SPAN 357.01 Introduction to Latin America Literature

Prof. Consuelo Hernández
Fall 2009, Tuesday: 2:10-4:40 p.m.
Hours: T 10-1:30 pm & Th 3-5:00 & 8-8:30
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PREREQUISITE: SPAN.353 or professor's authorization.

COURSE STATEMENT: The purpose of this course is to examine the development of Latin American literature and related cultural and visual documentation from the Pre- Columbian period to the present. We will read the course materials in terms of their historical and political context. However, we will also be attuned to the literary forms, genres, and techniques. This course is required for students minoring or majoring in Spanish and Latin American Studies. You will have the opportunity to appreciate works by major Latin American authors, exercise your own analytical and creative abilities, and dialogue with guest authors. Since this is a bridge course between language classes and topics, you will also have the chance to perfect your oral, reading and written skills.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
1. Introducing students to the study of Latin American literature and culture.
2. Developing reading, oral comprehension and written skills through the analysis of prose, poetry, drama, and film.
3. Studying literary and cinematic texts with a focus on key aspects (analysis of literary genre, form, structure, language, history, social movements, politics, gender roles, sexuality, etc.) necessary to the understanding of Latin American culture.
4. Encouraging critical thinking, making of connections, clear argumentation, and personal connections to literature.
5. Studying the historical trajectory of literary production in Latin America, divided into major time periods and/or literary and cultural movements.
6. Reading an entire literary work in Spanish and writing synopsis, summaries, critical exercises and research a topic, create a thesis sentence, and complete a bibliography in MLA style.

REQUIREMENTS:
1. Class participation and homework (25%). Class attendance and active participation are mandatory and graded. Students are expected to arrive on time, and be prepared to discuss assignments and present homework on readings (tardy arrivals will count as a 1/3 absence). This grade is based on:
a. Your thoughtful contributions to class discussions by making comments, asking and answering questions, and joining in the class dialogue. How well and how often you participate are equally important.

b. The quality of daily homework and reaction papers on assigned readings. Reading assignments and answering the indicated question in writing are crucial. There will be readings due for every class, so you need to keep current with them. Reading does not mean skimming. It means giving the assignments sufficient attention to be able to discuss or write about them intelligently.

Absences, late arrivals, unpreparedness or failure to participate in class will affect your grade adversely. Since this is a 3 credit course that meets only once a week, one unexcused absence may significantly affect your participation grade and more than one unexcused absence may also be ground for failure of the course. The University defines excused absences as: “illness, accident, religious observance, or representing the university at athletic or other off-campus events.” Official documentation proving the cause of an absence is required for it to be considered excused. When you are absent, you are responsible for getting all missed assignments and for handing them in when they are due. You are not supposed to leave the classroom anytime during the class or depart early without your instructor’s permission in advance. Three tardies are the equivalent of an absence.

In order to maintain an appropriate environment for your active oral participation, electronic devices must be turned off and kept out of sight at all times. Violations of behavior policies will result in being asked to leave the class and an absence will be entered for that class period (cell phones, laptops, organizers (PDA), Ipods, CD and DVD players, head phones, etc…).

2 Two compositions (20%). These will be creative pieces assigned during the semester. Please turn them in on time. (No make-ups). Writing is a process that improves in time, with practice and revision. Therefore, all work that is handed in on time may be revised once for an improved grade. The improved grade will be ten points higher than the original when the revision is perfect.

3. Oral presentation (15%). Students will sign up for a 15 minute presentation, on a topic related to the required readings and should include background information on historical or cultural contexts of the texts. You should relate the information you found to the texts. No reading please because it is boring and difficult to understand. If you choose to read, automatically you will fail your presentation. You need to make an appointment with the professor at least two to one week in advance to discuss in detail your oral presentation. The Presentation should have the form of an essay, with a main idea or thesis that you wish to illustrate. These essays should be critical and interpretative (No “summaries,” and biographies PLEASE!!). Additional sources and audiovisual aids should be used. Style of presentation, use of appropriate visual/audio aids, organization, and style of expression will be evaluated as well as the content of the presentations.
Your oral presentation must be accompanied by a one-page outline showing the organization of your talk and listing any important dates, places, names and the bibliography. You will reproduce the handout in enough copies prior to class to give a copy to each of your classmates. Grammar, spelling and punctuation will be graded along with organization, clarity, and pronunciation.

*4. Exam (15%). No make-up exams will be given. Please see the class calendar before making any travel plans. Travel or work plans are not valid excuses for missing class, assignments and/or exams.

6. Final paper and presentation (25%). Student must write an eight-page research paper plus notes and bibliography on a literary book that has not been read before this class. To be determined by the student and professor. Students should use at least 5 academic printed sources as bibliography.

Please turn in written assignments and final paper on time. All written work is to be typed, double-spaced, 12 times font, appropriately numbered, proof read, and stapled. Margins should be one inch all around. They must be written in Spanish.

Late work will be penalized, with ten points subtracted from the grade received and then your work will be accepted only one week later.

