



Department of History
University of Wisconsin–Madison

History 901–001: Studies in American History
“US-MEXICO GENDERED MIGRATIONS: ARCHIVAL RESEARCH, ORAL HISTORY, AND MEMORY”

COURSE INFORMATION

SPRING 2026

Tuesdays, 3:30 – 5:25 PM
5255 Mosse Humanities Building

Professor: Marla A. Ramírez, Ph.D.
Office: 4126 Mosse Humanities Building
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 10 AM – 12 PM
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Course Credit: 3 credits
Course Designation: This is a graduate level course
Course Modality: In-person
Requisites: Graduate standing

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar invites students to explore the history of gendered migrations across the US–Mexico border during nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We will analyze the social, political, labor, economic, and legal debates surrounding ethnic Mexican gendered migrations and their effects on migrants and their families. Additionally, the experiences of other racial and ethnic groups affected by the politics and policies of the US–Mexico border will also be discussed in this seminar. The assigned readings include books and articles that utilize diverse methodologies including memory, archival research, and oral history. Students will engage in critical discussions of assigned readings that employ diverse intersectional methodological approaches, cover the periods of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and offer national and transnational examinations of border topics.

OBJECTIVES – Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- Identify key themes in US-Mexico borderlands history
- Understand themes and debates in the subfield of Mexican gendered migrations history
- Improve skills in academic writing, textual analysis, intersectional methodological applications, and public speaking
- Apply the approaches of Mexican gendered migrations history and intersectional methodological approaches to their own research areas

COURSE CREDIT

The credit standard for this 3-credit course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course's learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit or 9 hours per week), which include regularly scheduled meeting times (group seminar meetings of 115 minutes per week), dedicated class time, reading, writing, individual consultations with the instructor, and other student work as described in the syllabus.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Students are required to write a weekly reading summary (1–1.5 pages) including:
 - a. Full citation of the assigned reading
 - b. 3-5 keywords to describe the assigned reading for the week
 - c. A paragraph about the author (expertise, trajectory, and affiliation)
 - d. 250-300 words summary of the reading
 - e. An analysis of what the student considers as the strengths and areas of improvement for the assigned reading
 - f. A methodological analysis explaining why the author's chosen methodology might have been used and how it helps uncover new knowledge on the historical event under examination
 - g. Write 2-3 questions for discussion to be addressed during our weekly seminars
2. Active participation and listening are required in every seminar meeting
3. Each student will lead three discussions during the semester (two as individual discussion leaders and one in teams of two)
4. For the final paper, students will write a 20-page historiographical paper
5. Students will deliver a presentation in a conference style format based on their research interests and their connections to the themes of this seminar.

GRADING

Attendance & Participation:	10%
Weekly Reading Summaries:	20%
Lead Discussion (3x):	25%
Final Paper:	30%
Final Presentation:	15%

GRADING RUBRIC

92-100% = A	87-91.9% = AB	82-86.9% = B	77-81.9% = BC
72-76.9% = C	67-71.9% = D	0-66.9% = F	

PARTICIPATION, LEADING DISCUSSION, AND ORAL PRESENTATION RUBRIC

Excellent (90-100)	Good (80-90)	Competent (70-80)	Inadequate (60-70)	Fail (0-60)
-Mastery over readings and previous discussion -Explores questions rigorously -Comes to class with interpretations and questions -Engages others	-Knows readings well -Consistent preparation and involvement -Offers analysis of texts in class	-Basic grasp of reading -Mostly offers facts or surface-level interpretations -Contributes when called upon but not actively engaged	-Insufficient command of reading -Attempts to contribute facts or interpretations when called but unable to offer substance	-Uninvolved -Unexcused -Disruptive

REQUIRED TEXTS

The following required books will be available at the university bookstore. They can also be ordered through various online vendors. Most of these books are currently available for free as eBooks through the [University of Wisconsin Library website](#).

