Course Description: This course repositions the border as a critical space of inquiry by focusing on the cinematic and televisual representations of the U.S.-Mexico border in Hollywood, independent, and Chicana/Chicano cinema. Drawing from the works of female and male directors, we will consider how the border is constructed in U.S. media and explore the historical, social, and cultural representations of the border. In the process of examining border cinema, we will question representations of Latina/os, Chicana/os, immigrants, sexuality, gender, and violence, to name just a few.

Topics that will ground our discussion of border history and media representations range from the border as a spectacle to issues of immigration and the war on drugs. Rather than present a chronology of border cinema, we will explore the long and tumultuous history of the U.S.-Mexican border and the interaction and collision of U.S. and Mexican social, cultural, and economic ideologies as they appear thematically in film and television. A selection of the films that will be screened include: *Touch of Evil, No Country for Old Men, Missing Young Woman, Which Way Home, El Norte, Born in East L.A., Sleep Dealer*, and episodes from the reality television series *Bordertown: Laredo*. Questions that will guide our discussions are: (1) What is the border, and what does it symbolize?; (2) How is the U.S.-Mexican border cinematically and televisually constructed and represented?; and (3) How have U.S. media representations framed and shaped the way we think about the border, immigration/immigrants, labor, gender, and sexuality?

Students will be evaluated based upon their participation in class discussions, two textual analysis essays, an in-class midterm, and a final research paper. The selected readings—articles and book chapters from contemporary Latina/o, Chicana/o, and media studies and posted on Oncourse—will provide the necessary theoretical and analytical tools needed to explore the cinematic and televisual construction of the border, and it is expected that by the end of the semester students will become familiar with Latina/o, Chicana/Chicano, and media studies.