Use of Blackboard.com: This course has a site on Blackboard and we will use it whenever is necessary to enhance the productivity of the class and communication.

*Electronic sources:
You are encouraged to find related sites that you can share with the class. Bear in mind, however, that almost anyone can publish on the Internet, so you have to evaluate your sources carefully before you use them. For each web source you use, you should have two printed sources.

University Code of Academic Integrity
Standards of academic conduct are set forth in University Academic integrity Code. It is expected that all exams, papers, and other assignments will be completed according to the University's Code of Ethics. By registering, you have acknowledged your awareness of the Academic Integrity Code, and you are obliged to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by it. Violations such as academic dishonesty in exams and/or in papers, work done in one course and submitted to another, deliberate falsification of data, interference with other students’ work, copy right violations, and plagiarism will not be tolerated under any circumstance, and disciplinary action will be taken should such violations occur. I am required to report cases to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The policy is failure for the course without notation for undergraduates and a one-semester suspension for graduates. See http://www.american.edu/handbook/aic
GRADING SCALE

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TEXTBOOKS:

RECOMMENDED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON RESERVE
Galeano, Eduardo. Las venas abiertas de América Latina.
Hernández, Consuelo. Álvaro Mutis: una estética del deterioro
Lindstrom, Naomi. Twenty Century Spanish American Fiction.
Meyer, Paris and Margarite Fernández, eds. Contemporary Women Authors of Latin America.
Paz, Octavio. El arco y la lira.
Todorov, Tzvetan. La conquista de América

SCHEDULE
This schedule is subject to change; whenever a change is necessary, I will notify you in advance.

AUGUST
26: Introducción.
Literaturas prehispánicas. Náhuatl (pp 2-7), Maya (26,27), Quechua (36-37)

SEPTEMBER
1: Literatura Náhuatl:
    Cantos de angustia de la conquista. Icnocúicatl (17-18).
    Consejos del padre a su hija. Consejos de la madre a su hija (pp. 22-24). Preguntas 3, 4.
    Literatura Maya: ¨Los Dzules¨ pp. 33-35. Preguntas 1,3 p. 35
8: El Barroco.
    Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1648-1695) (pp.151-154); y (156-158) Respuesta de la poetiza a la muy ilustre Sor Filotea. pp. (158-165). Preguntas 3, 4,5 p.165
15: Del romanticismo (208-215).
    Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda. (pp. 256-257)."Sab". (pp.263-271). Preguntas 1, 2, 3 p. 270. RESEARCH PAPER PROPOSAL DUE (subject, genre literary period. area of focus).
22: COMPOSITION 1 DUE
    El Modernismo (pp. 216-218).
    Rubén Darío. "El rey burgués" (pp. 325-331).
"Sonatina" (pp 336-337), "Oda a Roosevelt" (344-345). "Yo soy aquél" (pp.340-343). Preguntas: 2, 3, p. 349.

29: Del Modernismo a las primeras vanguardias. (pp.360-361). Delmira Agustini pp.369-376, Alfonsina Storni (pp. 391-396) y "Voy a dormir" 400). Preguntas 1, 2, 3 p. 376 y preguntas 1, 3 p. 400

OCTOBER

6: Ruptura de la visión etnocéntrica. Fernando Ortiz (pp.454-461). Transculturación. Guillén. (pp. 473-481). Preguntas: 1, 3 p.461 y preguntas: 2, 3, 4 p. 481. Voodoo and the Chuch of Haiti (40m)


20: Haber terminado de leer el libro seleccionado. COMPOSITION 2 DUE. DISCUSSION ON RESEARCH PAPER WITH THE PROFESSOR


NOVEMBER


10: Época contemporánea. Octavio Paz (pp. 615-625). Reaction paper due 1-2 páginas resumiendo la idea principal de cada párrafo.


24: RESEARCH PAPER DUE. Conclusiones.

DECEMBER

1: Mini conferencia.

FINAL EXAM
Date of my oral presentation _____________________________________

I will present with ______________________________________________

Appointment with prof. Hernández during office hours on ____________
A NOTE ON GRADES

Grades in the "A" range and "B+" are awarded to students who do truly superior work. This generally includes no absences, enthusiastic participation in class discussions, and a strong command of the course material as demonstrated orally, in the research paper, oral participation and/or in the exams.

Grades in the "B" range are received by students who do good work, but who do not merit an "A" or "B+" due to deficiencies in their attendance, their class participation, and/or their performance on the exams.

The grades of "C+" and "C" denote satisfactory work with deficiencies and without the excellence rewarded by the higher grades.

A "C-", "D" or "F" grade indicates serious problems. A student who receives or believes he or she may receive such a grade on an exam should visit my office without delay that we may together attempt to remedy the problem.
Draft statement on the pandemic to be communicated to faculty and included in course syllabi

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease), American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency.

Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and Blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence due to illness. Students are responsible for checking their AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, students should refer to the AU Web site (www.prepared.american.edu) and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean’s office for course and school/college-specific information.