- ❑ Alice Baumgartner, *South to Freedom: Runaway Slaves to Mexico and the Road to the Civil War* (Basic Books, 2020).
- ❑ Miroslava Chávez-García, *Negotiating Conquest: Gender and Power in California, 1770s to 1880s* (University of Arizona Press, 2004).
- ❑ Julian Lim, *Porous Borders: Multiracial Migrations and the Law in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands* (University of North Carolina Press, 2017).
- ❑ Monica Muñoz Martinez, *The Injustice Never Leaves You: Anti-Mexican Violence in Texas* (Harvard University Press, 2018).
- ❑ Kelly Lytle-Hernández, *¡Migra!: A History of the U.S. Border Patrol* (University of California Press, 2010).
- ❑ Marla A. Ramírez, *Banished Citizens: A History of the Mexican American Women Who Endured Repatriation* (Harvard University Press, 2025).
- ❑ Mireya Loza, *Defiant Braceros: How Migrant Workers Fought for Racial, Sexual, & Political Freedom* (University of North Carolina Press, 2016).
- ❑ Monica Perales, *Smelertown: Making and Remembering a Southwest Border Community* (University of North Carolina Press, 2010).
- ❑ Natalie Lira, *Laboratory of Deficiency: Sterilization and Confinement in California, 1900–1950* (University of California Press, 2022).
- ❑ Sergio Gonzalez, *Strangers No longer: Latino Belonging and Faith in Twentieth-Century Wisconsin* (University of Illinois Press, 2024).
- ❑ A series of articles will also be required and available through Canvas.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary [sanctions](#) include, but are not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

CHATGPT AND AI WRITING TOOLS

The use of ChatGPT and other AI tools can enhance your learning if used appropriately. However, if this technology is abused, it could interfere with the development of your critical thinking and writing skills. Given that you are all learning to critically analyze readings and write academic papers at the graduate level, this course prohibits the use of AI tools for all writing assignments. If you use AI tools for any assignment, you will receive a zero on that assignment.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy ([UW-855](#)) require the university to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities to access and participate in its academic programs and educational services. Faculty and students share responsibility in the accommodation process. Students are expected to inform faculty of their need for instructional accommodations during the beginning of the semester, or as soon as possible after being approved for accommodations. Faculty will work either directly with the student or in coordination with the McBurney Center to provide reasonable instructional and course-related accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. (See: [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#))

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Course Introduction

January 20, 2026

- Introductions and course overview
- Sign-up to lead discussion

Week 2: *Why Study Immigration?*

January 27, 2026

George J. Sánchez, "Race, Nation, and Culture in Recent Immigration Studies," *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Summer 1999): 66-84.

Vicki Ruiz, "Nuestra América: Latino History as United States History," *Journal of American History* Vol. 93, No. 3 (December 2006): 655-672.

Matthew Frye Jacobson, "More 'Trans-,' Less 'National'" *Journal of American Ethnic History* Vol. 25, No. 4 (July 2006): 74 – 84.

Adam Goodman, "Nation of Migrants, Historians of Migration," *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (Summer 2015): 7-16.

Assignment # 1: Due on Sunday, 1/25th by 11:59 PM via Canvas

- Complete the reading summary worksheet (posted on Canvas)
 - o Upload response to Canvas
 - o Share observations and questions during our seminar's discussion

Week 3: 19th Century Migrations from the US to Mexico to Escape Slavery

February 3, 2026

Alice Baumgartner, *South to Freedom: Runaway Slaves to Mexico and the Road to the Civil War* (Basic Books, 2020).

Assignment # 2: Due on Sunday, 2/1st by 11:59 PM via Canvas

- Complete the reading summary worksheet (posted on Canvas)
 - Upload responses to Canvas
 - Share observations and questions during our seminar's discussion

Week 4: Conquest and Resistance in 19th Century US–Mexico Borderlands

February 10, 2026

Miroslava Chávez-García, *Negotiating Conquest: Gender and Power in California, 1770s to 1880s* (University of Arizona Press, 2004).

Assignment # 3: Due on Sunday, 2/8th, by 11:59 PM via Canvas

- Complete the reading summary worksheet (posted on Canvas)
 - Upload responses to Canvas
 - Share observations and questions during our seminar's discussion

Week 5: No Class

February 17, 2026

No class this week, I will be away delivering a book talk.

