COURSE DESCRIPTION

A border is a line separating two sovereign entities. Borders drawn on maps lend certainty to our sense of who is part of the national “us” and who is part of the foreign “them.” However, the many processes and flows of people and goods that occur around and across borders, ranging from trade and migration to invasions and military occupations, belie that apparent solidity. This course invites us to consider borderlands: spaces at the margins of the modern nation-state that are defined by diversity, motion and conflict.

The study of borderlands implies the study of the cultural, political, economic and social forces that have shaped them. We will read historical documents as well as theoretical texts from the disciplines of history, anthropology, critical race studies and political science. Each of these disciplines has its own insights to offer us as we seek to better understand the role of borderlands in modern history.

We will examine various interpretations of the meanings of borders, borderlands and frontiers reflected in film, fiction, on public monuments and in the speeches of politicians. In the process, we will focus on developing critical reading and thinking skills and writing several types of college-level essay effectively and persuasively. Your work with theory relating to the study of borderlands will culminate in an independent research paper that investigates a past or current issue affecting a borderland of your choice.
OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS
For each of the three major assignments you will be asked to produce multiple drafts and
workshop your essays in class.

SYLLABUS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Essay 1: Close Reading
Assignment: A 5-6 page argument-driven essay examining Gloria Andalzua’s “Borderlands: La
Frontera,” informed by your own careful analysis of the texts. In this unit we will focus on
analyzing evidence and developing arguments.
First draft due: September 27
Final draft due: October 2

Essay 2: Lens
Assignment: A 7-8 page essay about the songs “Die Wacht am Rhein” by Max Schneckenburger
and “Le Rhin Allemand” by Alfred de Musset, and/or “Where is a German’s Fatherland?” by
Ernst Moritz Arndt, shaped by critical sources. In this unit, we will focus on using sources and
structuring arguments.
First draft due: October 23
Final draft due: October 30

Essay 3: Research
Assignment: A 9-10 page essay about a borderland of your choice, informed by your own critical
research. In this unit, we will be focusing on developing research questions and conducting
scholarly research in addition to refining the techniques and applying the theories borderlands
and national and ethnic identity introduced throughout the semester.
First draft due: November 27
Final draft due: December 6
Final Portfolio:
You will also turn in a portfolio containing all of your work from the semester along with a 3-page cover letter that reflects on your progress and evolution as a writer. Please save all your writing throughout the semester including pre-drafts, drafts, and cover letters for inclusion in your final portfolio.
Portfolio with Cover Letter due: December 6

GRADES
Attendance and Participation 15%
Pre-drafts and Peer Reviews 10%
Essays 70% (15%, 25% and 30%)
Portfolio and cover letter 5%

COURSE STRUCTURE
Over the course of the semester you will write three formal essays. There will be at least two required drafts of each essay. Each draft must be turned in with a cover letter. We spend 3-5 weeks on each unit: the first half of each unit is dedicated to reading and discussing new material; the second half of each unit will be focused on writing. You will produce a first draft for the first of these writing sessions and class time and individual conferences will be used to develop and craft your essay. Revision is an essential component of our class. Between the first and final draft you need to reshape, extend, complicate or substantially clarify your ideas, not just do surface editing. Writing exercises, workshops and conferences will help you with the composing and revising process.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION
In addition to our two weekly class meetings, we will meet individually in 20 minute conferences at least 3 times during the semester (see schedule of assignments). In addition to these required meetings, please note I am available during regular office hours or scheduled appointments outside of these conferences.

Our class time and conferences are very important—they are an opportunity to come out of the creative isolation in which we produce our texts to interact with potential audiences. You will be expected to participate actively and intelligently in workshops and discussions, not just giving constructive comments and feedback to your classmates, but receiving it and acting on it as well. If you have difficulty participating in class discussions, please speak to me about other possible ways to contribute. This course is a seminar, not a lecture course, and will be propelled by your insights and written and spoken contributions much more so than by my long-windedness. Thus it is everyone’s responsibility to make an effort to come to class prepared with thoughts about the reading so that we can think together more effectively. After all, the point of college is not to receive knowledge from a professor but to develop your own ideas and ways of thinking in collaboration with your fellow students.
You will be allowed three absences from either class or conference (a missed conference is an absence), after which your grade will be affected, unless you have extenuating circumstances that have been discussed and documented with me. Six or more absences may result in a failing grade. If you must miss class, you need to send me an e-mail before class. You are responsible for all material covered in your absence. If you are absent on a day when something is due, you are responsible for delivering it to me at the earliest possible time.
LATTE
Our course has a Latte site. You can access it by going to www.brandeis.edu/latte/ On the site you will find a copy of this syllabus, assignments, and useful links. Throughout the semester you will be asked to submit assignments using Latte. Please familiarize yourself with the site and let me know if you need help navigating it.

