Phil 216
Philosophy and Cultural Diversity
Instructor: Jose Jorge Mendoza
Office Hours: Thursday Nooon-2pm

Purpose:
This class is going to be devoted to investigating the structures and the philosophical implications of cultural diversity in the Americas with respect to the issues surrounding questions of knowledge, identity, and community. Specifically, we will be examining perspectives that include the following: ancient Aztec culture, a lesbian Chicana living in occupied Aztlan, a Caribbean Marxist struggling against colonialism in Martinique, a non-violent labor movement centered in California’s farmlands, and a contemporary Mexican political-philosopher. The overarching theme of this class is to present a general critique of mono-culturalism, in favor of a pluralism, and in particular to make a case for a much broader and richer understanding of American philosophy.

Texts:
Gloria Anzaldua: Borderlands/La Frontera
Aime Césaire: Discourse On Colonialism
Enrique Dussel: Twenty Theses on Politics
Miguel Leon-Portilla: Aztec Thought and Culture
Jose-Antonio Orosco: Cesar Chavez and the Common Sense of Nonviolence

Reading Schedule:
Week One: Leon-Portilla: Aztec Thought and Culture
  Monday: Introduction to class.
  Tuesday: Aztec Thought and Culture, Preface, Intro, and Chapter One.
  Wednesday: Aztec Thought and Culture, Chapter Two.
  Thursday: Aztec Thought and Culture, Chapter Three.
  Friday: Aztec Thought and Culture, Chapter Four.

Week Two: Leon-Portilla (continue) and Gloria Anzaldua: Borderlands/La Frontera
  Monday: Aztec Thought and Culture, Chapter Five and Conclusion.
  Tuesday: Borderlands/La Frontera Chapter One, Two and Three.
  Wednesday: Borderlands/La Frontera Chapter Three, Four and Five.
  Thursday: Borderlands/La Frontera Chapter Six and Seven.
  Friday: Holiday (Fourth of July)

Week Three: Cesaire: Discourse On Colonialism and Dussel: Twenty Theses on Politics
  Monday: Discourse On Colonialism (All)
  Tuesday: Twenty Theses on Politics, Forward, Prelim, Intro, Thesis One
  Wednesday: Twenty Theses on Politics, Thesis Two through Six
  Thursday: Twenty Theses on Politics, Thesis Seven through Ten
  Friday: Twenty Theses on Politics, Thesis Eleven through Thirteen
Week Four: Dussel (continue) Orosco: Cesar Chavez & Common Sense of Nonviolence

Monday: Twenty Theses on Politics, Thesis Fourteen through Twenty
Tuesday: Common Sense of Nonviolence: Introduction and Chapter One
Wednesday: Common Sense of Nonviolence: Chapter Two and Three
Thursday: Common Sense of Nonviolence: Chapter Four and Five
Friday: Open

Assignments/Grading:

Weekly Assignments: One due every Monday, worth 45% of Final Grade (15% each)

Final Paper: Due Monday July 20th by 5pm, worth 40% of Final Grade

Participation: Work, discussions, and activities done in class, worth 15% of Final Grade

Attendance: Attendance is expected and will be reflected in participation grade.

Recommended Reading:
Franz Fanon: The Wretched Of The Earth
Susan Ferriss and Ricardo Sandoval: The Fight In the Fields
Jacques Soustelle: Daily Life of The Aztecs
Spanish-to-English Dictionary

Note: No use of electrical devices will be allowed in class (e.g. cell phones and laptops)