

University of Waterloo
Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies
SPAN 387 – Gender, Power, and Representations in Latin America
Fall 2018
Friday 12:30 AM-2:20 PM, PAS 2084

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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 1.00-2.00PM, or by appointment

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Questions: I will answer questions asked by email within two working days. Students are encouraged to communicate concerns and questions regularly with the professor through email and/or personally during office hours.

Course Description

This course analyzes women's cultural production in Latin America. Examining the construction and the representation of gender/sex differences, the course explores the power relations inherent in these representations, while also examining how gender roles and expectations are linked to representations of class, race, sexuality, age, nationality, and ability.

Methodology

This course will be conducted entirely in Spanish.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will

- Gain greater fluency and accuracy in oral and written communications in Spanish;
- Increase vocabulary for academic usage;
- Familiarize students with concepts and theories related to Latin American women's cultural production;
- Think critically about culture and cultural practices;
- Develop students' ability to analyze artistic works by cultural producers studied in the course;
- Provide students with critical tools for analyzing women's artistic production in its socio-historical contexts;
- Connect themes and ideas learned in the course to related discussions on current issues;
- Engage in interdisciplinary approaches to understand how culture is formed and practiced, and evolves;
- Obtain a critical understanding of certain areas of the history and culture of the Hispanic world.

Students will demonstrate their mastery of the course objectives by:

- Answering content and thematic questions on each work;
- Identifying the main themes and secondary themes of each work;
- Explaining the corresponding social, political and cultural messages;
- Using basic literary terminology (a bilingual guide will be provided) and being able to define these terms as well as identify these techniques in a literary text, both in class discussions and on their final essay (if applicable);
- Incorporating this knowledge into a 3000 word essay (about 9 pages), in which they will analyze a work of art not studied in class. Students will be expected to follow my suggestions and make necessary corrections in the second version of this paper;
- Making an oral presentation on their papers' main arguments during the final week of class, during a Symposium;
- Showing progress in their oral and written skills in Spanish, as well as in reading and oral comprehension.

Pedagogical Approach

To achieve the general and specific objectives of the course, we will engage in a variety of activities:

- **lectures;**
- **readings** (reading of the lecture notes and texts is mandatory, both for your learning process and for your active participation in the course);
- **discussions** – improvised debates in class;
- **one minute papers;**
- **audiovisual materials**, to illustrate various topics.

Required Texts

Readings will be made available through Learn.

Course Requirements and Assessment

1. Oral presentation (15-20 minutes; hard time limit) – 10%

For each of the topics and texts discussed in class, students are asked to give in-class presentations. These are planned as paired/group activities, depending on class enrolment. The groups will make a 15-20 minute presentation about the text(s) 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 (150-200 words) is not turned in.

2. Short essays (3 essays, 750-1000 words each, about 3 pages) – 30%

Critical essay on each film discussed in class.

Due dates: October 5, October 26, and November 16.

Late Work: Late submissions will not be accepted, unless a documented excuse for legal or medical reasons is presented no later than 48 hours after the original due date.

3. In-class participation – 5%

In-class participation is understood as meaningful contribution to class/group discussion and includes both questions and comments relevant to the texts and works being discussed. We all have something to say about class topics. Say it! Participate! Earn your marks! Please note that disruptive or disrespectful behaviour during lecture will have a negative impact on your participation grade.

4. Learning logs – 10%

Keep an open-ended journal of the course in which you will explore your responses to the material presented in lectures as well as class discussion of it. The purpose of this journal is not to improve your writing skills (at least not directly) but to stimulate thinking about issues, questions, and problems raised by your study of Latin American culture. For the most part you will be rewarded for the process of thinking, rather than for the end product you produce. The kind of writing you will be doing is called "exploratory" or "expressive" writing – that is, writing that lets you "think out loud on paper" without having to worry whether your writing is effective for readers. Therefore, features of formal writing such as organization, correct sentence structure, neatness, and spelling will not matter in your journal. For writing entries, you will use a technique commonly referred to as free writing – which means writing nonstop for a set period of time. In this course you will write weekly for 15 minutes. You can choose to summarize lectures, to explain why an aspect of the text/concept is difficult to understand, to disagree with a point made by someone in class, to raise questions, to apply some aspect of the course to personal experience, to make connections between different strands of the course, etc... The learning logs will be on Google drive, and will be graded holistically.

