

Latinx Literatures and Expressive Practices
AFPRL 356-01
("W" Course)
Spring 2026

Professor Lázaro Lima

Meeting Time: Mondays, 2:30pm-5:15pm (in person)

Location: Baker Building BTB240 (151 East 67th Street)

Office Hours: Mondays, 5:30pm-6:00pm | Tuesdays, 4:30pm-5:30pm | or by appointment

Communication: lazarolima@hunter.cuny.edu and Brightspace e-mail list

Course Website: <https://www.lazarolima.com/afprl-356-spring-2026.html>

Course Description:

Latinxs — people of Latin American and Afro Latin American ancestry living in the United States — are often represented as a recent historical intrusion even though Latinx forms of personhood and cultural production both predate and are continuous with the consolidation of the U.S.'s geopolitical borders and spheres of influence. Despite this history of participation and presence, a haunting absence overwhelms the literary, cultural, and historical landscapes of the nation that cannot account for the Latinx body politic or explain why the nation's largest "majority-minority" — currently at over 64 million — is also the most politically disenfranchised.

How have Latinx literary and visual technologies of representation attempted to account for this historical, social, and political erasure? How are the categories of sexual, racial, linguistic, and ethnic difference negotiated in the construction of the U.S. Latinx body politic? In this course we will analyze how Latinx literature and identity projects have attempted to engage these questions and the politics of national belonging by insisting that the Latinx body is a constitutive subject of "American" cultural history from the U.S.-Mexican War (1846-48) to the present. Despite state-sanctioned attempts at erasing Latinx peoples, communities, and their histories from the national landscape, this semester we will focus specifically on how Latinx literatures and expressive practices have engaged and resisted social death and political erasure. From detention center chronicles and found art to performance, we will study and develop the necessary methodological tools to analyze and recover the *memento mori* of both the Latinx dead and the living "necrocitizens" who labor against oblivion through literature, art, and expressive practices.

In the process, we will study and critique the conditions under which Latinx texts and bodies have been granted, denied, resisted or demanded cultural inclusion. Primary texts across genres and major literary movements will be complemented by theoretical and interdisciplinary examples from the broader tradition of Latinx and African American literature, political thought, arts, and performance. This course is a reading and writing intensive "W" course that fulfills the Hunter College writing requirement (W) requirement.

Mode of Delivery

This course is required to be conducted in-person. Expectations for course attendance, participation, etc., is listed below.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

Learning Objectives

1. Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view through class assignments and readings,
2. Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically,
3. Produce well-reasoned written and oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions by the following class assignment prompts, and
4. Achieve an understanding of major literary currents, themes and methods in literary and cultural analysis

Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, students in this course will be able to:

1. Identify the major themes and topics related to Latinx literary and cultural history,
2. Understand the historical, social, political and cultural context for the creation, consumption, and dissemination of Latinx texts,
3. Employ historical as well as “critical ethnic studies” methodologies in order to engage conflicts of interpretation in political, historical, and aesthetic context, and
4. Cogently write and discuss how Latinx cultural and literary history is emblematic of “American” history.

The course learning objectives are structured so that learning outcomes can be assessed through the course requirements listed below.

Course Requirements

1. **Readings.** All students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss and analyze the material assigned for each class meeting. At a minimum, this means you should prepare short written summaries of each assigned primary text and related questions based on the assigned material. These short summaries will occasionally be collected for my review and commentary. Please refer to section on “Homework Listed on the Syllabus” here for additional information: <http://www.lazarolima.com/general-course-policies.html>.)

2. **Writing assignments.** Texts designated by an asterisk (“*”) in the syllabus will require a short formal writing assignment that will stress the development of the four most important forms of writing required for college graduates: close readings of texts, controlled research-based argumentation, evidence-based interpretation, and civic public argumentation. The formal writing assignments should be 3-4 pages in length, double-spaced, standard margins (e.g., MLA Style), and standard font (e.g., 12-point Times). There will be three (3) formal writing assignments and several informal in-class writing exercises during the semester. The details for each assignment will develop organically from our class readings and related discussions and will be posted on our class website. All written assignments must be submitted the day the writing assignment is due. Out of fairness to students who submit their work on time, no late submissions will be accepted for missed writing assignments.

3. **Class Participation.** This course meets once a week. Missing just one class means you have lost an entire week’s worth of readings, activities, discussions and, potentially, quizzes and assignments. This will impact

your final grade (see grade distribution below). Class participation involves voluntary contributions on the part of the student. All students must participate by actively speaking about the topics the assigned materials raise in relation to previous readings and class discussions. Attendance without participation counts as an absence. Please refer to section on "Class Participation" for an explanation of participation grade here: <http://www.lazarolima.com/general-course-policies.html>.