LAPTOPS AND CELLPHONES IN CLASS
I find that students using laptop computers in class is often distracting to me and other students, in part because the temptation to take “just a second” to check email or web updates is hard to resist. There will be times in class when we will be doing in-class writing and a laptop can be a useful tool for these times. At other times, I prefer for you to keep your laptop turned off during class. If you wish to use your laptop for note-taking or other academic purposes that is also acceptable, but please limit your use of electronic devices as much as possible. After all, this class is a seminar and depends upon your active participation. There will be few lectures and you will have a great deal more to learn from participating in discussion than from hiding behind a laptop screen. It is not appropriate to bring class readings or writing assignments to class on your laptop. Hard copies are required for successful discussion and workshopping. If use of laptops becomes distracting, I reserve the right to change my policy regarding them.
Use of cell phones in class for talking, texting or reading/writing email is prohibited. If you wish to leave your cell phone on in “Silent” mode because of an ongoing emergency situation that you may need to respond to, please speak to me at the start of class to let me know.

COURSE MATERIALS
Required:
*Write Now!*
Readings on Latte
Folder to keep all drafts and exercises

THE WRITING CENTER
Take advantage of the Writing Center here at Brandeis (in Goldfarb library) where you can get one-on-one writing tutorials. Visit http://www.brandeis.edu/writingprogram/writingcenter/ to learn more or to make an appointment.

DISABILITIES
If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
You are expected to be familiar with and to follow the University’s policies on academic integrity (see http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/srcs/ai/index.html) Faculty will refer any suspected instances of alleged dishonesty to the Office of Student Development and Conduct. Instances of academic dishonesty may result in sanctions including but not limited to failure in the course, failure on the assignment in question, suspension from the University and/or educational programs.
**Unit 1: What is Close Reading?/ Borderlands in North America**

**Week 1**

**August 30**
- Reading Assignment: None.
- In Class: Class discussion of high school vs. college writing; what is good writing? Read and discuss articles on borderlessness in Europe and North America.

**Week 2**

**Sept 4**
*No Class – Labor Day*

**Sept 6**
- Writing Assignment: none.
- In Class: The Study of Borderlands

**Week 3**

**Sept 11**
- Reading Assignment: **On Latte:** close reading assignment, Borderlands/La Frontera parts 1-3, **optional:** Blackhawk, *Violence Over the Land,* pgs. 1-25, 176-225.
- Writing Assignment: none or notes/reader response
- In Class: The Making of the American Southwest

**Close reading assignment on Andalzua; introduction to close reading and analysis.**

**Sept 13**
- Reading Assignment: **On Latte:** Andalzua, continued.
- Writing Assignment: Pre-draft 1.1 (mini close-reading)
- In-Class: The US/Mexico Border in the 20th Century, discussion of Andalzua,

**Week 4**

**Sept 18**
- Reading Assignment: **On Latte:** Gordon Harvey “Elements of the Academic Essay.”
- Writing Assignment: none.
- In-Class: Close reading of sources; deriving a thesis from evidence; crafting an introductory paragraph.

**Sept 20**
- Reading Assignment: essay(s) from *Write Now!*
- Writing Assignment: Pre-Draft 1.2 (introductory paragraph)
- In-Class: peer workshop of intro paragraphs; preparing to write first draft; elements
**Week 5**

**Sept 25**  
• Reading Assignment: none  
• Writing Assignment: **Draft of Essay #1** due with Draft Cover Letter  
• In Class: Workshop student essay from *Write Now!* focusing on thesis, structure, evidence, and analysis

**Sept 27**  
• Reading Assignment: Workshop materials  
• Writing Assignment: Draft Responses to draft writer(s)  
• In Class: Draft workshop focusing on thesis, structure, evidence, analysis  
**One-on-One Conferences to discuss drafts of Essay #1**

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**Week 6**

**Unit 2: How to Work with a Text as a Lens/ Borderlands and the Nation-State in Europe**

**Oct 2**  
• Reading Assignment: **On Latte**: George W. White, “Nations as Spatial Entities” from *Nation, State and Territory*, Lens essay assignment on German and French patriotic songs, **optional**: selections from James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State*  
• Writing Assignment: **Revision of Essay #1** due with Revision Cover Letter  
• In Class: Discussion of unit 1 sources—what did you learn from writing your essay? Intro to lens analysis and to lens essay assignment. How is defining a border an exercise of political power, and what are the obstacles states face in defining their borders?

