UGS 303. Difficult Dialogues: Feminicides and Human Rights Activism in Mexico and Central America

Unique# 65045. Spring 2014

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Class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays at BEN 1.126

Description:
This signature course aims to introduce students to one of the most concerning issues of gender violence and Human rights violations in the Americas: feminicides, or the systematic women killings, and its implications in activism and public debates on gender justice. To achieve this objective the class will discuss films, chronicles, essays, and testimonies, as well as documents related to Human Rights organizations, courts resolutions, and official statements, in order to: a) define gender concepts in relationship to Human Rights politics; b) understand how economic, political, and social factors are reflected in these crimes; and c) evaluate the different forms of activism and the development of political struggle related to feminicides/feminicides.

Grade Criteria (will be given as plus/minus):

20% class participation
30% partial tests
30% final paper
20% final test

Participation. Students are expected to participate actively in all activities inside and outside classroom. In their participation, students will contribute with comments on texts and other materials of study, response to professor and classmates positions, and questions addressing analysis and criticism. Attitudes and interventions that discourage the learning experience will be considered negative participation and may affect participation grade. Class and reading sections attendance will be considered for participation grade (after 2 absences, one point of the participation grade will be reduced for each absence).

Partial Texts. Three partial tests will include questions on readings and topics discussed in class.

Final Test. It will be an overview of the course.
**Final paper.** This will consist of one 1000-1500 words research on one feminicide case in the world. Students will explore the several resources in UT for documenting their entries, and will edit them collaboratively with the supervision and advising of the teaching assistant and the professor. Quality of documentation and comprehensiveness in covering the topic selected, as well as the organization and effective writing will be the criteria for grading these entries.

**Rules of the class:**

Only when a student has a valid excuse, he or she will be allowed to present tests or turn in assignments out of the scheduled date.

Students must talk to the professor in the office when they have any concern with grades, class performance, and other issues related to the class.

Professor musts give grades of tests and assignments at least one week after student presented or turned it in.

Professor will give general feedback in class after each test or assignment or any time students request it; he also will be available in office hours or by appointment (in cases of schedule conflict) to talk on the progress of any particular student.

Instructor will make himself available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that a student may require as a student with a disability. Before course accommodations will be made, students will be required to provide documentation prepared by the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (SSD). To ensure that the most appropriate accommodations can be provided, students should contact the SSD Office at 471-6259 or 471-4641. For more information, read regulations for Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities [http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd)

Scholastic dishonesty: students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from The University of Texas. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For more information, visit Student Judicial Services (SJS) at [http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/)

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.
Schedule:

January
14. Introduction to the course
30. Femicide as politics. Reading: Russell, "Introduction"

February
4. Definitions I. Russell "Defining Femicide...
6. Definitions II. Reading: Lagarde
11. Test 1.
   "Muertes intolerables."
18. Understanding Cd. Juárez femicides II. Reading: Wright, Disposable Women....
25. Film: Señorita extraviada
27. On Señorita extraviada. Reading: Fregoso

March
4. Film: La batalla de las cruces
6. Activism in Cd. Juárez I. Reading: Wright "Femicide, Mother-Activism..."
18. Activism in Cd. Juárez II. Reading: Domínguez, Ravelo.
20. Test 2

April
1. Film: Backyard
3. Guest speaker Lydia Huerta on Backyard
8. The legal question. Reading: Harrington.
10. The case of Campo Algodonero: resolutions and official reactions.
15. Feminicides in Guatemala I. Reading: Cházarro et al.
17. Feminicides in Guatemala II. Reading: Musalo et al.
22. Feminicides in Argentina. Reading Fontenla.
24. Film: Bajo el Tacaná
29. Test 3

May
Course materials:


Films:

*Backyard/Traspato*. Carlos Carrera, dir.
*Bajo el Tacaná*. Isabel Vericat, dir.
*La batalla de las cruces* Rafael Bonilla, dir.
*Señorita extraviada*. Lourdes Portillo, dir.