Latino Migration Film Guide
Films relevant to North Carolina

This film guide was prepared to provide a resource on understanding of Latin American migration experiences in North Carolina through documentary film. All films listed below are available for free loan at http://isa.unc.edu/film/

The Consortium in Latin American and Caribbean Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University

The Consortium in Latin American and Caribbean Studies houses a collection of films in the Latin American Film Library in room 3218 of the FedEx Global Education Center. We are located on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill at:

3218 FedEx Global Education Center
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THE GUESTWORKER: BIENVENIDOS A CAROLINA DEL NORTE

Description: Having spent the last 40 years harvesting American crops, Candelario Gonzalez Moreno (Don Cande) is now a guestworker in the U.S. Government's H-2A Visa Program. While he has made the trip illegally many times before, the program ensures him safe passage but offers no hope of citizenship and the benefits that go along with it. Filmed on both sides of the border, The Guestworker: Bienvenidos a Carolina del Norte chronicles Don Cande's life while looking at the H-2A program from contrasting perspectives. The film shows the pressure on farmers to produce their crops and documents the struggle farmworkers face to secure a future for their families back home in Mexico.

Relevant discussion topics: North Carolina agriculture, migrant labor, workers’ rights, impacts of migration in sending countries, Mexico, the North Carolina Growers Association

Type: Documentary  
Year: 2005  
Directors: Cynthia Hill and Charles Thompson  
Country: USA/Mexico  
Website: theguestworker.com  
Copy 1: DVD  Language: English  Subtitles: Spanish  Length: 50 minutes

DE NADIE (Border Crossing)

Description: Individuals who leave their Latin American countries in hopes of a better life in the United States have a rough road ahead of them. Mexican filmmaker Tin Dirdamal follows a number of refugees in a South-Mexican refugee center, from where they hitch illegal rides on freight trains to the northern border.

Relevant discussion topics: Understanding the journey to the United States for a person without legal documentation, Central American migration to the United States, abuses suffered by migrants (including sexual abuse of female migrants), impact of migration on families left behind.

Type: Documentary  
Year: 2005
NUESTRA COMUNIDAD

Description:
This film documents the community and work environments of migrant workers living in North Carolina. The debate about whether illegal immigrants should be living and working in the United States is central to this film. Through many interviews with policy-makers, immigrants, religious officials, human rights workers and North Carolina residents, a complete picture of the opinions that fuel the debate is provided here.

Relevant Discussion Topics: Migrant community, North Carolina, undocumented workers, Migrant community activities, religion and migrant communities.

Type: Documentary
Year: 2001
Director: Joanne Hershfield and Penny Simpson
Country: USA

Copy: 1 Format: DVD-R Language: English Subtitles: None Length: 60 minutes
Copy: 2 Format: VHS Language: English Subtitles: None Length: 60 minutes
Copy: 3 Format: VHS Language: English Subtitles: None Length: 60 minutes
Copy: m Format: VHS Language: English Subtitles: None Length: 60 minutes

LA FIESTA, LA QUINCEAÑERA

Description: 2-part film about Patricia Ortegon from Dallas, Texas cannot wait until the end of the school day. Her fifteenth birthday party, la quinceañera, will be celebrated during the weekend. This film follows Patricia during her quinceañera weekend and describes the process of the quinceañera inside and out. Patricia and her family travel to Reynosa, Mexico to visit with family, discuss preparations for the quinceañera and attend mass in Mexico. This film is a short and informative analysis of the religious and cultural importance of the quinceañera tradition for both Mexicans and Mexican-
Americans. It is a film that documents the ties that bind Mexican-Americans to their home country and traditions, despite living in the United States.

**Relevant Discussion Topics:** Mexican-American culture, cross-cultural and bi-national exchanges, border crossings, religious celebrations, quinceañera, immigration, Latinos-Chicanos, and first-generation Americans.

**Type:** Documentary  
**Year:** Information not available  
**Director:** Information not available  
**Country:** USA/Latin America  
**Copy:** 1  
**Format:** DVD-R  
**Language:** English and Spanish  
**Subtitles:** English  
**Length:** 38 minutes

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**CARTAS DEL OTRO LADO**

**Description:** "Letters from the Other Side" captures the circumstances, doubts, struggles and hardships that Mexican families must endure when their husbands, sons, and male relatives migrate to the United States in search of work. Told from the perspective of several women, the daily effects of migration to the North and post-NAFTA trade policies between the US and Mexico on families left behind in Mexico are central to this documentary. This film establishes the need for immigrants to work on both sides of the border. It also highlights the inhumanity and danger that the journey to the US poses for both the individuals who endure it and the families that are left behind.

