Midterm Exam

We will discuss the format more in class, but the exam will be designed to test how well you have engaged with the material and can articulate thoughtful arguments on border issues.

3. Final project (due during our final exam period)

You can choose what you would like to work on for your final project. Please propose a project that will allow you to demonstrate what you learned during the semester as well as drawing on skills you've developed in class. Do not feel confined to the traditional 5-paragraph essay that is typically assigned in high school and university (although that is fine as well). You can put together a series of interviews with experts on a particular topic, you can create a podcast about a topic you are interested in that relates to the border, you can create an online magazine on border topics, or perhaps a semester-long blog on a topic that interest you (and one that is related to the border!). Or you can research a topic that we didn't cover in depth in the semester that is around 8-10 pages.

No matter what you choose, *please email me* with a proposal and we will figure out how best your project will be assessed. If you choose to do something besides the research paper, you'll also need to turn in a written reflection about what you learned from the project (around 3 pages) and a bibliography of your sources.

4. In-class work

There are 25 points available for in-class work (though it is possible to score as many as 35!). If you contribute to a group presentation, you will earn 5 points (see more below on that topic).

You will receive .5 points for each class you attend, plus an extra .5 for any reading quiz you answer acceptably or any group project you participate in during that class.

There are also other possibilities for points (limited to one per student). You can get an additional point for:

- a. Being the official note-taker for the day. Take notes, type them up, and post them on BB for your peers within the following two days. You get the point after they're posted.
- b. Coming up with several questions you have on the material for the midterm review and turning them beforehand.
- c. Being a "Previously" narrator: At the start of the class, summarize in a minute or two the most important topics we covered in the previous class.

d. Being an *Annotator*: Many people read texts better when they are marked up with highlights, definitions, notes, etc. Submit a PDF that is annotated for other readers for future classes & peers. Instructions here: <https://slideplayer.com/slide/10656558/>

e. *Show & tell*: In the last couple weeks of the semester, you can share your final project on BB for comments. 1 point for sharing and 1 point for providing thoughtful (and constructive) feedback.

*Group presentations will be on selected chapters from Gustavo Arrellano's *Taco USA: How Mexican Food Conquered America*. Groups will consist of no more than 4 students, and all are expected to contribute to the project. I have already decided which presentations will occur on which days (see below), so please keep that in mind when you sign up for a particular group. Presentations will be no more than 15 minutes long (with a penalty for ones that go long) and should be informative but also entertaining.

Summary of Final Grade Composition

Homework	25 points
Midterm	25 points
Final Project	25 points
<u>In-class work</u>	<u>25 points</u>
Total	100 points

Readings & Topics for the Semester

Week 1

Thursday, January 13th

Introduction

Week 2

Tuesday, January 18th

Danelo, D.J., 2011. The many faces of Mexico. *Orbis*, 55(1), pp. 165-173.

Antebi, Nicole, 2019, "How I Mapped the Fluid Border Between El Paso and Juárez," *citylab.com*, August 16th.

Uhler, Andy, 2019, "Border life: An apartment in Mexico, a job in the U.S.," *Marketplace*, February 25th.

Davidson, John Daniel, 2018, "Inside The Texas Border Town That Funnels Half Of All U.S.-Mexico Trade," *The Federalist*, August 8th.

Thursday, January 20th

Heimbuch, Jaymi, 2018, "How would a border wall between the U.S. and Mexico affect wildlife?" July 5th.

Zoë Schlanger, "There's a time bomb for US-Mexico relations ticking underground," *Quartz*, August 20th, 2018.

Discuss movie

Week 3

Tuesday, January 25th

"Chapter 1. A New Map for North America: Defining the Border," in Rachel St. John's *Line in the Sand*. Princeton University Press.

Thursday, January 27th

"Chapter 2: Holding the Line: Fighting Land Pirates and Apaches on the Border" in *Line in the Sand*.

Week 4

Tuesday, February 1st

Dewey, pp. 1-18 and Chapter 1: Borderlands in Transition (1820-1880), pp. 19-45

Thursday, February 3rd

"Chapter 3: Landscape of Profits: Cultivating Capitalism across the Border" in *Line in the Sand*.