4. **Attendance.** Although our course meets in person, more than one absence after add-drop period stands to affect your grade negatively as you will not be able to participate, contribute, or learn from the class discussions. You are required to get notes, announcements, or any missed material from your classmates before consulting with me. Please refer to section on "Attendance" here: <http://www.lazarolima.com/general-course-policies.html>.

5. **Presentations.** You will complete two presentations during the course of the semester. The presentations are not to simply repeat information found in the assigned texts or assignments but rather an opportunity to connect the presentation topic at hand with previous class readings and discussions. Presentations are timed and will last approximately 5-6 minutes (additional minutes will be allotted for questions and discussion). Since select information from each presentation may appear on quizzes and/or examinations, it is to your benefit, and that of your classmates, to cogently and clearly explain your topic to the class. I encourage students to meet with me in person or virtually prior to assigned presentations. Additional presentation details will be posted on our class website.

6. **Final Project.** Your final project constitutes either a paper related to one of the course topics, or a final digital/archival project related to the course.

A. Final Research Paper: Students interested in this option should inform me before the midterm. I will work with you to develop a working draft of what will become your final research paper. The topics for the research paper will focus on any of the texts, themes, or topics covered in the course. The final research paper will be double-spaced, 12-point Times-font, and conform to MLA Style; unlike shorter papers ("W" writing assignments), the final research paper will be 5-6 pages (inclusive of documentation). Research papers will be graded on 1) content, 2) grammar, 3) use of primary and secondary sources, and 4) clarity of expression.

B. Final Project. As an alternative to the final paper, students familiar with digital media and/or archival work will be allowed to submit a digital project (e.g., a digital timeline of Latinx literatures, a web-archive of Latinx literary resources, an oral history project or interviews with NYC Latinx writers/cultural agents or a related project). This option requires you to choose at least one major theme or topic included in the syllabus that will guide the content of your final project. If you are interested in this option, please see me before our midterm exam date.

7. **Exams.** There will be a midterm and a cumulative final exam for the course. Exams require in-class writing (W).

8. **Quizzes.** There will be two short unannounced quizzes during the course of the semester. Quizzes are based on assigned readings, class lectures and conversations. Quizzes require in-class writing (W).

Evaluation and Grading

EVALUATION:

Formal Writing Assignments (W)	30%
Class Participation	20%
2 Presentations	10%
2 Quizzes (W)	10%
Midterm (W)	10%
Final Exam (W)	10%
Final Project/Final Paper	10%

GRADING SYSTEM:

A+= 97.5-100
A = 92.5-97.4
A- = 90-92.4
B+= 87.5-89.9
B = 82.5-87.4
B- = 80-82.4
C+= 77.5-79.9
C = 70-77.4
D = 60-69.9
F = 0 = 59.9

Required Texts

Harold Augenbraum and Margarita Fernández Olmos, *The Latino Reader: An American Literary Tradition from 1542 to the Present*. Mariner Book, 1997 and ss. (designated as TLR on the syllabus).

Note: All additional primary and secondary texts listed on the syllabus are accessible via our class website.

Email Policy

You are expected to check your email regularly for course updates. Email is useful for short exchanges and/or short questions, not complicated issues. Longer exchanges should be conducted during office hours. Please see me during office hours if your questions require elaboration. If you have a doubt about what constitutes appropriate email exchanges, please see here: <https://articles.outlier.org/email-etiquette-students>. I respond to e-mail within 48 hours or less during regular business hours (9:00 am - 5:00 pm). If your e-mail is time sensitive, please keep these parameters in mind and plan accordingly.

Academic Integrity

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The college is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

This means not only automatic failing of the course but possible expulsion from Hunter College.

AI Policy

It is a violation of CUNY policy to misrepresent work that you submit by characterizing it as your own. The use of AI tools during in-class examinations, writing prompts, or assignments is not permitted. AI tools may only be used with the aim to deepen understanding of course subject matter, but these technologies are not a substitute for your own thinking, analysis, and writing. Submitting responses to assignments that do not acknowledge the use of generative AI tools constitutes academic dishonesty. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions about the use of generative AI tools before submitting any content informed or created by these tools.

Recording Policy

Trust is essential to productive, engaging, and civil discourse, regardless of the topic in question. That trust is breached when lectures, conversations, and/or related discussions are taped, transcribed or transmitted without the permission of participants. Similarly, the use of "smart glasses" or similar video devices, including photography and image recording apparatuses, without the permission of participants, constitute a breach of trust and is not allowed. Consequently, no recordings are allowed without the expressed permission of all the parties involved. In-class course lectures, the course syllabus, curated readings and archival materials, along with course media, are the intellectual property of the instructor and may not be disseminated without the expressed permission of the instructor.

