

As a teacher of Spanish in the United States, I'm committed to bringing diverse perspectives into my classroom. My high school is the most diverse private high schools in Oregon and my Heritage Spanish class has students with roots in Honduras, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic and Mexico. My students are mostly 1st generation Americans, whose parents have risked much to give them more opportunities than they had in their home countries. Portland, Oregon is 1600 miles from El Paso, Texas and my hope is that I can bridge that gap with rich resources for my students that will get them engaged in learning more about the complicated history of the Borderlands.

My personal interest in the Borderlands stems from the 12 years I spent living in Tijuana and daily border crossing to my job in the San Diego area. My children grew up there, first attending school in Tijuana and then graduating to crossing daily to go to high school in the US while living this incredible duality that is being a bicultural, binational person living with one foot in either country. I am so familiar with the Tijuana-San Diego region but not at all educated about the Texas border with Mexico.

Both my undergraduate and graduate degrees are in Spanish. As an undergrad, my focus was mostly literature and the Chicano/a literature classes were the ones that I enjoyed the most.

While working in migrant education at that time, I also came to discover other authors from that genre that helped me to understand the immigrant experience and appreciate the permeability of the border. As a graduate student, my focus was more on linguistics and the language of the border, acceptance of Spanglish, and bilingual, bicultural identities. I moved from the border area to Oregon at that time and since then I so miss the fluidity of the border.

As chair of the Spanish department at my school, I am constantly working on improving our curriculum. I took over the teaching of the Heritage classes because I wanted to change them and

really make them like an English Language Arts class for Spanish speakers. I'm incorporating novels and poetry in Spanish and sharing authors that I hope will resonate with them. My school values a social justice orientation and after studying the syllabus, I am enthusiastic about incorporating themes and readings from this experience to that end. It is my aim to incorporate the narratives and history learned here into my curriculum and the hope is that it will be engaging for my students.

I've no doubt that this experience on the border with other educators will be transformative and am hopeful about making contacts with whom I can continue the dialogue about our experience and how it informs our teaching long after summer 2019 has ended. Thank you for your consideration.