**Relevant Discussion Topics:** Mexicans and Mexican-Americans, Gender roles and distinctions, border crossings, immigration, poverty, work in Mexico and the US, illegal immigration

**Type:** Documentary  
**Year:** 2006  
**Director:** Heather Courtney  
**Country:** USA/Mexico  
**Copy:** 1  
**Format:** DVD  
**Language:** English/Spanish  
**Subtitles:** English  
**Length:** 73 Minutes

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**A DAY WITHOUT A MEXICAN**

**Description:** This is a comedic take on the idea that immigrants, primarily from Mexico, arrive and take jobs away from US citizens. The premise is that California suddenly loses a third of the population, all of whom are Latinos. Reporters cover this event and the economy of California begins to transform and decline. This "mock"umentary provides a glimpse into how the quality of life in California (and as an extension the rest of the US) would transform if "illegal" immigrants left the US and returned to their homelands.

**Relevant Discussion Topics:** Illegal immigration, immigrants in the workforce, citizenship, immigrants and economy

**Type:** Feature Film
BORDERLINE CASES

Description: This film documents how *maquiladores* in three borderland areas (Tijuana-San Diego, Matamoros-Brownsville, and Ciudad Juarez-El Paso) have affected the environment of these regions. The documentary classifies these areas as comparable to toxic waste lands that need clean-up and restoration. This film not only acknowledges how various national and economic actors on both sides of the border have created these environmental disasters, but also begins to discuss how public policy and individuals representing the US and Mexico are garnering efforts to resolved the problems caused by *maquiladora* factories.

**Relevant Discussion Topics:** immigration to borderlands, borderlands, workforce in borderlands, environment, transnational cooperation, low-wage labor

**Film:** Documentary

**Year:** 1997

**Director:** Lynn Corcoran

**Country:** USA

**Copy:** 1   **Format:** DVD-R   **Language:** English and Spanish   **Subtitles:** English   **Length:** 65 minutes

**Copy:** m   **Format:** VHS   **Language:** English and Spanish   **Subtitles:** English   **Length:** 65 minutes
MORRISTOWN: IN THE AIR AND SUN

Description: This film documents how workers in Tennessee speak about their lives as immigrants. The film ends with union workers from a poultry processing plant speaking up for their rights in Morristown Tennessee. They speak about their experiences as workers, their aspirations and goals for their lives in the US. The impetus and causes of immigration are also documented in this film with a discussion about why individuals decide to leave their homelands, in this case Mexico, to struggle in the US. Meanwhile, the surroundings of immigrants is heavily documented by this film. Life on the border and within an immigrant community is depicted—stores, factory environments, community halls, parks, recreation and even employment agencies all become a large part of this documentary.

Relevant Discussion Topics: Social Issues, the lives of immigrants, causes of immigration
Type: Documentary
Year: 2007
Director: Anne Lewis
Country: USA (Tennessee)/Mexico
Copy: 1  Format: DVD  Language: English  Subtitles: English & Spanish  Length: 60 min
Copy: m  Format: DVD  Language: English  Subtitles: English & Spanish  Length: 60 min

BROTHER TOWNS/PUEBLOS HERMANOS

Description: Brother Towns/Pueblos Hermanos is a story about two communities in two different nations and how they intertwine. Ultimately, it is about how we define ourselves as nations and neighbors, our vision of community, and our efforts to connect to one another. News stories about immigrants in the United States appear on TV and in the papers daily. But we don’t have to listen to the news to know that undocumented immigrants live in nearly every community across the U.S. Thus Brother Towns is a story that also affects nearly every city and town in Mexico and
Central America, and one that helps us think about not only citizenship, but what it means to be human.

**Type:** Documentary  
**Year:** 2010  
**Director:** Charlie Thompson  
**Country:** USA/Guatemala  
**Copy:** 1  
**Format:** DVD  
**Language:**  
**Subtitles:**  
**Length:** 58 minutes

### PAPERS: STORIES OF UNDOCUMENTED YOUTH

**Description:** "Papers" is the story of undocumented youth and the challenges they face as they turn 18 without legal status. There are approximately 2 million undocumented children who were born outside the U.S. and raised in this country. These are young people who were educated in American schools, hold American values, know only the U.S. as home and who, upon high school graduation, find the door to their future slammed shut.

**Type:** Documentary  
**Year:** 2010  
**Director:** Anne Galisky  
**Country:** USA  
**Copy:** 1  
**Format:** DVD-R  
**Language:** Spanish  
**Subtitles:** English & Spanish  
**Length:** 88 minutes

**Copy:** M  
**Format:** DVD  
**Language:** English  
**Subtitles:** English & Spanish  
**Length:** 88 minutes
**LOS QUE SE QUEDAN (Those Who Remain)**

**Description:** This film profiles families left behind by migrants in communities throughout Mexico. It is an intimate and discerning depiction of the impact of migration on families and villages left behind by loved ones who have traveled north for work.