5. Essay (45%)

Select a Latin American work (literature, movie, visual art, etc.) that deals with issues of gender and power, and write a researched argument on how the chosen work represents issues of gender and power in the Hispanic world. Early in your research process you must identify a problem, question, or controversy that requires from you a contestable thesis statement supported by your own critical thinking. Use the introduction of your paper to engage your reader's interest in the problem or question you plan to address, showing why it is both problematic and significant. The body of your essay should be your own contestable response to this question made as persuasive as possible through appropriate analysis, argumentation, and use of evidence.

Assume you are writing an academic paper for an undergraduate conference in Latin American Studies. Also assume that your audience is not familiar with the work and will attend your conference session because your title hooked their interest. You will present (15-18 minutes) a condensed version of your paper during the last week of class.

Please follow current MLA style guidelines, and use 12p Times New Roman, double-spaced. The bibliography should include at least four scholarly sources (books and/or articles).

- ⇒ Essay proposal (2 pages) – 5%
 - Due date: October 12

The proposal must include a thesis statement that clearly articulates the focus of the paper. The proposal must also outline the main argument of the essay and specify a working methodology.

- Students are required to select a topic and present a short proposal for the assignment. I will give written feedback to help you improve your proposal/paper.
- Students are not allowed to choose novels/movies/works of art covered in the course.
- Failure to submit a proposal will result in a grade of 0 on the paper. No paper will be accepted without a proposal having been submitted. Papers submitted without an approved proposal will automatically fail.

- ⇒ Essay draft (3000 words, about 9 pages) – 10%
 - November 2, during class
- ⇒ Final essay (3000 words, about 9 pages) – 20%
 - December 7, at 11.59pm, on Learn
- ⇒ Presentation at the Symposium (15-18 minutes) – 10%
 - November 30

Late Work: Late submissions will not be accepted, unless a documented excuse for legal or medical reasons is presented no later than 48 hours after the original due date.

Breakdown of the mark

80% - Content (clear thesis statement, sound arguments, strong conclusion, good and diverse use of sources)

10% - Form (writing, grammar, formatting (font, proper margins), style)

10% - Bibliography, referencing

A more detailed rubric will be presented in September.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to come to class on time, and participate in every individual and group activity. As we all have to work together, discrimination and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. Punctuality is expected as late comers interrupt classes and usually take time to integrate to activities. Three late arrivals will constitute one absence. Working on non-course-related activities is considered an absence. Any absence equals less participation.

Late Work

No late work will be accepted, unless a documented excuse for legal or medical reasons is presented within 48 hours of the missed deadline. Students are responsible for their own Internet connection in order to download and upload ON TIME the required homework and assessments from/to content and/or dropboxes in LEARN. Assignments must follow the required formats published in this syllabus and in LEARN.

Information on Plagiarism and Academic Offences

Students are expected to present their own work for any evaluation component, especially for written assignments. Any assignment and homework done in and out of class is subject to scrutiny for plagiarism by the instructor. Cheating is an unacceptable practice. Students must avoid committing this type of academic offence during evaluations. See below for information on, and ways to avoid, Academic Offences. Once again, discrimination and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

Electronic Device Policy

Students are allowed to use electronic devices only for course-related activities (e.g. accessing the *Supersite*, online dictionaries, websites relevant to in-class work, online newspapers). It is apparent when a student is constantly accessing social media or working on assignments for other courses. Please, refrain from doing this as anyone doing something other than class work in his/her electronic devices will be deemed absent and not participating. All electronic devices are subject to scrutiny at the discretion of the instructor.

Institutional-required statements for undergraduate course outlines approved by Senate Undergraduate Council, April 14, 2009

Academic Integrity

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity Webpage \(https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/\)](https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/) and the [Arts Academic Integrity Office Webpage \(http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/current-undergraduates/academic-responsibility\)](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/current-undergraduates/academic-responsibility) for more information.

Grievance

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4 \(https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70\)](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70). When in doubt please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing academic offenses and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline (<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>). For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties (<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm>).

Appeals

A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72, Student Appeals (<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>).

Note for Students with Disabilities

The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

The Writing Centre

The Writing Centre works across all faculties to help students clarify their ideas, develop their voices, and write in the style appropriate to their disciplines. Writing Centre staff offer one-on-one support in planning assignments and presentations, using and documenting research, organizing and structuring papers, and revising for clarity and coherence. You can make multiple appointments throughout the term, or drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre . Group appointments for team-based projects, presentations, and papers are also available. Please note that writing specialists guide you to see your work as readers would. They can teach you revising skills and strategies, but will not proofread or edit for you. Please bring hard copies of your assignment instructions and any notes or drafts to your appointment.