

Español 141: Survey of Latin American Literature

Instructora:

María Luísa Ruíz

Dante 301

X4568

[mlruiz@stmarys-ca.edu]

hora de clase:

1:10-2:40 (T/Th)

horas de oficina:

TBA

Course Description



Spanish 141 is an advanced literature survey course that is designed to give students a wide scope of readings from the beginning of the 20th century to more recent texts that have shaped Latin America's social, cultural and literary history. This intellectually rigorous course is concerned with Latin America's redefinition of itself, its societies and diverse national identities, with particular attention given to the relationship between literature, social change, cultural colonization and globalization. We begin by problematizing terms like "América", "Americano" and "Latin America" from the perspective of individual Spanish speaking countries who continue

to redefine, challenge and question these terms in light of both internal and global changes. As Edmundo O'Gorman, stressed in his seminal work about Latin America's struggle to define itself against its colonial legacy, America was *invented*, not discovered, suggesting multiple and diverse definitions, both real and fictional, of Latin America(s) as expressed through the literary and cultural expression of individual writers from different countries.

Students will be able to compare and contrast how representative authors from individual countries employ different literary genres; analyze individual texts using appropriate literary terminology; and engage critically in questions about Latin America's colonial legacy, nation-building; identify tensions between consumers and producers of knowledge and culture from the perspective of individual writers; and engage with questions of regional and individual national identities. As we discuss works of literature, we will learn about Latin American history, politics, human rights, social activism, and gender roles through the lens of fictional and non-fictional characters, including the voices of women writers who represent diverse class and ethnic backgrounds.

In this way, we will understand literature more clearly, as well as connect the relationship between language, the creation of texts, and the socio-political reality represented in them.

The instructor encourages introspection in the analysis of literary texts through class discussions, student presentations, lecture, presentations of film and photographs, and written and oral assignments.

Required book for the class:

Huellas de las literaturas hispanoamericanas, 2nd ed. Garganigo, et. al.

Latinoamérica: su civilización y cultura, 4th ed. Chang-Rodríguez (selections)

Additional resources:

MLA Handbook

Selected sources for Latin American Literature:

<http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/literature/>

http://library.csustan.edu/boyer/modern_languages/mexican.htm

http://www.zeroland.co.nz/latin_literature.html

http://www.glencoe.com/sites/common_assets/worldlang/web_explore_sp.php

http://ilt.ilstu.edu/smexpos/website/latin_america_history.htm
<http://www.casahistoria.net/latam.html#20th%20century>

Learning objectives

Students will be able to:

1. Engage with themes of cultural diversity, regional and individual national identities, and literature as both a literary and cultural text using non-U.S. and non-Western European literature,
2. Compare and contrast how representative authors from individual Spanish speaking countries employ different literary genres,
3. Identify different literary periods and movements in Latin American literature in relation to historical and cultural periods,
4. Understand how the process of colonization and nation-building affected the development of literature and literary movements in Latin America's cultural and literary history,
5. Learn to be critical readers by demonstrating an understanding of the different literary terminology employed in the analysis of different types of narratives, such as poetry, shorts stories, plays, testimonio,
6. Deepen and synthesize insights gained from these readings in written assignments where they use literary terminology,
7. Analyze contemporary Latin American literature and situate the texts within the appropriate socio-historical period and literary genre,
8. Identify tensions between consumers and producers of knowledge and culture from the perspective of individual writers'
9. Articulate a basic understanding of Latin American history, politics, human rights, gender roles, social class disparities, ethnic/racial difference, as seen through the texts we read.
10. Improve written and oral expression in Spanish and expand vocabulary.

Course Requirements:

Evaluation:

Your course grade will be based on the following:

Class participation/Activities/attendance:	10%
Self Reflections:	10%
Response papers on readings:	15%
Presentations:	10%
Midterm Project:	15%
Final paper:	20%
Final Exam:	20%
Total	100%

Class Participation/Activities/Attendance: 10%

We will have a series of in-class activities that involve group work, work in pairs and discussion. Therefore, it is important that you attend class **on time** and come prepared to participate as fully as possible. You are expected to complete all reading assignments **before** coming to class. In addition to the readings, I will, on occasion, assign activities such as bringing advertisements from magazines or writing poems or other creative pieces. These will count towards your participation grade.

Students are allowed TWO absences. Any absences after the 2 allotted will lower your grade. Realize that ALL your absences will affect your participation grade. Even if you are absent, it is your

responsibility you find out from a classmate the work that you missed for the day. I will not accept emailed papers sent in lieu of your presence in class. Students must be punctual. 1/2 point will be deducted each time you are more than five minutes late to class.

