LACS 212 J-TERM 2021

Border Lives

TWRF 10-11:40AM

Class Zoom Link:

<https://trincoll.zoom.us/j/93919120388>

Instructor:

Johannes F. Evelein, Chair & Professor of Language & Culture Studies (he)

Seabury Tower 214

Email: johannes.evelein@trincoll.edu

Office phone: 297-2490

Office hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays 11AM-12:15 PM & by appt.

Zoom link for Office Hours: <https://trincoll.zoom.us/j/6199403974>

**Course Description**

We live in a bordered world. While some national borders may seem invisible, allowing for easy crossing, others are heavily guarded--stern markers of state sovereignty and protectionism. In this course we will examine the broad political and cultural implications of borders, from the 20th century into the present. Our main focus will be on the lived experience of--and on--the border, with special attention given to transnational travel, migration (increasingly climate related), exile, and the unique cultures that emerge in borderlands. Aside from reading essential texts within the field of Border Studies, we will explore several novels, short stories and films from different parts of the world--from the Berlin Wall to the US-Mexico Border.

**Course Materials**

**Purchase or borrow (either hardcopy or e-book):**

* Manlio Graziano. *What is a Border?* San Francisco: Stanford UP, 2018. ISBN: 9781503605390.
* Raja Shehadeh. *Where the Line is Drawn. A Tale of Crossings, Friendships, and 50 Years of Occupation in Israel-Palestine.* New York: The New Press, 2017. ISBN: 9781620972915.
* Francisco Cantú. *The Line Becomes A River.* *Dispatches from the Border.* New York: Riverhead Books, 2018. ISBN: 9780735217713.
* Bryan Caplan and Zach Weinersmith. *Open Borders. The Science and Ethics of Immigration*. New York: First Second, 2019. ISBN: 9781250316967.
* Stephen Alter. *Amritsar to Lahore. A Journey Across the India-Pakistan Border*. Philadelphia: U. of Pennsylvania Press, 2001. ISBN: 0812217438.
* Peter Schneider. *The Wall Jumper. A Berlin Story.* New York: Random House, 1983. ISBN: 0394728823.

Most of the readings and viewings will be made available on our Moodle site at <https://moodle.trincoll.edu/course/view.php?id=4009>

**Course Format and Strategy**

This accelerated course will be entirely online, using the Zoom videoconferencing platform. See Zoom link at the top of the syllabus. We will have a total of 20 sessions over 5 weeks: TWRF 10-11:40 AM.

Our course is very much student-centered. It goes without saying that you can learn a great deal from your peers who have different backgrounds, bring different approaches, observations, and interpretations to the classroom, and actively contribute to the course. There will be lots of student interaction, group discussions, and peer presentations.

Participation in this course involves the following activities, all of which are described and announced in advance on Moodle:

A. Reading Assignments/Viewings. For each class session you'll read between 50-100 pages. Assignments for Tuesday classes (following the long weekend) will be somewhat longer. Typically, I'll give you some questions or pointers to reflect on as you read the assigned material. Read attentively and come to class with questions to ask and observations to share. It is essential that you do so, in order for the class discussion to be productive. We'll be learning from each other. In addition to readings, we will regularly watch and discuss films and documentaries for which viewing links will be posted on Moodle.

B. Pre-class Posts/Short Essays.  Typically, you write a short Moodle forum post *before class* on a subject of your choosing that 1) responds directly to the reading/viewing and centers on an idea that you’re exploring; 2) brims with curiosity and intelligence; and 3) is well written. Posts are typically between 250-300 words. In addition, you will be asked to compose four short essays (750-800 words) which are due on Saturdays. It is important that you *not summarize*. Key is to offer your critical insights and analysis.

C. Full and Active Participation. You are encouraged—expected—to contribute to class discussion, because without you, there won’t be any! So: ask questions, respond, argue, quote, joke, ponder, debate, critique.

D.  Discussants. Typically, 2x2 students are asked to serve as discussants in charge of framing the conversation: by identifying a theme or motif that they consider of central importance or by offering an interpretation (not a summary!) that is then opened up for questions and further discussion.

Discussants have up to 10 minutes. They will be assigned at least one class period ahead of time. Discussants are expected to meet before class to devise a plan, decide on what themes/issues to bring to the group, etc. Typically, students serve twice as discussants.

E. Group Work. You'll regularly work in small break-out groups to discuss some of the materials mentioned in A. You will all take notes during the discussion. After approx. 10 minutes one student briefly summarizes the main points and comments on the outcome of the discussion, questions raised, and insights gained. When the commentators from all groups have done so, there will be time allocated for further class discussion.

F. Final.  Given the compressed structure of this J-term course, there will be no midterm exam. The Final consists of a guided writing exercise in which I will ask you to address a number of questions about the readings and discussions spanning the entire term. See Moodle for dates. The final exam is due on Saturday, Feb. 6.

**Workload**

For this 1-credit course (= 157.5 hour equivalent), you should expect to spend **an average of 20 hours** per week studying and completing assignments.

**Accommodations**

If you have approval for academic accommodations, please notify me—by email or during office hours—so that we can discuss implementation.

**Grading Policy**

Attendance/Active Participation 25%

Leading Discussion 10%

Short Essays 35%

Moodle Posts 15%

Final Guided Writing Exercise 15%

**Academic House Rule**s

Please be a responsible academic citizen, and by this we mean (at the risk of stating the obvious or sounding pedantic):

a) Since this course is very student-oriented, attendance is crucial and imperative. If you think you can’t make it to class, first do some serious soul searching to see if your excuse is legitimate. If so, let us know in advance so that we can work out an alternative for you. If you're absent more than two class periods without a compelling reason, 3% will be taken off your final grade for every additional class missed.

b) If work starts at 8 a.m., you make sure that you are there. Our class starts at 10 AM. Be there on time. Coming in late is very disruptive and disrespectful both of your peers and your instructor. If you are more than 10 minutes late without a legitimate reason, you'll be considered absent.

c) Plagiarism is the biggest sin in academe (and this is no overstatement). You are encouraged to use other people’s ideas to support your own, but make sure that your reader can differentiate between your thoughts and someone else’s. Consult the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers by Joseph Gibaldi with questions about the proper format of your paper. Please familiarize yourselves with Trinity’s Academic Dishonesty procedures, which you will find in the Student Handbook.

d) Zoom etiquette: you are expected to have your camera and audio on. Dress appropriately, as if you were going to class, and maintain a posture conducive to attentive participation (lounging is NOT conducive!). Use the “raise hand” feature to ask a question.

**Detailed Schedule: See Moodle**

https://moodle.trincoll.edu/course/view.php?id=4009