“On the Border: Mexico and the U.S.—service learning”
Dr. Tracy Ferrell

"Knowledge, without action, is useless. It’s not what you learn, it’s what you live.”
--Dr. Kyla Dillard

Spring 2014
sect.051, TTh 8:00-9:15, CHEM 133
sect.068, TTh 12:30-1:45, HUMN 270
email: tracy.ferrell@colorado.edu
Website: www.colorado.edu/PWR/courses/ferrell

Office: GRDV 135
Hours: TTh 11-12 or by apt.
Phone: 303-492-3515

**Required Texts:**
in the bookstore:
*The Tortilla Curtain*, T.C. Boyle

on D2L:
selection from *Borderlands/La Frontera*, Gloria Anzaldúa
selection from *Just Like Us*, Helen Thorpe
selection from *Aims of Argument*, Timothy Crusius and Carolyn Channell

articles on the internet (accessible through class website):
“Immigration Debate,” *CQ Researcher*
“Death in the Desert,” *Newsweek*
“Arizona Desert Swallows Migrants on Riskier Paths,” *New York Times*
“Migrant Deaths Aren’t New,” alternet.org
“Deferred Action,” Homeland Security website
“New Immigration Laws Split America in Two,” msnbc.com
“NAFTA” on *Wikipedia*
“Maquiladoras” on *Wikipedia*
“Mexico’s Drug War,” Council on Foreign Relations website
“Border Debate,” *CQ Researcher*
other current events articles

films:
*Maquilapolis*
*Al Otro Lado*

Course Description:
Writing 3020 satisfies upper-division core requirements in the College of Arts & Sciences by extending student rhetorical knowledge and writing skills, engaging theoretical perspectives and addressing specialized disciplinary communities. This course is meant to build upon the knowledge you gained in WRTG 1150 and will help you to improve your writing by introducing you to more complex analytical reading skills as well as a variety of rhetorical strategies. In addition, this course is a service learning section, meaning that you will be volunteering 16 hours in the community or on campus and then writing and presenting on your experience. Readings and in-class discussions will focus on the theme of “On the Border: Mexico and the U.S.” We will examine the border both in its physical form and as a border between cultures and languages. We will begin the class by a discussion of the meaning of “borders” and by looking at the history of the U.S./Mexico border both as a physical and metaphorical space. We will then examine the discourse of immigration through the novel *Tortilla Curtain*, in various articles, videos and news reports, through class speakers and through discussions of your work in the volunteer community. Finally, we will look at other political issues of the physical border between the two countries such as drug trafficking, maquiladoras and “the wall”.


Course Goals and CCHE Criteria:
This upper division seminar is part of the state-wide “Guaranteed Transfer” pathway of courses. Thus, this course meets the Colorado Commission on Higher Education goals for an Advanced Writing course in the following areas:

Rhetorical Knowledge: Because this class focuses on the topic of the Mexican/U.S. border, readings and discussions will be located within the interdisciplinary discourse of area studies (geography, sociology, history, cultural studies, etc.). The class will read and discuss seminal works of border studies such as Gloria Anzaldua’s Borderlands/Fronteras. We will also be reading literature about the issues we will be studying (T.C. Boyle’s The Tortilla Curtain) and various current events articles from newspapers, magazines and the web. We will read from books such as Aims of Argument by Timothy Crusius and Carolyn Channel and use websites such as Diana Hacker’s Writing Guidelines to better form an understanding of the principals of rhetoric in general in order to be able to employ that knowledge within these more specific disciplines.

Writing Process: The course will allow you to understand writing from the audience perspective by focusing on the peer review of work in progress. Thus, you will discover how revision is central to the writing process. Each paper will go through a minimum of two revisions and we will all work together as a class to provide constructive criticism to help each writer with his/her writing process. Your job will therefore be to provide oral and written commentary on other students’ papers when assigned to do so. In addition, you will sometimes be asked to evaluate other students’ input into the workshop process.

Writing Conventions: The papers you will write for this course will call upon key genres of academic writing as well as writing for specific and general audiences. In the process you will learn about genre conventions appropriate to your field and/or to your audience, and about how to draw on specialized vocabularies in ways that still make your work accessible to secondary audiences.

Effective Communication Strategies: Many of the assignments in the course are geared to real-world audiences—including members of your discipline or profession, stakeholders on campus and the community, and the community at large. You will become familiar with writing in a disciplinary or specialized rhetorical situation, even as you make your work accessible to secondary, more general audience. In addition, your work in the community will require you to develop effective written and oral communication strategies with your partner organization as well as the immigrants with whom you will be working.