Response Papers: 15%

You are to write a **FULL one page, (typed, double spaced, 12 font New Times Roman, one inch margins)** on the readings for the week, in which you attempt to formulate an answer to an evaluative question based on the texts. You may focus on just one aspect of a text, or compare the different readings. These will be used as part of our in class discussions and can be used to develop paper topics for your final project. It must be a **FULL page** in order to receive credit! **NO LATE, EMAILED, OR HAND-WRITTEN PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

Presentations: 10%

For each of the topics and texts discussed in class, you are asked to give in-class presentations. These are planned as paired/group activities, depending on class enrollment. The groups will make a 15-20 minute presentation about the texts assigned for that week. This presentation should include: **1)** general information about the significance of the text, **2)** the group's interpretation of the text **3)** connections of the texts to the theme for the week, and **4)** questions for class/group discussion. The rest of the class will be spent on clarification by the instructor and questions about general aspects of the works. You are also encouraged to bring outside information relevant to the discussion during the presentation. The presentations can be used to explore potential topics for your final papers, thus, I ask the groups to submit a one page, typed summary/outline of their presentation. **Oral presentations are considered incomplete if an outline is not turned in.**

Race/class/gender self-reflections (10%):

You will write two short essays (2 pgs. in length minimum, MLA style) summarizing what you know about race, class, national identity, citizenship, and gender. When you hear these words what comes to your mind? It may help for you to talk with your friends or family members to think through this process. What do these terms mean to you? How do they inform your values and beliefs? How do you Items and issues you might want to think about in analyzing who you are may include:

**Gender *religion *class/ socioeconomic status *geographic location *family heritage
*occupation *language race or ethnicity *education/age *sexual orientation/civil
status *political beliefs *nationality/citizenship*

Take the items that are appropriate for you, add others that are important to you, and draw a pie chart indicating what percentage of your identity each item comprises. In class, you will briefly present your chart to the class, and we will discuss the implications of what comprises an identity. **THIS WILL BE DUE FEB. 24th.**

The second part of this assignment is to write an essay reflecting on your identity and sense of place in this country. Please feel free to utilize the assigned introductory readings in this class as a guide to help you think about these issues. Questions you might consider in writing this essay are:

What label would you place on your identity and sense of belonging?

What factors have helped form your identity and how you identify yourself as 'American' or whatever label with which you choose to self-identify?

How do other aspects of your identity interact with each other and come in conflict with 'mainstream' values?

What role have race/ethnicity, class, and gender played in your family's history?

How does your identity affect your daily life?

How do you think your identity and beliefs of citizenship will affect your future? What bearing does it

have on your political and economic prospects?

How does your identity and ideas of 'nation' affect your values, beliefs, and purpose in life?

Does your identity change as you are in different environments (do you think of yourself differently here at college than you might at home)?

I will collect these papers and return them to you at the end of the semester. **This essay will be due on MARCH 10th**. You will then write a final essay on how your views have changed throughout this course. How has what you learned in this class helped you understand how race, class, and gender interact and continue to be a persistent force in society? This second essay will be due on **MAY 5th**.

Midterm Project: 15%

Your midterm essay is a way for you to demonstrate your understanding of the readings, the themes in the texts, and of general concepts related to gender, feminism and women's writing in Latin America. The essay is to be between **5-6 pages (typed, double spaced, Times New Roman 12pt. font, one inch margins) and should follow standard MLA format**. Further details about the midterm essay will be discussed in class well before it is due.

NO LATE, EMAILED OR HAND-WRITTEN PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Final paper: 20%

The final paper is due *May 17th*. It is to be between **6-8 pages (typed, double spaced, Times New Roman 12pt. font, one inch margins) and should follow standard MLA format**. Details about the final project will be discussed in class well before it is due.

Classroom Rules:

In order to try to insure that all class participants experience a stress-free and non-distracting learning environment, the following are put forth and your cooperation solicited:

- 1. Please be on time** and don't leave early. If you arrive late be sure to just take your seat quietly so as not to disrupt the lecture or other ongoing activity. You are required to attend a full class. If you must leave, be aware that it will count as a tardy. You are allowed two absences during the semester. After two missed classes, your grade will go down 1/2 of a letter grade. Tardies/leaving early also affect your overall grade.
- 2. You are responsible for any planned class activity such as a test or quiz even if you were absent from an earlier class in which it was announced.** Additionally, you are responsible for all the assignments on the syllabus even if I did not mention them during class. You must contact a fellow class member or the professor after an absence to inquire about what is going to be happening when you return.
- 3. It is totally inappropriate to work on other reading or writing activities at length during class.** Leave the updating of your appointment book, the studying for some other class, and the reading of material related to another course to your own time out of class.
- 4. Active cell phones and pagers are not welcome in the classroom. If you regularly carry one of these devices during the day, make sure you shut it off before coming in class.**
- 5. No prolonged bathroom breaks.**
- 6. Discussions are in Spanish; please do not use English when discussing texts.**

Administrative Policies:

I would like to reiterate that this is a rigorous and intellectually challenging course and I expect full participation for each of you so that we can reach the objectives of the course successfully. If you feel at any point that you are having trouble keeping up with the course, please see me. Plagiarism and

other forms of intellectual dishonesty will **NOT** be tolerated. In this course, we will adhere to the code of conduct as detailed in the honor code in the student handbook.

Academic Advising & Achievement and TASC are committed to providing undergraduates with the guidance necessary to fully realize their potential. Their programs and services support you in planning your studies and reaching your educational, career and life goals. TASC offers a variety of support services and programs that assists students who are experiencing academic difficulties and/or are placed on probation.

Student Disability Services extends reasonable and appropriate accommodations that take into account the context of the course and its essential elements for individuals with qualifying disabilities. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Student Disability Services Office at (925) 631-4358 to set up a confidential appointment to discuss accommodation guidelines and available services. Additional information regarding the services available may be found at the following address on the Saint Mary's website: <http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/sds>