



**TALES FROM THE
CHIHUAHUAN DESERT:**
A NEH Summer Institute

WELCOME AND INFORMATION PACKET

Tales from the Chihuahuan Desert:

Borderlands Narratives about Identity and Binationalism

National Endowment for the Humanities

A Summer Institute for Secondary School Teachers (Grades 6th – 12th)

Sponsored by The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP)

Department of English

and

Department of History

in Collaboration with the

Center for Inter-American and Border Studies (CIBS)

and Institute of Oral History (IOH)

July 16th – July 30th, 2017

Project Co-Directors

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April 25, 2017

25 April 2017

Dear NEH Summer Scholars:

Welcome to our [Summer Institute for School Teachers](#) (grades 6th – 12th) named ***Tales from the Chihuahuan Desert: Borderland Narratives about Identity and Binationalism***. We are excited about your interest in our Institute and that we will meet soon.

The Institute is sponsored by the [National Endowment for the Humanities](#) (NEH) and will be held at the campus of [The University of Texas at El Paso \(El Paso, Texas\)](#).

The Institute dates are **July 16th – July 30th, 2017**, in El Paso, Texas. A stipend (taxable) will be provided to each Summer Scholar (teacher).

We developed ***Tales from the Chihuahuan Desert*** in an effort to reframe our national discourse about the ways in which we see and talk about the U.S.–México borderlands and its binational populations.

In the Information Packet we prepared, we provide answers for some questions as you begin planning for your participation in the Institute. The most current information will begin to appear on the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) web page and [Travel and Housing](#) web page. Updates will occur every week leading to the first day of the Institute. There are **five payroll forms** to complete and a **biographical note** to **submit before May 15th, 2017**. Instructions appear on pages 10 and 13.

We look forward to your participation and contributions. Indeed, we anticipate shared professional learning and growth across the disciplines and an engaging, positive experience with lifelong colleagues and friendships in the making. ***¡Bienvenidos!***

Sincerely,

Drs. Ignacio Martínez and R. Joseph Rodríguez, Institute Directors
The University of Texas at El Paso
El Paso, Texas, USA
Chihuahuan Desert
borderlandsnarratives@utep.edu
<http://borderlandsnarratives.utep.edu>

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TRAVELING TO EL PASO (ELP)

Summer Scholars will be responsible for their travel arrangements to El Paso. Plan your airline or car travel now and expect to pay yourself back once you receive the first payment of your stipend.

Arrival Date: Sunday, July 16th, before 3:00 PM

Make your airline or car travel arrangements now to **ARRIVE on Sunday, July 16th, 2017**. Consider the following before making your travel reservations and itineraries:

1. Arrive on Sunday BEFORE 3:00 PM. We have a welcome with light appetizers that is scheduled to begin promptly at 5:30 PM.
2. Booking your flight early will help reduce expenses.

Departure Date: Sunday, July 30th, in the morning hours

Make your flight reservation now to **DEPART on Sunday morning, July 30th, 2017**. Consider the following before making your travel reservations and itineraries:

1. Saturday is not an option for departure, since we have an evening program scheduled on Sat., July 29th.
2. Depart on Sunday morning, July 30th. We will not have any scheduled programming that day.

HOUSING

During the Institute, Summer Scholars will have the option to be housed on the UTEP campus in an apartment-like housing complex named Miner Village. Housing on campus in the Miner Village is not required, but recommended.

A UTEP Residence Life, Department of Housing, Guest Housing application must be completed before July 1st, 2017.

With the application submission, the scholars agree to have the rate, plus additional taxes, paid from their stipend in advance. Two weeks prior to the scholars' arrival, rooms will be assigned at the UTEP Miner Village.

Lodging at the UTEP Miner Village, which is located at 2401 North Oregon Street, will cost \$25.00 a night (\$25 per night X 14 nights = \$350.00).

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All apartments are designed to house two individuals. Each apartment has two separate bedrooms, a shared bathroom, kitchen, and living area. The housing administrator will make every effort to pair roommates by gender.

The rate of each furnished apartment includes the following (note that meals are not included):

1. Full kitchen
2. Semi-private bath
3. Wireless Internet
4. Refrigerated air conditioning
5. Linen
6. Free parking with guest parking
7. Parking permit

Single units may be available at a higher cost. Include this request in your UTEP Miner Village housing application.

