



**LAS 3930 Latinx Gulf Vibes;
Mapping Latinx History Across the Gulf Coast**
Spring 2026/ TU 11:45 AM – 1:40 PM and TH 12:50 PM – 1:40 PM

Professor Rafael Ramirez Solórzano **Email:** r.solorzano@ufl.edu
Office Hours: TBD **Book Me Here:** <https://proferafa.youcanbook.me>

This course explores the long-standing, yet often overlooked transborder histories and movements of Latinx peoples across the Gulf of Mexico and into the U.S. South. Drawing on a rich archive that stretches back to 1492, the course unpacks five centuries of history and culture to uncover rich narratives and primary sources that reveal the Gulf as both an economic engine and cultural resource. Through close readings of primary documents from the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo to nineteenth- to twentieth-century testimonies, we will investigate how Latinx communities, including Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Chicanxs/Mexicans, Central Americans, and Indigenous peoples, forged connections and confronted the shifting dynamics of race, labor, gender, and geography. Particular attention will be given to how interactions evolved across rural and urban spaces. Additionally, by engaging with secondary texts such as Julie Weise's *Corazon de Dixie: Mexicanos in the U.S. South* and Sarah McNamara's *Ybor City: Crucible of the Latino South*, students will examine how Latinx histories illuminate critiques of U.S. territorial expansion across land and water, immigration enforcement and repatriation efforts, economic growth, and the navigation of Jim Crow and Juan Crow racial lines at the turn of the 20th century.

Building on Clyde Wood's study of the Mississippi Delta Region, lastly, this course adopts a social-spatial, dialectical-historical framework in studying the role of the Latinx communities within the political-economic development of the Gulf Region. Together we will trace the long industry-driven histories of migration into Louisiana, Mississippi, and Florida, exploring how it led to the emergence of vibrant cultural hubs that became home to thousands of Latinx, Black, Asian, Caribbean and European workers. Finally, the course considers how the Gulf's distinctive geography, energy, and culture have generated a powerful "vibe"—a shared sense of sensibility that shapes identities, emotions, histories, worldviews, and collective imaginings.

Why this history matters: By engaging with the Gulf's layered histories, students gain insight into how Latinx communities have contributed to, and been shaped by, Southern politics and economies. The course invites you to engage with familiar narratives of U.S. expansion and to appreciate how a region's geography can become a living, breathing participant in cultural production and economic development. This isn't just a historical study; it's a conversation about the present and future of the U.S. South.

Course Learning Objectives (CLO)

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- CLO 1: Analyze the historical and cultural significance of Chicanx and Latinx settlement and migration across the Gulf of Mexico and into the U.S. South from 1492 to the 20th Century.
- CLO 2: Interpret primary sources – including treaties, testimonies, speeches, and archival documents—to understand how Latinx, Black, Indigenous and White settlers were shaped by transnational and regional dynamics
- CLO 2: Evaluate the interconnections between the Gulf's political-economic development and Latinx lived experiences, with attention to how historical, institutional, economic, geographic, and social forces interact to produce regional experiences and identities.
- CLO 3: Recognize the relational constructions of race, class, gender, and citizenship within the lives of Latinxs, Black, Indigenous, and White rural and urban communities.
- CLO 4: Interpret and assess the broader social implications of historical and cultural transformations in the Gulf coasts for communities living within and outside the region.
- CLO 5: Develop the analytical writing and critical reading, thinking, and communications skills necessary to thrive in our increasingly pluralistic society and globalized world.

Course Structure

Along with lectures, each week, the class will use a thematic, text-driven approach. Together we will read book chapters or articles; analyze archival documents; watch brief lecture videos, films or review media focusing on particular concepts and historical events; participate in virtual activities, and review study guides if needed. Each week you will complete graded discussion posts, a short-written assignment or video recording. Additionally, you will participate in a one-time graded facilitation activity with your assigned partners. In Weeks 7 and 11, and Finals Week you will submit midterms and final.

As you may have guessed, this course will require your attention and time. You should be prepared to set aside at least 5-7 hours per week for this course. If you do the work regularly and pace yourself, you will be successful in this course. All course materials will be accessible by using UofF's learning management system(s) CANVAS.