**Presentation on "Chapter Two: Whatever Happened to the Chili Queens and Tamale Kings?" from Gustavo Arrellano's *Taco USA: How Mexican Food Conquered America*. Scribner, 2013 and Carolina A. Miranda, "Cool, colorful, revolutionary; Richard Gomez's tamale cart design is economical, lightweight, meets health codes and could forever change sidewalk vending in L.A.," *Los Angeles Times*, December 12th, 2021.

Week 5

Tuesday, February 8th

Díaz, Chapter 1: Creating a Contrabandista Community, 1848-1881

Thursday, February 10th

Dewey, Chapter 2: Forging a Landscape of Opportunity (1880-1940), pp. 46-80

Week 6

Tuesday, February 15th

Díaz, Chapter 2: Rails, Trade, and Traffickers, 1881-1910

Thursday, February 17th

Dewey, Alicia, "Ranching Across Borders: The Making of a Transnational Cattle Industry in the Texas-Mexico Borderlands, 1749-1945" in Bowman et al., 2017. *Farming across Borders: A Transnational History of the North American West* (Texas A&M University Press).

Week 7

Tuesday, February 22nd

Díaz, Chapter 3: Smugglers in Dangerous Times: Revolution and War, 1910-1919

Thursday, February 24th

Díaz, Chapter 4: Narcotics and Prohibition, 1914-1945

**Presentation on "Tequila? Tequila!" in *Taco USA*.

Week 8

Tuesday, March 1st

Midterm review plus presentation!!

Thursday, March 3rd

Midterm

Week 9

Tuesday, March 8th

Díaz, Chapter 5: Smugglers and Seditonists: States Confront Illicit Traders, 1920-1945

Thursday, March 10th

Snodgrass, Michael. "Patronage and progress: The bracero program from the perspective of Mexico." [Workers across the Americas: The transnational turn in labor history](#) (2011): 245-266.

Camilo Smith, [Photos show life on Texas migrant camps in the 1940s](#), *The Chronicle*, February 5, 2016.

Presentation on “What took the Burrito so Long to become Popular?” from Gustavo Arrellano’s *Taco USA: How Mexican Food Conquered America*. Scribner, 2013.

Spring break

Week 10

Tuesday, March 22nd

Economist, Mexico’s maquiladoras: Big maq attack: A 50-year-old export industry that provides millions of jobs has to reinvent itself quickly to stay competitive, October 26th, 2013

Excerpt on maquiladoras from Paul Ganster and Kimberly Collins’ *The U.S. - Mexican Border Today*. Rowman & Littlefield; Fourth edition (April 12, 2021).

Thursday, March 24th

“Chapter 1: Culture, Structure, and the South Texas-Northern Mexico Border Economy” in Chad Richardson and Michael Pisani’s *The Informal and Underground Economy of the South Texas Border*. University of Texas Press, 2012.

Week 11

Tuesday, March 29th

Chapter 5: Informal Cross-Border Trade in Chad Richardson and Michael Pisani’s *The Informal and Underground Economy of the South Texas Border*. University of Texas Press, 2012.

Thursday, March 31st

Cadava, G.L., 2015. “The Other Migrants: Mexican Shoppers in American Borderlands” In *Race and Retail: Consumption Across the Color Line*. Rutgers University Press.

Week 12

Tuesday, April 5th

No class!

Thursday, April 7th

“Chapter 6: Border Colonias: Informality in Housing” in Chad Richardson and Michael Pisani’s *The Informal and Underground Economy of the South Texas Border*. University of Texas Press, 2012.

Week 13

Tuesday, April 12th

Hendricks, Tyche, *The Wind Doesn't Need a Passport: Stories from the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands* (University of California Press, 2010), Chapter 4: "Nogales/Nogales: 'If they get sick here, we take care of them'"

Thursday, April 14th

Excerpts from Ieva Jusionyte's *Threshold: Emergency Responders on the US-Mexico Border*. University of California Press, 2018.

**Presentation on "Chapter 3: How did the taco become popular before Mexicans flood the United States?" from *Tacos USA*

Week 14

Tuesday, April 19th

Hendricks, Tyche, *The Wind Doesn't Need a Passport: Stories from the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands* (University of California Press, 2010), Chapter 3, "Hachita: 'A fence is only as good as its weakest point.'"