Scholars seeking housing for a spouse and other family members may seek housing in the UTEP Miner Village or find additional accommodations on their own and off campus. Include this request in your UTEP Miner Village housing application.

STIPENDS AND PAYROLL FORMS

Summer Scholars selected to participate in our two-week project will receive a stipend of \$2,100 (subject to taxes).

Stipends are intended to help cover travel expenses to and from the Institute location, housing, food, and basic research expenses. The Institute will cover the cost of your books as well as any fees to museums and historical sites.

Participants who cannot, or choose not to complete the full tenure of the project—including attendance, participation, and e-portfolio—will receive a reduced stipend. As such, Institute participants are required to attend and actively participate in all Institute meetings, planned field trips, and e-portfolio requirements.

Summer Scholars must devote their full attention to the Institute and not engage in outside professional activities unrelated to the Institute's goals and activities.

Payroll forms must be fully completed to receive stipend payment. You will receive these e-forms via an e-message, and you will be required to return them to Ana Diaz, our Institute

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administrator by May 15th, 2017. The forms also appear on our Institute web site. Submit your forms either via e-mail before May 15th.

The stipend will be paid in two to three installments. One of these partial payments will be at the beginning of the Institute and by July 21st, 2017, pending receipt and processing of payroll documents.

GRADUATE-LEVEL CREDIT

UTEP will offer up to 3 credits of graduate-level, academic credit, which Summer Scholars can earn through participation in the Institute. Tuition and fees for the graduate-level course are not included in the Institute; this will be an out-of-pocket expense for each Summer Scholar who is seeking graduate-level credit.

Credit will be through a selected Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) course named **ENGL 5341 English Education in the Borderlands (CRN 35096)**, which is offered by the UTEP English Education Program in the Department of English during Summer II.

Summer Scholars seeking credit must apply for UTEP Graduate School admission before the deadline. More information about submitting your e-application for graduate admission and signing up for academic credit via ENGL 5341 is available [here](#).

EXPENSES (estimate)

The Institute will cover the cost of your books as well as any fees to museums and historical sites.

El Paso is a relatively inexpensive city. An estimated expenses sheet appears in **Appendix A** (see page 11).

Food is cheap, depending on where you eat. In the vicinity of the University, expect to spend anywhere from \$10.00 – \$25.00 for dinner.

There are several off-campus restaurants within reach on foot, and public transportation is available to downtown El Paso.

TRANSPORTATION

If you are bringing your own vehicle to UTEP, a parking permit will be required to park on UTEP property.

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Taxis are a bit more expensive from the airport and in the city, so Über may be a better alternative. There is a fairly cheap and reliable bus system that can take you most anywhere in El Paso.

COLLABORATION AND EXPECTATIONS

Collaboration is essential. We are stronger in our teaching, research, and leadership through collaboration and cooperation. We will model cooperative and collaborative learning each day. We will work together to build more bridges of communication for teaching, learning, and fun.

Introduce yourself to the Summer Scholars soon. We will be requesting a recent photograph and a biographical note to add to our Institute home page. More information appears in **Appendix B** (see page 13).

You will have access to email addresses and other media to communicate through various platforms in the months ahead.

Before and during the Institute, be mindful and maintain awareness as an educator, learner, listener, and presenter in the presence of our colleagues who will be Summer Scholars, faculty, lecturers, and Institute administrators and supporters.

A central part of the Institute experience is participation and the exchange of ideas. However, disagreements will arise, for which a high degree of respect for the ideas of others is expected from everyone. This will allow for a significant learning experience where diverse interests, ideas, and experiences will expand the scope of knowledge.

Some of the topics of discussion will be of a sensitive nature (politics, religion, sexuality, etc.) and may invoke individual experiences. We will also visit sites with varied histories and interpretations. Moreover, we will meet people who may have opposing political views. We are a community of scholars and, as such, we are expected to distinguish opinion from argument.

Thus, we will be nudged to think differently and to challenge ourselves and others about specific concepts, ideas, and perspectives we may hold that can directly influence our students' thinking and lives in the schools and communities where we work and live.