**Relevant Discussion Topics:** how families in Mexico are affected by immigration of relatives/friends to the United States

**Film:** Documentary  
**Year:** 2009  
**Directors:** Carlos Hagerman and Juan Carlos Rulfo  
**Country:** Mexico

**Copy:** 1  
**Format:** DVD-R  
**Language:** Spanish  
**Subtitles:** English or Spanish  
**Length:** 96 minutes

**Copy:** M  
**Format:** DVD  
**Language:** Spanish  
**Subtitles:** English & Spanish  
**Length:** 96 minutes

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**LISTA DE ESPERA (The Waiting List)**

**Description:** A desperate group of people wait at a rundown Cuban transit station for the next bus to arrive. The problem is, it never shows up. While a number of busses pass by the station, and others that are either full or at the end of the line stop by, it soon becomes obvious that the bus everyone was waiting for has left them high and dry. While one of the would-be passengers, Emilio, uses his downtime to win the affections of the beautiful Jacqueline, most of the rest decide that if they’re stuck without anywhere to go, they might as well make the station a better place to wait, and they begin forming a plan to turn the decrepit bus terminal into a showplace that people would look forward to visiting.

**Relevant Discussion Topics:** Critique of the Cuban government system; communism

**Type:** Feature Film  
**Year:** 2000
ANGELICA’S DREAMS

Description: Angelica’s Dreams, the first Latino feature film to come out of North Carolina, boldly mixes financial education and fiction. It is the film version of Latino Community Credit Union's three-part dramatic mini-series dedicated to financial education. The primary purpose of the video is to show community members, and the general population, the process of buying a home. The film is a story of an immigrant couple from Latin America, Angélica and Roberto, who are discussing whether to return to their home country or stay in the US. With an unexpected event, everything changes and the couple is faced with the difficult realization that one of them will have to sacrifice their dream for the other.

Relevant Discussion Topics: Illegal immigration, immigrants in the workforce, citizenship, immigrants and economy

Type: Documentary
Year: 2007
Director: Rodrigo Dorfman
Country: USA/Latino/Chicano

WHICH WAY HOME

Description: A heart-wrenching exploration of a lesser-known dimension of Central American migration to the United States. Every year tens of thousands of unaccompanied children, attempt to migrate through Mexico to the United States. Some as young as nine years old, these children ride atop the roofs of Mexican freight trains
in hopes of getting to the United States. This film centers on the experiences of two teenagers from Honduras, Kevin and Fito, following them as they make their way north. The film explores their experiences undertaking a journey that is harrowing even for the most resourceful of adults. Interviews with migrant children, immigration officials, and parents back home reveal the myriad dangers these children face and their determination to brave these dangers in hopes of obtaining a better life.

**Type:** Documentary  
**Year:** 2009  
**Director:** Rebecca Cammisa  
**Country:** USA/Central America/Mexico  
**Copy:** 1  
**Format:** DVD-R  
**Language:** English and Spanish  
**Subtitles:** English  
**Length:** 90 minutes

**NEW WORLD BORDER**

**Description:** New World Border documents the rise in human rights abuses along the U.S.-Mexico border since the implementation of border blockades, which have been erected in populated areas throughout the border region during the last decade. This film includes interviews with immigrant rights organizers, testimony from immigrants, analysis of “free trade” policies & current efforts to build a vibrant movement for immigrant rights.

**Type:** Documentary  
**Year:** 2001  
**Director:** Casey Peek and Jose Palafox  
**Country:** USA/Mexico  
**Copy:** 1  
**Format:** DVD-R  
**Language:** English  
**Subtitles:** None  
**Length:** 28 minutes

**Copy:** 2  
**Format:** DVD-R  
**Language:** English  
**Subtitles:** None  
**Length:** 28 minutes

**Copy:** M  
**Format:** VHS  
**Language:** English  
**Subtitles:** None  
**Length:** 28 minutes

**GRINGO NEXT DOOR**

**Description:** When Jack sees that his chickens are missing, he turns on the only people he thinks to blame - his Hispanic neighbors. The solution? Hire immigrant labor to build a wall between the two homes. A hilarious web of miscommunication ensues in this humorous satire. This short film was shot by UNC-CH students in Pittsboro, NC.

**Type:** Feature Film  
**Year:** 2003
**Director:** Habib Yazdi  
**Country:** Mexico/USA  
**Copy:** 1  
**Format:** DVD  
**Language:** English and Spanish  
**Subtitles:** English  
**Length:** 15 minutes