Wagner, Dennis, 2019, "Border ranchers, in a world without a wall," USA Today

Thursday, April 21st

Hendricks, Tyche, *The Wind Doesn't Need a Passport: Stories from the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands* (University of California Press, 2010), Chapter 5, "Sells: 'O'odham first and American or Mexican second'"

**Presentation on "Chapter 7: Is Tex-Mex food doomed?" from *Tacos USA*

Week 15

Tuesday, April 26th

Excerpt from Antonio's Gun and Delfino's Dream: True Tales of Mexican Migration by Sam Quinones

Excerpt from Homelands: Four Friends, Two Countries, and the Fate of the Great Mexican-American Migration, by Alfredo Corchado.

Tonya Malinowski, 2019, "His mom has never seen him play: This is football and life on the border," ESPN.

**Presentation on "Chapter 11: Is the Tortilla God's Favored Method of Communication?" from *Tacos USA*

Thursday, April 28th

Current immigration policies, covid & the border, tbd.

Week 16

Tuesday, May 3rd

Class off to work on final projects!

****Final projects due on May 7th by 5:00 p.m.**

What to do if you need help with writing:

Please let me know if you are finding the reading or writing in this class difficult. Besides myself, the [University Writing Center](#) is a great resource to help you with your writing. It is located in Room 175 of the English/Philosophy Building. Their phone number is 742-2476 and they have recently started an online scheduler. Here is the link: [WCOOnline](#).

You matter:

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor's office hours. Please note: instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information, please contact Student Disability Services in West Hall or call 806-742-2405. They will help you figure out the best way to enhance your learning and I will be happy to make any accommodations they recommend. Of course, I will also keep all information confidential.

Please remember that learning is about more than words on a page, or ideas in a classroom. In order to learn, you need to have your basic needs met. If you are having trouble with these needs, please go to the following link for a list of resources: <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/dos/basicneeds.php>

Texas Tech University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from gender and/or sex discrimination of any kind. Sexual assault, discrimination, harassment, and other Title IX violations are not tolerated by the University. Report any incidents to the Office for Student Rights & Resolution, (806)-742-SAFE (7233) or file a report online at titleix.ttu.edu/students. Faculty and staff members at TTU are committed to connecting you to resources on campus. Some of these available resources are: TTU Student Counseling Center, 806- 742-3674, <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/scc/Provides> confidential support on campus.) TTU 24-hour Crisis

Helpline, 806-742-5555, (Assists students who are experiencing a mental health or interpersonal violence crisis. If you call the helpline, you will speak with a mental health counselor.) Voice of Hope Lubbock Rape Crisis Center, 806-763-7273, voiceofhopelubbock.org (24-hour hotline that provides support for survivors of sexual violence.) The Risk, Intervention, Safety and Education (RISE) Office, 806-742-2110, <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/rise/> (Provides a range of resources and support options focused on prevention education and student wellness.) Texas Tech Police Department, 806-742- 3931, <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/ttpd/> (To report criminal activity that occurs on or near Texas Tech campus.)

Academic Integrity at Texas Tech:

Academic integrity is taking responsibility for one's own class and/or course work, being individually accountable, and demonstrating intellectual honesty and ethical behavior. Academic integrity is a personal choice to abide by the standards of intellectual honesty and responsibility. Because education is a shared effort to achieve learning through the exchange of ideas, students, faculty, and staff have the collective responsibility to build mutual trust and respect. Ethical behavior and independent thought are essential for the highest level of academic achievement, which then must be measured. Academic achievement includes scholarship, teaching, and learning, all of which are shared endeavors. Grades are a device used to quantify the successful accumulation of knowledge through learning. Adhering to the standards of academic integrity ensures grades are earned honestly. Academic integrity is the foundation upon which students, faculty, and staff build their educational and professional careers. [Texas Tech University ("University") Quality Enhancement Plan, Academic Integrity Task Force, 2010]

We will commit to acting with academic integrity in everything we write and say this semester, making sure to offer credit to those whose ideas we are articulating. I believe that all of you are fundamentally honest and I am happy to help you learn what we mean by academic integrity, such as making sure to cite your sources correctly and being clear when you are using your words or someone else's. For more on the Texas Tech honor code, please click [here](#).

If you'd like to read more about Texas Tech's Statement on Academic Integrity, please click [here](#)

Religious Holy Days:

"Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Texas Tax Code §11.20. A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence. A student who is excused under section 2 may not be penalized for the absence; however, the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete the assignment satisfactorily.