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LS 359.01: Spanish-American Civilization Through Literature and Film

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SPANISH-AMERICAN CIVILIZATION THROUGH LITERATURE AND FILM
SPAN/FLLG/ENTL/LS 359
Spring 2002

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Class Meeting Times: MW 1:10-3:00
Class Location: GBB L04
Office Hours: MWF 10:25-11:10;
MW 12:00-1:10 P.M. and by appointment

Required Texts:

One Hundred Years of Solitude by Gabriel García Márquez
The Poet's Answer to the Most Illustrious Sor Filotea de la Cruz by Sor Juana
Inés de la Cruz
The Death of Artemio Cruz by Carlos Fuentes
Like Water for Chocolate by Laura Esquivel
House of the Spirits by Isabel Allende
Old Rosa by Reinaldo Arenas

Note: *The Poet's Answer* is available on-line at <http://eres.lib.umt.edu> or you may go to the library and ask for a hard copy at the Reserve Desk. Check under my name and this course number. Your password for this information is FLLG395 (all capital letters, no space between FLLG and 395).

I have also placed *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *The Death of Artemio Cruz* (in *The Collected Works of Carlos Fuentes*), *Like Water for Chocolate*, and *House of the Spirits* on reserve for your convenience. Unfortunately, our library does not own *Old Rosa*. Feel free to encourage the library to purchase this important work.

Moreover, I have placed the summary and an analysis of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *The Death of Artemio Cruz*, *Like Water for Chocolate*, and *House of the Spirits* on reserve. Again, you may go to the library and read the hard copy or you may access this information with the above WEB address.

The books *Based on a True Story: Latin American History at the Movies* and *Framing Latin American Cinema: Contemporary Critical Perspectives* are also at the Reserve Desk should you want to use them as a reference at any time during this course. Feel free to use these books to help you think about a topic for your term paper or to read about some of the movies we will see this semester.

Videos/Films: (tentative)

“García Márquez and Magical Realism,” “Buried Mirror I-V,” “I, the Worst of All,” “The Young and the Damned,” “Crossing Borders: The Journey of Carlos Fuentes,” “Frida Kahlo,” “Strawberry and Chocolate,” “The Official Story,” “Interview with Isabel Allende.”

Course Description/Goals:

Modern writers commonly refer to a “traditional society” in Spanish America that supposedly has proved resistant to innovation and social change. This course seeks to provide an explanation of Spanish American civilization in order to examine the crucial formative stages of this “traditional society.” By tracing the development of a new culture and society through the interaction of European, Indian, and African elements via Carlos Fuentes’ *The Buried Mirror*, the student will better appreciate the legacies of the past and recognize essential continuities running throughout the entire range of Spanish American history. From a broader perspective, this course will foster an empathy with the peoples and cultures of Spanish America. Students are encouraged to keep up with current events and local activities concerning the Spanish American experience. To illustrate better what the literature describes, we will also view videos/films, and we will read several novels as well as a “letter” that pertains to Spanish America.

Objectives: It is my hope that your knowledge of Spanish America will grow considerably during the course of the semester. I intend to challenge you intellectually by asking you to read the texts and to watch the videos/films with a critical eye. As you may have noticed, the required reading is extensive. You will be asked to prepare certain reading assignments on your own and to be able to present short oral summaries and/or analyses in class. Sometimes you will work individually; other times you will work with at least one other person. I would like to structure this class more as a discussion course than a traditional lecture course. Your preparation and participation are vital for a successful class. Moreover, I hope to improve your critical thinking as well as your reading and writing skills. Please let me know how I can better help you to learn and to understand the material.

Term Paper: You will be required to write a five to seven page paper on a topic that we decide on together. Below are the names of movies for possible research projects. If you decide to watch a movie as part of your term project, be sure that you understand that you must read something (articles, reviews, histories, film theory, etc.) to complement your viewing of the film. You may **NOT** ask anyone for help of any kind with your paper (proofreading, editing, etc.). You must use MLA (Modern Language Association) style in your term paper. The *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* is available in the Reference Section of the library. **If you do not use MLA style, I will deduct ten points from your grade on the term paper.** You **MUST** use at least five sources (books, articles, etc.) to receive an 80 (or above) on your paper. Please familiarize yourself with “Plagiarism” as explained in the *Handbook*. If you commit plagiarism, you will receive an F in this course, and I will take you to Honor Court.