Last but not least, this class is a mixture of many things: part lectures, part writing forum, part seminar, part virtual field trip, part creative laboratory, and part analyzing scholarly texts, alongside important Latinx cultural productions such as comic books, visual art, poetry, music and film.

Required Texts

We will be reading chapters from the following books. All readings will be available via Canvas and/or online via eBooks through UofF's Library.

- Gloria Anzaldúa. *Borderlands, La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Foundation Book, 1987
- David J. Weber. *The Spanish Frontier in North America: The Brief Edition*. Yale University Press. 2009.
- Julio Capó. *Welcome to Fairyland: Queer Miami before 1940*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017.
- Cynthia Orozco. *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement*. University of Texas Press, 2009.
- Cynthia Orozco. *Agent of Change: Adela Sloss-Vento, Mexican American Civil Rights Activist and Texas Feminist*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2020.
- Marla A. Ramirez. *Banished Citizens: A History of the Mexican American Women Who Endured Repatriation*. Harvard University Press, 2025.
- Sarah McNamara. *Ybor City: Crucible of the Latino South*, Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2023
- Maria Cristina García, 1996. *Havana USA Cuban Exiles and Cuban Americans in South Florida, 1959-1994*. Berkeley: University of California Press
- Maylei Blackwell. *¡Chicana Power! Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012
- Johanna Fernández. *The Young Lords: a Radical History*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2020.
- Julie Weise. *Corazon de Dixie: Mexicanos in the U.S. South*. University of North Carolina Press, 2015
- Sarah Fouts. *Rebuilding New Orleans: Immigrant Laborers and Street Vendors in the Post Katrina Era*. The University of North Carolina Press, 2025
- Maria T. Padilla and Nancy Rosado, *Tossed to the Wind: Stories of Hurricane Maria Survivors*. University of Florida Press, 2020
- Alberto Ledesma, *Diary of Reluctant Dreamer: Undocumented Vignettes from a Pre-American Life*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press.
- All additional readings will be posted on Canvas as PDFs.

Student Evaluation

20 Points/Class Engagement: To facilitate student engagement with the readings students will participate in TEN IIQs/Video (Important, Interesting and Questions) assignments. Students are responsible for submitting thoughtful and reflective IIQs and/or video responses on the week of your choice on Canvas (choose wisely). **IIQs/Video Recordings will be due TBD**

10 Points/Group Facilitation Activity: Additionally, your grade depends upon a facilitation activity that covers weekly terminology, concepts, events and theories from the readings.

10 Points/St. Augustin Reflection Paper: This is your opportunity to virtually visit a historical site in Florida and to engage in a critical analysis. You will gain a broader understanding of Florida's monuments that shape the lives of Floridians. **It will be due by the end of WEEK 4**

15 Points/Midterm: This exam will be based upon readings and lectures during the first half of the course and will include an essay question. **It will be held during WEEK 7**

15 Points/Midterm II – This second midterm will be a short essay on the shifting ideas of Latinidad based upon readings and lectures from week 8 to week 11 **It will be held during WEEK 11**

30 Points/Final/Digital Testimonio/Oral History Project: The final project for this class is a digital oral history video, in which students will document and share the life story of an individual of Latinx descent living along the Gulf Coast. Through conducting oral history interviews, students will develop active listening skills and gain experience transforming interview transcripts into compelling public video narratives. By incorporating course themes and historical contexts into their projects, students will engage in civic participation—both online and offline—by helping inform the public about Latinx histories and experiences. The assignment will be provided in Week 9, so you are only likely to create a great assignment if you’ve kept up with the readings, assignments, and attended lecture.

Grade Points

A	93-100	B-	80-82	D+	67-69
A-	90-92	C+	77-79	D	63-66
B+	87-89	C	73-76	D-	60-62
B	83-86	C-	70-72	F	59 or below

How to view current grades in a current course on Canvas?

<https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Student-Guide/How-do-I-view-my-grades-in-a-current-course/ta-p/493>

General Assignment Guidelines: All work must be double-spaced in 12-point Times New Roman font with 1” margins, page numbers inserted, and your name clearly printed on the first page of your paper. Page limits do not include images or the bibliography.