**Oct 4**  
• Reading Assignment: **On Latte**: Lyrics to “Die Wacht am Rhein,” “Des Deutschen Vaterland” and “Le Rhin Allemand,” excerpt from *From Reich to State*  
• Writing Assignment: none.  
• In Class: The Rhineland between France and Germany in the 19th Century, discussion of primary sources; establishing a baseline reading

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**Week 7**

**Oct 9**  
• Reading Assignment: Detmar Klein, “Becoming Alsatian”  
• Writing Assignment: Consider the situation of the Alsatians in light of what White has to say about nations and space. Write a paragraph or two of reflections and be prepared to share them with the class.  
• In Class: Between two European states: the Alsatians, Understanding and applying the lens text.

**Oct 11**  
*No Class – Brandeis Thursday*
Week 8

Oct 16  
• Reading Assignment: None.
• Writing Assignment: Pre-draft 2.1 (reverse outline)
• In Class: Discussion of nations, space and borders. Discussion of pre-draft 2.1; thesis and motive in lens essays

Oct 18  
• Reading Assignment: Lens Essay(s) from Write Now!
• Writing Assignment: Pre-draft 2.2
• In Class: working with quotations; working with lens; Discussion of sample student essay; drafting strategies

Week 9

Oct 23  
• Reading Assignment: none.
• Writing Assignment: Draft of Essay #2 due with Draft Cover Letter
• In Class: Style workshop.

Oct 25  
• Reading Assignment: Workshop materials
• Writing Assignment: Draft responses to draft writer(s)
• In Class: Draft workshop focusing on thesis, motive, analysis, revision strategies

One-on-One Conferences to discuss drafts of essay 2

Week 10

Unit 3: The Argumentative Research Essay/ Postcolonial Borders and Current Issues

Oct 30  
• Reading Assignment: Research paper assignment on Borderlands in Context
• Writing Assignment: Revision of Essay #2 due with Revision Cover Letter
• In Class: Moving Beyond Borders?: The world since 1945, Research essay assignment- Finding a topic, types of sources, framing a research question.

Nov 1  
• Reading Assignment: The Spanish/Moroccan border
• Writing Assignment: Find a current border issue and write one paragraph on its historical roots.
• In Class: Film showing: Black and White in Color (1976)

Week 11

Nov 6  
• Reading Assignment: Library research guide
• Writing Assignment: Library Tutorial  
• In Class: Library visit and orientation session.

Nov. 8  
• Reading Assignment: none.  
• Writing Assignment: Pre-draft 3.1 (Research proposal)  
• In Class: Brief oral reports on research topics; evaluating sources; prep for FLIP

Week 12

Nov 13  FLIP Session: Meet in Library  
• Reading Assignment: On Latte: Article with sample annotation  
• Writing Assignment: none  
• In Class: Library session on available resources

Nov 15  
• Reading Assignment: Research Essay(s) from Write Now!  
• Writing Assignment: none  
• In Class: Interweaving multiple sources in Write Now! essay; prep for annotated bibliography

Week 13

Nov 20  
• Reading Assignment: Your research materials.  
• Writing Assignment: Pre-draft 3.2 (Annotated Bibliography)  
• In Class: (course material) Research question, thesis, and motive in Write Now! essay; quotation and citation

Nov 22  No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 14

Nov 27  
• Reading Assignment: none  
• Writing Assignment: Draft of Essay #3 due with Draft Cover Letter  
• In Class: Essay structure; paragraphing; audience and tone; title workshop

Nov 29  
• Reading Assignment: Workshop materials  
• Writing Assignment: Draft response to draft writer(s)  
• In Class: Draft workshop focusing on evidence/analysis, structure, and integration of sources

One-on-One conferences to discuss drafts of essay 3
Week 15

Dec. 4
• Reading Assignment: None
• Writing Assignment: None
• In Class: Structure and stitching; discussion of portfolio assignment and reflective writing

Dec. 6
• Reading Assignment: none
• Writing Assignment: none
• In Class: Review of course; discussion of writing in future courses; course evaluations. Brief oral reports on research papers.

Revision of Essay #3 due with Revision Cover Letter, Writing Portfolio due with Portfolio Cover Letter

LAST DAY OF CLASS

After the Semester

Dec 12-Dec 19 Finals Week
Mid-Finals Week • Pick up portfolios and final grades in my office