Access/Ability

In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. Students with documented disabilities (emotional, medical, physical, and/or learning) should provide the instructor documentation after consultation from the Office of AccessABILITY by the second week of the semester. The office is located in Room E 1214B. For further information and assistance call the office of AccessABILITY: (212) 772-4857 or (212) 650-3230.

Hunter College Policy on Sexual Misconduct

"In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College reaffirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationships. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College.

1. Sexual Violence: Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, or contacting the College's Public Safety Office (212-772-4444).
2. All Other Forms of Sexual Misconduct: Students are also encouraged to contact the College's Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose (jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-650-3262) or

Colleen Barry (colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123.

CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct Link: <https://hunter-graduate.catalog.cuny.edu/policies/cuny-policy-on-sexual-misconduct>

Miscellaneous

We will cover issues pertinent to the course that span the depth and breadth of human diversity including representations of race, gender, sexuality, politics, violence, and related themes and topics that require analytic distance and evidence-based interventions. Engaging productively with course readings, discussions, materials, presentations and related course content are required to successfully complete the course. Please familiarize yourself with course materials in the syllabus by reviewing it, and/or speaking with me, in order to avoid unexpected surprises or material that may be sensitive to certain sensibilities.

Changes to Syllabus

This syllabus is subject to change as needed (e.g., weather related cancellations, student intellectual interests, unforeseen technical issues, etc.). All changes will be announced via our class website and/or email via Brightspace.

Syllabus	Readings and Assignments (Please Refer to Class Website for Course Prompts and Realia)
Dates	Topics
Monday, January 26	<p>Introduction to Latinx Literary and Expressive Practices</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Course introduction and review of basic terminology in Latinx studies 2. Critical cartographies: 1492, 1848, 1898 (review and discussion of pre- and post-US-Mexico War maps on class website) 3. General concepts for literary study: Periodicity, Canonicity, and Critique <p>Activity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In class viewing of Denice Frohman's poetry-performance "Accents," and Paola González and Karla Gutiérrez's "At the Wall, US/Mexican Border, Texas, 2020." What are the major affinities (e.g., themes, topics, styles, etc.) between Frohman, and González and Gutiérrez's poetic slams? <p>Realia (Historical Context for Latinx Literatures)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) 2. John Calhoun, "Conquest of Mexico" (aka, "The Government of a White Race") (1848)

	<p>Activity</p> <p>D Esperanza, <i>Detained: A Boy's Journal of Survival and Resilience</i> (2025) [excerpts]. Reading and discussion of <i>Detained</i> in relation to thematic and formal qualities of Frohman's "Accents," and Paola González and Karla Gutiérrez's "At the Wall, US/Mexican Border, Texas, 2020."</p>
Monday, February 2	<p>Cultural Industries: Race, Ethnicity, and the Question of Representation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Harold Augenbaum and Margarita Fernández Olmos, "Introduction: An American Literary Tradition" <i>TLR</i> (xi-xx) 2. Anonymous, "The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez" <i>TLR</i> 3. Simon Romer, "Lynch Mobs Killed Latinos Across the West. The Fight to Remember These Atrocities is Just Starting" <i>New York Times</i> (2019) 4. Complete prompts listed on class website <p>Activity</p> <p>View paintings of American westward expansion on class website and answer prompts.</p> <p>Comparative "American" Literary Histories and the Decolonization of the Curriculum</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. *Toni Morrison, "Recitatif" (1983) <p>Realia</p> <p>Toni Morrison interview with Jane Wendt (1998 [start at 23:00])</p>
Monday, February 9	<p>Writing Assignment 1 Due (Toni Morrison, "Recitatif")</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Percival Everett, "The Appropriation of Cultures" 2. Richard Rodríguez, "Aria" <i>TLR</i> 3. Myriam Gurba, "Pendeja, You Ain't Steinbeck: My Bronca with Fake-Ass Social Justice Literature," <i>Tropics of Meta</i> (2029) 4. Complete prompts listed on class website <p>Realia</p> <p>Images and material culture objects for analysis of Americana (Sydney Sweeny controversy)</p>
Monday, February 16	College Closed
Monday, February 23	Foundling Fictions: Assimilation, Racial Passing, and "American" Cultural Amnesia