Grading/Late Assignments/ Grade Disputes: I truly believe that grades serve the purpose of evaluating student work (your own learning) and also, as a source of motivation. To ensure that I’m grading with accuracy and fairness, students should expect grades and feedback on Papers, Quizzes, and Midterms within two weeks. **Assignments are due on specific due dates. Late assignments will be accepted with a legitimate excuse and with advance notice. Tardiness will result in a reduction on your assignment score by 5% a day.**

If you wish to dispute a grade, you have *two weeks* to discuss your grade. You may submit to me via email (1) the graded assignment and (2) *a paragraph* (no more than a page) describing the reasons for which you are requesting a change of grade on an assignment. Bear in mind that I have the right to raise or lower the assignment’s grade.

Assignment Assistance: I am happy to offer feedback on assignments during office hours or by appointment. Need more assistance? Such as with breaking down your reading assignments, dealing with writer’s block or understanding the rules for using commas, check out the amazing resources, tools and handouts for students. **Check out the University Writing Studio:**

<https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> Schedule an appointment here:
<https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/for-students/schedule-an-appointment/>



Research Help: You are expected to write original papers and reflections for this course. I highly recommend that you take advantage of UofF's amazing library and special collections. I recommend you visit the center and get to know their Student Support Services—Group Study Rooms, Databases, Research Consultants, Study Zones, and Workshops.

Check out this Latin American Studies Library Guide -
<https://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/latinamericanstudies/>

Computer Requirements

Minimum Technology Requirements: You are welcome to use a desktop/laptop, or mobile device (smartphone/ tablet) for this class. Access to a 2-3 years old computer would be best for installing necessary software for the course. An updated internet browser such as Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox and the latest version of Adobe Acrobat Reader would be useful. And, most importantly a stable high-speed internet connection to access Canvas is needed to have a successful course.

Please visit <https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/> for any questions concerning technology, Wi-fi, software, computer labs, tech support, etc.

For 24-hour one-on-one technical assistance, visit <https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/mobile-devices/consulting-services/>

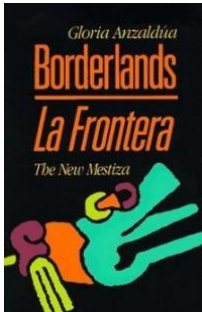
Course Policies

Plagiarism: You are expected to write your own work for this course. Proper citation of other people's work is required. For this course, you will be using Chicago, APA, or MLA for your in-text citations and works cited page. Plagiarism or "Cheating" will not be tolerated and will be investigated.

UF students are bound by the Honor Pledge which states, "We the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

COURSE CALENDAR

WEEK 1 – Introduction to the U.S. Gulf Coast Territories and Histories



Tuesday, January 13th, 2026

Required Readings:

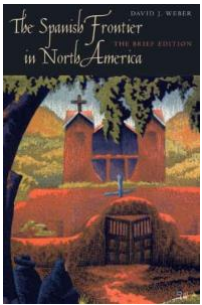
Syllabus Overview, Review Grading Assignments

Thursday, January 15th, 2026

Required Readings:

1. Anzaldúa, Gloria. 1987. *Borderlands, La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Foundation Books—Chapter 1, The Homeland, Aztlan, 1-13

WEEK 2 – New Frontiers and Racial Hierarchies



Tuesday, January 20, 2026

Required Readings:

1. David J. Weber. *The Spanish Frontier in North America: The Brief Edition*. Yale University Press. 2009. – Chapter 2 and 3

Thursday, January 22, 2026

2. David J. Weber. *The Spanish Frontier in North America: The Brief Edition*. Yale University Press. 2009. – Chapter 6

WEEK 3 – Internal Colonialism and Social Control



Monday, February 2, 2026 – Labor Day

Tuesday, January 27th, 2026

Required Readings:

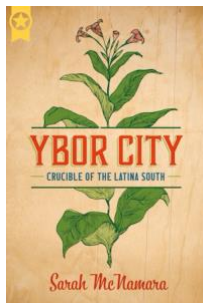
1. Julio Capó. 2017. *Welcome to Fairyland; Queer Miami before 1940*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press – Chapter 1/Queer Frontier

Thursday, January 29th, 2026

Required Readings:

Cynthia Orozco. *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement*. 2009. – Chapters 1

WEEK 4 – Great Depression and Multiracial Working-Class Consciousness 1920 – 1940 in Florida