Week 6: The Railroad and Multiracial Transnational Migrations

February 24, 2026

Julian Lim, *Porous Borders: Multiracial Migrations and the Law in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands* (University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

Assignment # 4: Due on Sunday, 2/22nd by 11:59 PM via Canvas

- Complete the reading summary worksheet (posted on Canvas)
 - Upload responses to Canvas
 - Share observations and questions during our seminar's discussion

Week 7: Vigilantes, Mexican Lynchings, and Racial Terror

March 3, 2026

Monica Muñoz Martinez, *The Injustice Never Leaves You: Anti-Mexican Violence in Texas* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018).

Assignment # 5: Due on Sunday, 3/1st by 11:59 PM via Canvas

- Complete the reading summary worksheet (posted on Canvas)

- Upload responses to Canvas
- Share observations and questions during our seminar's discussion

Week 8: *The Creation of the US–Mexico Border*

March 10, 2026

Kelly Lytle-Hernández, *¡Migra!: A History of the U.S. Border Patrol* (University of California Press, 2010).

Assignment # 6: Due on Sunday, 3/8th by 11:59 PM via Canvas

- Complete the reading summary worksheet (posted on Canvas)
 - Upload responses to Canvas
 - Share observations and questions during our seminar's discussion

Week 9: *Mixed-Status Mexican Families Banished During the Great Depression*

March 17, 2026

Marla A. Ramírez, *Banished Citizens: A History of the Mexican American Women Who Endured Repatriation* (Harvard University Press, 2025).

Assignment # 7: Due on Sunday, 3/15th by 11:59 PM via Canvas

- Complete the reading summary worksheet (posted on Canvas)
 - Upload responses to Canvas
 - Share observations and questions during our seminar's discussion

Week 10: *The Bracero Program & Queering the Historical Record*

March 24, 2026

Mireya Loza, *Defiant Braceros: How Migrant Workers Fought for Racial, Sexual, & Political Freedom* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016).

Assignment # 8: Due on Sunday, 3/22 by 11:59 PM via Canvas

- Complete the reading summary worksheet (posted on Canvas)
 - Upload responses to Canvas
 - Share observations and questions during our seminar's discussion

Week 11: *Spring Break*

March 31, 2026

No class, have a good spring break!

Week 12: *The Making of the Urban West through Transnational Capitalism*

April 7, 2026

Monica Perales, *Smelertown: Making and Remembering a Southwest Border Community* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

Assignment # 9: Due on Sunday, 4/5th by 11:59 PM via Canvas

- Complete the reading summary worksheet (posted on Canvas)
 - Upload responses to Canvas
 - Share observations and questions during our seminar's discussion

Week 13: *Sterilization as Reproductive Injustice*

April 14, 2026

Natalie Lira, *Laboratory of Deficiency: Sterilization and Confinement in California, 1900–1950* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2022).

Assignment # 10: Due on Sunday, 4/12th by 11:59 PM via Canvas

- Complete the reading summary worksheet (posted on Canvas)
 - Upload responses to Canvas
 - Share observations and questions during our seminar's discussion

Week 14: *Beyond the Border Region, Mexican Migrations to Wisconsin*

April 21, 2026

Sergio Gonzalez, *Strangers No Longer: Latino Belonging and Faith in Twentieth-Century Wisconsin* (University of Illinois Press, 2024).

Assignment # 11: Due on Monday, 4/19th by 11:59 PM via Canvas

- Complete the reading summary worksheet (posted on Canvas)
 - Upload responses to Canvas
 - Share observations and questions during our seminar's discussion

Week 15: Final Presentations

April 28, 2026

Final presentations in a conference style format. Each student will have be 15-minutes to present followed by Q&A.

Final Paper: Due Monday, 4/27th by 11:59 PM via Canvas

Important Note: This syllabus, course assignments, and due dates are subject to change. It is the responsibility of the student to check the course' Canvas page and wisc email for course updates.