Suggested movies for the term paper:

Available from IMS:

Like Water for Chocolate
Doña Bárbara
Camila
Missing

Available from local video stores:

Guantanamo
Man Facing Southeast
Eréndira
Cabeza de Vaca

59-0

F

Pass/Fail Option:

To receive a "pass" in this class, your course average at the end of the semester (this, of course, includes the final exam) must be at least a 60.

Calendar (Tentative)

- January 28: Introduction to the course
30: **Part 1: Spanish-America Civilization and History**
García Márquez and Magical Realism (video); discussion;
One Hundred Years of Solitude--read chapters 1-3; discussion
- February 4: *Buried Mirror I: The Virgin and the Bull (video); discussion;*
One Hundred Years of Solitude--read chapters 4-5; discussion
6: *Buried Mirror II: Conflict of the Gods (video); discussion;*
One Hundred Years of Solitude--read chapters 6-8; discussion

11: *Buried Mirror III: The Age of Gold (video); discussion;*
One Hundred Years of Solitude--read chapters 9-11; discussion
13: *Buried Mirror IV: Price of Freedom (video); discussion;*
One Hundred Years of Solitude--read chapters 12-14; discussion

18: Presidents' Day (no class)
20: *Buried Mirror V: Unfinished Business (video); discussion;*
One Hundred Years of Solitude--read chapters 15-17; discussion

25: *One Hundred Years of Solitude--read chapters 18-20; discussion;*
Review for test.
27: **Test I**
- March 4: Meet in the Library (Student Learning Center MLIB 283); Dr. Sue Sampson will show you how to do advanced research.
6: **Part II: Understanding Mexico**
"I, the Worst of All" (film); discussion

11: *Read "The Reply" (letter); read the entire letter by this date;*
discussion of "The Reply" and continued discussion of "I, the Worst of All"
13: *"The Young and the Damned" (movie); discussion. Read up to*
"[1919: May 26]" in "The Death of Artemio Cruz."

18: Spring Break
20: Spring Break

25: *“Crossing Borders: The Journey of Carlos Fuentes;”* discussion; Read up to “[1955: December 31]” in *“The Death of Artemio Cruz;”* discussion

27: Finish *“The Death of Artemio Cruz;”* discussion

April

1: *Frida Kahlo* (video); discussion. Read the first three chapters of *“Like Water for Chocolate;”* discussion

3: Read chapters 4-7 in *“Like Water for Chocolate;”* discussion

8: Finish *“Like Water for Chocolate;”* discussion. Review for Test

10: **Test II**

15: **Part III: Problems with Authority**

“Strawberry and Chocolate” (movie); discussion

17: Continued discussion of *“Strawberry and Chocolate;”* Read *“Old Rosa”* (first story); discussion

22: Read *“The Brightest Star”* (Second story in *“Old Rosa”*); discussion

24: *The Official Story* (movie); discussion. Read the first two chapters of *“House of the Spirits.”*

29: *“Interview with Isabel Allende;”* discussion. Read chapters 3-7 in *“House of the Spirits;”* discussion.

May

1: **Term Paper Due.** Read chapters 8-9 in *“House of the Spirits;”* discussion.

6: Finish *“House of the Spirits;”* discussion

8: Conclusion; Review for Final Exam

Final Exam: Monday, May 13, 1:10-3:10 P.M.

Good luck! “¡Buena suerte!”

Grade Sheet:

Name: _____

I. Attendance/Active Participation/Preparation/(Reading Quizzes as needed): 20%

Dates absent: _____

II. First Exam: _____ x .20 _____

Second Exam: _____ x .20 _____

III. Paper: _____ x .20 _____

IV. Final Exam: _____ x .20 _____

Total: _____

Course Grade: _____