Tuesday, February 3, 2026

Required Readings:

1. Gaye Theresa Johnson, 2013. *Spaces of conflict, sounds of solidarity: music, race, and spatial entitlement in Los Angeles*. Berkeley: University of California Press – Chapter 1

Thursday, February 5, 2026

Required Readings:

Sarah McNamara. *Ybor City: Crucible of the Latino South*, Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, -- Chapter 2

WEEK 5 – The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights 1920 – 1960 in Texas



Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Required Reading:

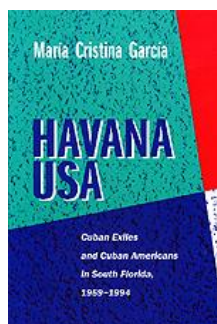
1. Cynthia E. Orozco, 2020. *Agents of Change; Adela Sloss-Vento*. Austin: University of Texas Press – Chapter 2, The Mexican American Civil Rights Movement, 1920-1950
2. Review World War II oral histories from the Voces Oral History Center

Thursday, February 12, 2026

Required Reading:

1. Cynthia E. Orozco, 2020. *Agents of Change; Adela Sloss-Vento*. Austin: University of Texas Press – Chapter 3, The Mexican American Civil Rights Movement, 1950-1963

WEEK 6 – Exiles, Not Immigrants: Cuban Migration to the U.S. 1959-1980



Tuesday, February 17, 2026

Required Reading:

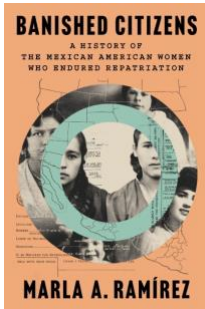
1. Maria Cristina García, 1996. *Havana USA Cuban Exiles and Cuban Americans in South Florida, 1959-1994*. Berkeley: University of California Press – Chapter 1

Thursday, February 19, 2026 – Midterm Prep

Required Reading:

1. Maria Cristina García, 1996. *Havana USA Cuban Exiles and Cuban Americans in South Florida, 1959-1994*. Berkeley: University of California Press – Chapter 2

Week 7 – Midterm



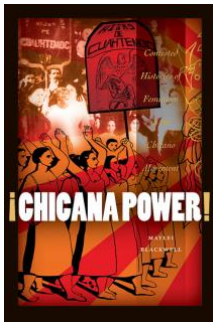
Tuesday, February 24, 2026

Required Reading: Marla A. Ramirez. *Banished Citizens: A History of the Mexican American Women Who Endured Repatriation*. Harvard University Press, 2025.—
Chapters to TBD

Thursday, February 26, 2026 – Midterm

WEEK 8– Chicana/o Freedom Movement 1968 - 1980

Tuesday, March 3, 2026



Required Reading:

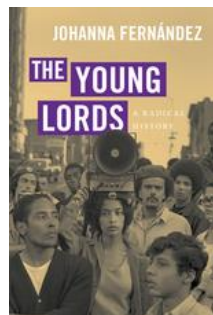
1. Delgado Bernal, Dolores. Grassroots Leadership Reconceptualized: Chicana Oral Histories and the 1968 East Los Angeles Schools Blowouts. (113-142)
2. Film: East LA Blowout of 1969

Thursday, March 5, 2026

Required Reading:

1. Maylei Blackwell, 2011. *Chicana Power!: Contest ed Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement*. Austin: University of Texas Press – Chapter 2

WEEK 9 – The Emergence of the Puerto Rican Young Lords



Tuesday, March 10, 2026

Required Reading:

1. Joahanna Fernández, 2020. *The Young Lords: A Radical History*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press – Chapter 1

Thursday, March 12, 2026

Required Reading:

1. Joahanna Fernández, 2020. *The Young Lords: A Radical History*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press – Chapter 2 and 3
2. Arellano, Gustavo. Parkland Student activists should study the East L.A. Blowouts that launched a movement in California. Los Angeles Times. February 28, 2018.