Technology:
My WRTG 3020 course draws extensively on a wide variety of technology. You will be expected to use the course website daily for finding readings and interactive web assignments. We will also be using D2L for certain course readings as well as grade posting, etc. We will be using various forms of technology in the classroom including video clips and websites as a basis for work in the analysis of visual rhetorics. Finally, you will be using databases and search engines as a basis for research on your final project.

Writing Help: In addition to coming and seeing me during my office hours, there are various resources available on campus to help you with your writing or research. The Writing Center schedules individual consultations in Norlin E111. You can schedule an appointment at http://www.colorado.edu/pwr/writingcenter.html.

Course Requirements:
1) Leading class discussion: At the beginning of the semester, you will be partnered with a classmate and given one of the major topics that we will be studying this semester. As a pair you are responsible for researching this topic and preparing to lead the class on your assigned day. You should give a brief presentation on the topic and then have a prepared lesson for the class. This could be an article/articles for the class to read or a short video followed by discussion. You could also get creative and design a game, a debate or another way for students to learn and discuss the material.
2) Short Papers: These papers will vary between 4-5 pages in length and will be due in the first half of the semester. Short papers will help you to hone the skills of description, analysis, and synthesis that were taught in WRTG 1150. The first paper will ask you to practice tone and voice for particular audiences by writing a 2-3 page argument about immigration from the perspective of one of the characters in *The Tortilla Curtain*. You will also be writing a 1-2 page rhetorical analysis to accompany paper #1. The second paper will require you to do research that will be used in crafting a persuasive argument about one of the issues/problems from the class.

3) Writing exercises: These exercises are shorter writing assignments that are not graded as strictly as the longer essays. Much like a journal, these papers allow you to get your thoughts down on paper and to practice skills that you will need for the more formal writing assignments. Many of the responses will ask you to reflect on your experience working in the community, and some will ask you to connect issues from the readings or videos with local immigrant issues. These responses should be approximately 1 page, typed, double spaced.

4) Service Learning: This section of 3020 is also a service learning course. That means that you will be required to volunteer a minimum of 16 hours with a local non-profit that works with the Mexican immigrant community. You will choose your organization within the first week of classes and then arrange to attend any training and to complete your hours. Many of the responses and in-class discussions will center on your volunteer experiences. In addition, your final paper/project will respond to a need of your community organization. You will also be required to give a presentation on your organization/volunteer experiences at the end of the semester.

5) Participation/Attendance: Clear thinking is imperative to clear writing. To this end, you are expected to come to class having read and completed all assignments and ready to share your thoughts in a class discussion. Such discussions allow you to clarify your own opinions and arguments when faced with opposition. Of course, you cannot participate if you are not in class. Thus, if you miss more than three classes during the semester, your grade will be lowered by 5 points for each subsequent absence. Extenuating circumstances will require written documentation. I also expect you to be on time for class, since arriving late disrupts the entire class. Because of this, 3 tardies will count as 1 unexcused absence. In class writing assignments and reading quizzes will also count in the participation grade.

6) Final paper: The course will culminate with a collaborative final essay of around 5-8 pages. For this paper, you will be partnered with another student who is working at the same agency. You will need to meet with your volunteer coordinator to gather background information about the organization and identify a need. This could be a financial need, a need for more volunteers, a need for more community education, or something very specific like a need for a new website or brochure. You will create a formal proposal for your paper, identifying the appropriate audience, necessary research, etc. You will also have to determine the appropriate writing genre for your project and do a genre analysis to familiarize yourself with that type of writing. Some examples of final papers might be grant proposals, proposals to other organizations/corporations, editorials, brochures, testimonials, etc. If your final paper is less than 5 pages, you will complete the requisite pages with a reflective piece. Further information and guidelines on this assignment can be found on the class website.

7) Collaborative presentation: With your proposal partner, you will be responsible for a 15-20 minute presentation about your organization and project. The presentation should include information about the organization and the work you did, issues that arose and possible solutions and connections between the issues we raised in class and the volunteer work. You should incorporate visuals into your presentation such as videos, a slide show, a picture/story board, etc. The presentations will be graded based on the rubric found on the website. After your presentation, we will also be workshopping your final project as a class.

Extra Credit
There are two chances to earn extra credit this semester (and more may be added as events come to my attention):
**The first opportunity is to attend part or all of the Undergraduate Diversity Conference being held on Wednesday, Feb.19 in the UMC from 9:00-3:00. To earn extra credit, you will need to attend one of the sessions at the conference and write a one page reflection piece. The extra credit will be equivalent to one writing exercise.

**The second opportunity for extra credit is to staff a table at the Service Learning Showcase in April. You can bring the visuals from your collaborative presentation and then just answer questions that other students may have about service learning. This extra credit will be 5% added to a short paper grade.

