Course Description:
This course will provide a broad survey of Latinas/os in Hollywood and American film and television, from the introduction to sound through the rise of Hollywood’s Spanish-language films, the “Good Neighbor” Era, the advent of television, the Chicano Movement and the contestation of negative images, race, social class, and alternative filmmaking, and the resurgence of the (in)visibility of Latinization in film and television.

We will view and discuss a wide range of shorts, feature films, television programs, read contemporary Chicana/o, Latina/o, and media criticism concerning Latinas/os representations, and historical material written during specific time periods, all with the larger goal of exploring and examining U.S. film and television by and/or about Hispanics and Latinos/as (i.e., Mexican-American/Chicano, Puerto Rican/Boricua, and Cuban-American). Throughout the semester we will be concerned with the complex relationship between the constructions of Latina/o identities, Latina/o stereotypes, and the circumstances which Latinos encounter in the U.S. as portrayed in film and television. As we study this history of Latina/o identities and Latina/o stereotypes, we will consider significant films, stylistic trends, genres, and Latina/os that have been instrumental in the development and progress of Latina/o representation on the big and small screen. Students will also learn how to analyze films with respect to the social contexts in which they appear.

Students will be evaluated based upon their participation in class discussions, five quizzes, two critical essays, an in-class midterm, and a final research paper. Three textbooks and selected articles and book chapters from contemporary Latina/o scholars will provide the necessary theoretical and analytical tools needed to explore the cinematic and televisual construction of the Latina/o identities and stereotypes. In addition to attending lectures, students are required to attend weekly screenings. It is expected that by the end of the semester students will become familiar with Latino studies.