***** Oral History Video Project Final Distributed*****

**Spring Break – No Class
Week of March 16th**

WEEK 10 - Latinos into the Heart of Dixie, New Orleans and Mississippi

Tuesday, March 24, 2026

Required Reading:

1. Julie Weise. *Corazon de Dixie: Mexicanos in the U.S. South*. University of North Carolina Press, 2015 – Chapter 1 Mexicans as Europeans: Mexican Nationalism and Assimilation into New Orleans

Thursday, March 26, 2026

Required Reading:

1. Julie Weise. *Corazon de Dixie: Mexicanos in the U.S. South*. University of North Carolina Press, 2015 – Chapter 2 Mexicans in Jim Crow Mississippi



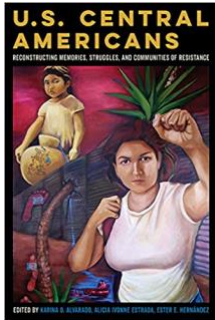
WEEK 11 – Reimagining US Latinx Indigeneity, and U.S. Central Americans in Florida MIDTERM

Tuesday, March 31, 2026

Required Reading:

1. Karina O. Alvarado, Alicia I. Estrada, and Ester E. Hernández, 2017. *U.S. Central Americans: Reconstructing Memories, Struggles, and Communities of Resistance*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. Chapter 1

2. *Critical Latinx Indigeneities Special Issue*, Latino Studies Journal – Luis Sanchez-Lopez, “Learning from the paisanos: Coming to consciousness in Zapotec LA,” Lourdes Alberto, “Coming Out as Indian: On being Indigenous Latina in the US,”



Thursday, April 2, 2026

Required Reading:

1. Mahler, S.J., Cogua-López, J. & Chaudhuri, M. Expressing similarities and differences: Latin@ voices from metropolitan Miami. *Latino Studies* 16, 21–42 (2018).
2. Smith, J., Vallejos, A., Mejia, M. et al. The views from where we labor: Metropolitan Miami’s community organizers tell their stories. *Latino Studies* 16, 129–138 (2018).

WEEK 12 – Hurricanes, Race, and Immigrant Labor in New Orleans

Tuesday, April 7, 2026

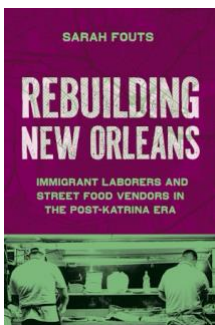
Required Reading:

1. Sarah Fouts. *Rebuilding New Orleans: Immigrant Laborers and Street Vendors in the Post Katrina Era*. The University of North Carolina Press, 2025 -- Chapter 1 and 2

Thursday, April 9, 2026

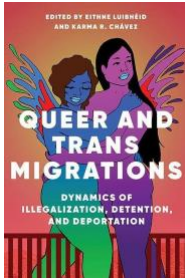
Required Reading:

1. Sarah Fouts. *Rebuilding New Orleans: Immigrant Laborers and Street Vendors in the Post Katrina Era*. The University of North Carolina Press, 2025 -- Chapter 3 and 4



Oral History Workshops

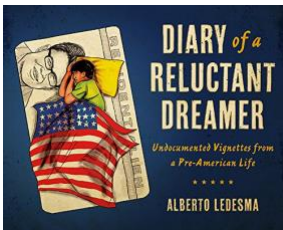
WEEK 13 – Lives in Limbo, Illegality and the Undocumented Youth Education and Activism in the U.S. South



Tuesday, April 14th, 2026

Required Reading:

1. Rafael Solórzano. “Welcome to Cuban Miami: Linking Place, Race, and Undocuqueer Youth Activism.” In *Queer and Trans Migrations: Dynamics of Illegalization, Detention, and Deportation*, edited by Eithne Luibhéid and Karma R. Chavez. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2020. Chapter 7



Thursday, April 16th, 2026

1. Alberto Ledesma, *Diary of Reluctant Dreamer: Undocumented Vignettes from a Pre-American Life*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press.

Digital Video Workshops

WEEK 14 – Hurricanes, Migration, and Latino Orlando



Tuesday, April 21, 2026

Required Reading:

- Maria T. Padilla and Nancy Rosado, *Tossed to the Wind: Stories of Hurricane Maria Survivors*. University of Florida Press, 2020 – Chapter 1 and 2

Final Project Workshops

Finals Week

NO CLASS- Good Luck on Finals!

***** Finals Due – Dates to Be Decided *****