**Revising Graded Assignments**
At the end of the semester, if you would like to resubmit one of your short papers, you may revise your work and turn in a Revision Portfolio for reevaluation. The new grade will completely replace your original grade on that paper. If you resubmit work you must:

- Choose one of the short papers and revise your work. (You are welcome to schedule an appointment with me to discuss some strategies for revision.)
- Attach the original graded version and drafts of the assignment so that I can better evaluate your revisions.
- Write a one-page reflective statement describing your revisions.
- Submit your Revision Portfolio on or before the last day of class

**Grading:**
Writing exercises will earn a check plus, check or check minus. All papers and presentations will be graded according to the rubrics that can be found on the website. The final grade will be broken down as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Short Papers (15% each)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing exercises</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leading class</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Genre analysis</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final project/paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service work</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborative presentation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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**Late Work:**
For each paper, you will be responsible for writing two rough drafts, which are due on the date noted. Late rough drafts will not be accepted. If you have an excused absence on the day that a rough draft is due, you are responsible for having the draft workshopped by other students in the class or by the writing center. Final paper drafts need to be turned in with all drafts. I will accept papers up to one day late for one grade lower. The final project will not be accepted late, since I have to do grades immediately. Other assignments such as writing exercises and research assignments will not be accepted late unless you have an excused absence.

**Cell Phones/Computers:** Remember to turn off your cell phone when you enter the classroom. Because ringing cell phones are extremely disruptive to the entire class, you will receive an F for participation for the day if your phone rings in class. You may use your computer to take notes in class. If I find that you are using your computer for non-class related activities, you will receive an F for the day and will lose your computer privileges.
University Policies

Students with Disabilities: If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (303-492-8671, Willard 322, www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices).

Plagiarism: We will discuss plagiarism in depth in class before any paper assignments are due. Any student found to have intentionally plagiarized work for this course will receive an F on that assignment with a possibility of further sanctions based on the severity of the infraction. Students found to be breaking the honor code in any way (cheating, lying, plagiarizing, etc.) will be reported to the Honor Code Council and may be subject to both academic and non-academic sanctions. For further information, please consult the CU Honor Code at: http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/studentinfo/index.htm

Sexual Harassment: The University of Colorado Policy on Sexual Harassment applies to all students, staff and faculty. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual attention. It can involve intimidation, threats, coercion, or promises or create an environment that is hostile or offensive. Harassment may occur between members of the same or opposite gender and between any combination of members in the campus community: students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Harassment can occur anywhere on campus, including the classroom, the workplace, or a residence hall. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been sexually harassed should contact the Office of Sexual Harassment (OSH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the OSH and the campus resources available to assist individuals who believe they have been sexually harassed can be obtained at: http://www.colorado.edu/odh/resources.html

Religious Observances: Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, I expect to be notified in the first two weeks of the semester if you will be missing class due to a religious observance so that we can make arrangements for any work missed.