	<p>1. María Amparo Ruiz de Burton ("MARB"), <i>The Squatter and the Don</i> TLR (or as linked) [ONLY READ: Chapter One "Squatter Darrell Reviews the Past" and Chapter Two, "The Don's View of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo"]</p> <p>2. Complete prompts listed on class website</p> <p>Activity</p> <p>Identify and discuss which Articles of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo are addressed in these two chapters.</p> <p>Realia</p> <p>MARB images and related archival materials for analysis</p>
Monday, March 2	<p>1. Joan Didion, "Notes from a Native Daughter," from <i>Slouching Towards Bethlehem</i> (1990)</p> <p>2. Complete prompts listed on class website</p> <p>Activity</p> <p>View videos on class website of the Joan Didion and Mike Davis interviews and be prepared to discuss how both writers have different understandings of California's past and its futures.</p> <p>Critiques of Empire from the Global South to Global North</p> <p>1. *José Martí, "Our America" <i>El Partido Liberal</i> (1891)</p> <p>2. Mark Cary, "Principled and Pragmatic: Canada's Path" (Prime Minister Carney addresses the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting at Davos, Switzerland, January 20, 2026)</p> <p>3. Complete prompts listed on class website</p> <p>Realia</p> <p>Analysis of "Uncle Sam's Burden" and related images</p>
Monday, March 9	<p>Writing Assignment 2 Due (José Martí, "Our America" <i>El Partido Liberal</i> (1891))</p> <p>1. Lola Rodríguez de Tío, "La Borinqueña" (1868)</p> <p>2. Lázaro Lima, "Empire," <i>Keywords for Latina/o Studies</i> (2017)</p> <p>3. Complete prompts listed on class website</p> <p>Realia</p> <p>Cuban and P.R. archives (archival images for analysis)</p>

Monday, March 16	<p>1. Review for Midterm Exam</p> <p>2. Midterm Exam (W)</p>
Monday, March 23	<p>Latinx Modernisms and the Archive: From Impressionism to Belated Modernity</p> <p>1. Francisco Oller, "Selected Writings" (1917 ss.) (see realia section on class website) 2. Arthur A. Schomburg, "José Campeche, 1752-1809" <i>TLR</i> (1934) 3. Complete prompts listed on class website</p> <p>Activity</p> <p>In-class analysis of Campeche's major paintings from the Museo de Puerto Rico and the Smithsonian Museum</p> <p>Realia</p> <p>Analysis of Campeche's major paintings from the Museo de Puerto Rico and the Smithsonian Museum</p>
Monday, March 30	<p>Poetry, Protest, and Historical Memory from the Chicano Renaissance, to the Puerto Rican Poets Café, and Beyond</p> <p>1. Rodolfo Corky Gonzáles, "I Am Joaquín" <i>TLR</i> (1967) 2. View documentary, <i>Chicano! History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement</i>, Part 1, "Quest for a Homeland" (as linked on class website) 3. Karina Ordóñez, "Canción de flores" (2025) (as linked on class website)</p> <p>Activity</p> <p>Protest and poetry workshop</p> <p>Realia</p> <p>Karina Ordóñez, "Artist Statement," poetry workshop handouts and Puerto Rican Poet's Café images/photos and archives (as linked on class website)</p>
Monday, April 6	College Closed/Spring Break
Monday, April 13	<p>Writing Assignment 3 (Gloria Anzaldúa, "How to Tame a Wild Tongue")</p> <p>Latinx Sexualities</p> <p>1. *Gloria Anzaldúa, "How to Tame a Wild Tongue," <i>TLR</i> (1987) 2. Complete prompts listed on class website</p> <p>1. John Rechy, from <i>City of Night</i>, <i>TLR</i> (1963)</p>

	<p>2. Gloria Anzaldúa, "La Prieta"</p> <p>3. Complete prompts listed on class website</p> <p>Activity</p> <p>Review class website for videos, documents and realia related to Stonewall Uprising, Sylvia Rivera, and Marsha P. Johnson. See class website for instructions and prompts.</p> <p>Realia</p> <p>Images/videos from Stonewall Uprising, Sylvia Rivera, and Marsha P. Johnson</p>
Monday, April 20	<p>1. Myriam Gurba, selections from <i>Mean</i> (2017)</p> <p>2. Answer prompts listed on class website</p> <p>Realia</p> <p>Myriam Gurba interview and images</p>
Monday, April 27	<p>1. Junot Díaz, "Ysrael" (1996)</p> <p>2. Complete prompts listed on class website</p> <p>3. Answer prompts listed on class website</p> <p>Realia</p> <p>Junot Díaz controversy (images and documents)</p>
Monday, May 4	<p>1. Group Presentations</p>
Monday, May 11	<p>1. Final Exam Review</p>
FINAL EXAM (W)	<p>Monday, May 18, 2026, from 2:30-4:30 (Baker Building BTB240, 151 East 67th Street)</p>