A mutual agreement about our responsibilities will occur our first two days of the Institute.

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We have scheduled time for personal conversations to engage with the faculty and lecturers for your own professional growth and personal interests.

We will conduct a brief survey after a few days of the Institute. Based on feedback, count on the directors to:

- (1) make any adjustment where possible,
- (2) change course as needed, and
- (3) inform you if policies have our hands tied as directors.

Two additional surveys will be completed: a handwritten one the last day of the Institute, and an additional one to be sent electronically, via your e-mail address, with a link in August 2017.

You are expected to attend every class meeting. Exceptions will be made only in cases of illness or other major events.

BIG PICTURE: AN INSTITUTE DAY

Each class day will be guided by an **essential question** that will be answered by the Summer Scholars, faculty, and lecturers through the readings, artifacts, and field site visits (field trips).

Collaborative learning is our goal and practice. Your own understanding will be complemented by the **faculty and lecturers' expertise**.

Summer Scholars will **work collaboratively** and will launch the conversation based on the readings at the beginning of either the morning or afternoon sessions.

Next, the faculty and lecturers will continue the **conversation on the theme and concepts** toward addressing the essential question of the day.

This format works well with the **ownership of concepts and interpretation of the readings** with expertise from scholars (faculty and lecturers) who are active researchers and educators in the discipline.

Each day will begin with a **reflection** on the previous day we experienced. The brief reflection will feature a story with media and images.

READINGS AND TECHNOLOGIES

All the readings will be posted electronically on the Institute web page. The readings will be downloadable as of June 20th.

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Three books, which are required reading, will be shipped to you, via US Postal Service, in late May 2017. Be sure to provide a current and reliable address to receive a shipment of three books.

In an effort to be environmentally conscious and cut down on paper waste, we also encourage scholars to read any articles or essays on their computers or iPads.

You will have access to a computer laboratory outside of the classroom sessions. It is, however, advisable that you bring your own laptop or iPad. Wi-Fi access is available at no additional cost.

E-PORTFOLIOS

The e-portfolio projects, which will be housed in a Web platform and named Tales from the Chihuahuan Desert Borderlands: An Archive, will be lesson plans with a summary of what each Summer Scholar learned about a concept presented and that is most applicable in his or her individual secondary classroom, grades 6–12.

Each participant will create a **minimum of two lessons or one unit plan** using materials from the Institute. A template will be provided and the e-portfolio must be completed to earn your stipend.

Summer Scholars will use the resources on the project Web site along with resources and writings compiled through the e-portfolio Web site to transform their Institute experience into an e-product.

All Summer Scholars will have three to four hours each day to work on the e-portfolio with additional time available during the two-week period. You may begin thinking about an essential question and using the readings you received to begin brainstorming and planning.

The e-portfolio will be directly applicable to the Summer Scholars' teaching and for other teachers to adopt and use.

After the Institute, the Summer Scholars' individual e-portfolio projects will be posted to UTEP Tales from the Chihuahuan Desert Borderlands: An Archive. Based on permissions, the e-portfolio based projects will be made available to Summer Scholars and interested teachers nationwide beyond the Institute period.

The e-portfolios to be developed by the Summer Scholars will be managed on a platform in consultation with the UTEP Office of Academic Technologies and their Creative Studios team.

Steve Varela, the director the UTEP Academic Technologies, is a national leader in teacher professional learning and education. Steve's Creative Studios team will assist Summer Scholars in curating their e-portfolios.

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The team members will be present in the assigned laboratory during specific time periods, although it is the individual Summer Scholar’s responsibility to develop the content of the lesson plans and to make sure the content corresponds to state or national standards in your discipline, content area, or subject.

TRAVELING TO MÉXICO

NEH is not responsible for incidents that may occur if you choose to cross into México.

Currently, there are no travel restrictions into Ciudad Juárez. However, parts of Ciudad Juárez remain dangerous for residents and travelers. If you wish to travel into México, be aware that a U.S. Passport is required.

Please review the following [travel warning](#) that was last updated on December 8, 2016.

The U.S. Department of State warns U.S. citizens about the risk of traveling to certain parts of México due to the activities of criminal organizations in those areas. U.S. citizens have been the victims of violent crimes, including homicide, kidnapping, carjacking, and robbery in various Mexican states.