Classroom Behavior: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which students express opinions. See policies at: http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html
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<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Readings and Classwork</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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| Week 1  | **14 Jan.**  
Introduction  
In class writing on “borders”  
Discussion of history of the border  
Community organization presentations                                                                                                                   | Writing exercise #1: Examine your own cultural border intersections. What is your ethnic, cultural, religious background? In what ways are you a mixture of different influences? |
|         | **16 Jan.**  
Read selection from Gloria Anzaldua, *Borderlands/La Frontera*  
Discussion of service learning component  
Community organization presentations  
Q & A on volunteer work                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                 |
| Week 2  | **21 Jan.**  
Read *Tortilla Curtain* Pt.1, Ch.1-6 (p.1-100)  
Read *CQ Researcher* "Immigration Debate" with update                                                                                                         | Due: Choose your community organization Reading quiz 1                                                                              |
|         | **23 Jan.**  
Read *Tortilla Curtain* Pt.1, Ch.7-Pt.2, Ch.2 (p.101-187)  
***Student led discussion on Immigration History                                                                                                       | Reading quiz 2                                                                                                                    |
| Week 3  | **28 Jan.**  
Read *Tortilla Curtain* Pt.2, Ch3- Ch.8 (p.171-265)  
***Student led discussion on Immigration Laws                                                                                                         | Reading quiz 3: (reflection/drawing connections) Write about your first time volunteering at your organization. If you haven’t volunteered yet, write about your fears and expectations of what the experience will be like.  
Due: Copy of Service contract                                                                                                                     |
|         | **30 Jan.**  
Read *Aims of Argument* —background information on rhetoric and argument construction                                                                                                                     | Writing exercise #3: (rhetoric analysis) Find a letter to the editor or short opinion piece in the newspaper or a magazine. Analyze the argument in the terms of the *Aims of Argument* reading. Please bring the editorial to class. |
| Week 4  | **4 Feb.**  
Workshop in class—small group read aloud workshop to focus on appropriate voice and style and honing revision strategies                                                                                     | 1st draft of Paper #1: Take the voice of one of the characters from *Tortilla Curtain*. In a 2-3 page essay, write an opinion piece which effectively argues that character’s position on illegal immigration from Mexico. Then, write a 1-2 page rhetorical analysis of the character’s argument. Bring one copy of your draft to class. Full assignment sheet on-line. |
|         | **6 Feb.**  
Dialogues on Immigrant Integration in class                                                                                                                                                                         | Bring a list of 5 questions for our visitors                                                                                      |
| Week 5  | **11 Feb.**  
Read *Tortilla Curtain* Pt. 3, Ch.1-end(p.269-366)  
Service learning reflection                                                                                                                                 | Reading quiz 4                                                                                                                    |
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>13 Feb.</td>
<td>Workshop in class—small group silent reading to hone editing and proofreading skills</td>
<td>Second draft of paper #1 due: bring three copies to class</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>18 Feb.</td>
<td>Writing exercise #4: (analysis) Write about your experiences volunteering. Use the following prompts: “When I first started volunteering, I thought . . .” “Three things that I have learned about myself or those I work with are . . .”</td>
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<td>20 Feb.</td>
<td>***Student led discussion on Migrant Deaths&lt;br&gt;Read <em>Newsweek</em>, &quot;Death in the Desert&quot;&lt;br&gt;Read <em>New York Times</em>, “Arizona Desert Swallows Migrants on Riskier Paths”&lt;br&gt;Read alternet.org, “Migrant Deaths Aren’t New”</td>
<td>Due: Paper #1 final draft (turn in a portfolio that includes all drafts and preliminary work)</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>25 Feb.</td>
<td>Extra credit #1 due</td>
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<td>27 Feb.</td>
<td>***Student led discussion on Deferred Action and State Immigration Laws&lt;br&gt;Read “&quot;Deferred Action” on the Homeland Security website&lt;br&gt;Read msnbc.com, “New Immigration Laws Split America in Two”</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>4 March</td>
<td>***Student led discussion of NAFTA&lt;br&gt;Read “NAFTA” on Wikipedia&lt;br&gt;Service learning reflection</td>
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<td>6 March</td>
<td>***Student led discussion on Maquiladoras&lt;br&gt;Read “Maquiladoras” on Wikipedia&lt;br&gt;Watch <em>Maquilapolis</em> in class</td>
<td>Writing exercise #5: (analysis of visual rhetoric) Write a review of the movie. What was its argument? How did it make it? Did it do a good job? Why or why not?</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>11 March</td>
<td>Finish <em>Maquilapolis</em> and discuss</td>
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<td>13 March</td>
<td>In class workshop—small group workshops to focus on persuasive elements of other students’ papers&lt;br&gt;Service learning reflection</td>
<td>First draft of Paper #2 due: (persuasive argument/genre conventions) Choose one specific issue that we have studied in class. Identify the problem and then take a position. Using outside research, craft a well-supported argument of 4-5 pages in which you persuade the reader of your position. Bring 3 copies of your draft to class. Full assignment sheet on-line.</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>18 March</td>
<td>Citation workshop—MLA conventions&lt;br&gt;Grammar/Punctuation review in class—extending knowledge of conventions</td>
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<td>20 March</td>
<td>In class workshop—small group workshops to hone editing and reading</td>
<td>Second draft of paper #2 due: bring 3 copies to class</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>24-28 March</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK!</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>1 April</td>
<td>***Student led discussion on the Drug Cartels Read “Mexico’s Drug War,” on the Council on Foreign Relations website</td>
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<td>3 April</td>
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<td>***Student led discussion on Border Control read CQ Researcher, “Border Debate”</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>8 April</td>
<td>Start watching <em>Al Otro Lado</em> in class</td>
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<td>10 April</td>
<td>Watch <em>Al Otro Lado</em> in class</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>15 April</td>
<td>Service learning reflection</td>
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<td>17 April</td>
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<td>Presentations/Workshops—20 minute oral presentations demonstrating content knowledge and synthesis of volunteer experience with classroom work, followed by final project workshopping</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
<td>22 April</td>
<td>Presentations—same as above</td>
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<td>24 April</td>
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<td>Presentations—same as above</td>
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<td>Week 16</td>
<td>29 April</td>
<td>Presentations—same as above</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 May</td>
<td></td>
<td>Last day of class--celebrate</td>
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