Mexican American/Chicano History

Content: This course seeks to provide students with an introduction to Mexican American history from about 1830 to the present. Several topics will be explored in depth: the development of Mexican American communities in Texas and California; the particular challenges faced by Mexican American women; the emergence and decline of the Chicano Movement; and the birth of Oregon’s Mexican American community.

Format: There will be no lectures. The class will meet once a week to discuss assigned readings. The reading load will be comparatively heavy. Participation in classroom discussions will be expected of all students.

Reading: The following books are required and are available at the U of O Bookstore:

1. Meier and Ribera, Mexican Americans/American Mexicans (revised ed.)
2. Montejano, Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986
3. Sanchez, Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945
4. Ruiz, Cannery Women/Cannery Lives
5. Tywoniak and Garcia, Migrant Daughter
6. Dunne, Delano: The Story of the California Grape Strike

In addition, I will provide you (electronically) with several chapters of my book manuscript on the birth of Oregon’s Mexican American community.

Course Requirements: There will be neither a midterm nor a final examination in this course. Grades will be based on the following: pre-announced quizzes to insure that the reading assignments are done on time (approx. 40%); short papers, 2-3 pages in length, based on the assigned readings (approx. 40%); class participation (approx. 20%).

Note: Graduate students will be evaluated by the same formula.

Tentative Schedule of Discussions, Assignments, Etc.

January 6 Introductory session. Begin reading Meier and Ribera.

January 13 Overview: Discussion of Meier and Ribera, through p. 158. Quiz 1.
February 3  California (1): Discussion of Sanchez, through p. 125. Quiz 3.
February 17 Women and Work: Discussion of Ruiz. Also read Meier and Ribera, 159-97. Quiz 4.
March 3  Chicano Movement: Discussion of Dunne. Also read Meier and Ribera, 198-248. Quiz 5.
March 10 Oregon’s Mexican Americans: Discussion of May book manuscript. Quiz 6.