DOCUMENTS TO COMPLETE: CHECKLIST WITH DUE DATES

The following documents must be completed and submitted by the due dates listed here:

Website: <http://borderlandsnarratives.utep.edu>

1. Biographical Note with Photo (see **Appendix B**, page 13)
2. Affiliate Credential Request Form (see web site)
3. Authorization of Personal Services Form (see web site)
4. Guest Housing Form (see web site)
5. Supplier Information Form (see web site)

DUE	ITEM	SEND QUESTIONS & TURN IN VIA
May 15, 2017	Biographical Note and Photo	borderlandsnarratives@utep.edu
May 15, 2017	Forms for UTEP and Stipend	aldiaz3@utep.edu
July 1, 2017	UTEP Housing Form	aldiaz3@utep.edu

APPENDIX A
Estimated Expenses Sheet
(Stipend: \$2,100 before tax deductions)

1. Travel

Plan to arrive on Sunday, July 16th, BEFORE 3:00 PM. Evening event begins at 5:00 PM
Plan to depart on Sunday morning, July 30th, 2017.

Air Travel: Estimate from your destination to El Paso, Texas (ELP)

The [El Paso International Airport](#) address is 6701 Convair Road, El Paso, TX 79925.

[Taxi](#) from Airport to UTEP: \$32.00

[Taxi](#) from UTEP to Airport: \$32.00

The [public transit](#) is named [Sun Metro](#). It is an option as well as using Über. The Sun Metro's Glory Road Transfer Center, located at 100 East Glory Street, El Paso, TX 79902, is closest to the Institute's housing complex named UTEP Miner Village.

Total = \$64.00 (not including weekends)

2. Food

During the summer, UTEP Dining Services provides breakfast and lunch options at the main dining area. No dinner options are currently available during this time. However, there are a number of restaurants and fast-food options within a short walking distance of the UTEP Miner Village, the Institute housing complex.

Each apartment is furnished and equipped with a refrigerator and an electric stove, so you may buy groceries. An Albertsons grocery store is four blocks away from UTEP Miner Village.

If you choose to eat at the [Pick n' Shovel](#) dining area during your stay, here are the rates and estimated expenses.

Breakfast at Pick n' Shovel—\$6.25 per day X 10 days = \$62.50

Lunch at Pick n' Shovel—\$7.25 per day X 10 days = \$72.50

Dinner is on your own—\$18.00 (estimated) per day X 10 days = \$180.00

Total = \$315.00 (not including weekends)

3. Lodging

Lodging will be at the UTEP Miner Village, which is located at 2401 North Oregon Street, El Paso, TX 79902.

The costs is \$25.00 per night X 14 nights = \$350.00

Grand Total of estimated expenses= \$730.00

4. Books and Excursions

The Institute will cover the costs of all books and fees to museums and other historical sites. If you, however, choose to receive graduate-level credit for the Institute, you are responsible for tuition and fees.

The Department of English Summer II course is named ENGL 5341: English Education in the Borderlands (CRN 35096). Apply to the UTEP Graduate School and register [here](#).

APPENDIX B

Biographical Note and Photo

A biographical note about each Summer Scholar will appear on our UTEP NEH Institute web site. A sample is included below as a sample.

As you write your own (100 words maximum), be sure to include the following:

1. Your name
2. Home city
3. Teaching subject or content area
4. Your hobbies
5. Any publications or leadership and service
6. Your post-Institute goal
7. How to reach you (optional)

Sample

Frank N. Stein is from Shelley, Texas. He teaches English and Spanish language arts at a high school in Van Horn, Texas. Frank is an avid reader of novels and poetry and enjoys hiking and kayaking in the Paso del Norte Region. He is an active volunteer with First Book and promotes the study of history in a few local organizations. He plans to apply his knowledge of the Chihuahuan Desert histories and narratives in a few advanced courses on the forming of the American West and borderlands people's identities. Frank can be reached at franknstein@utep.edu and via @franky.

Send us a photo in color as an attachment to then upload to the web site.

Submit your biographical note and photo by **May 15th, 2017**, to:
borderlandsnarratives@utep.edu.