

fall 2009 courses

Courses in Other Departments:

ENGLISH 298: Intro. Seminar in Reading and Interpretation: Caribbean and African Lit.

Instructor: Evan Mwangi

This course is devoted to helping students develop sensitive reading of literatures from non-western cultures. Combining popular and canonical texts, we use Caribbean and African literary and cultural texts to appreciate the role of textual and political contexts in literary interpretation. What are the defining characteristics of a literary text? How might literariness vary from one culture to another? What are the qualities of a good critical essay? What is the role of the critic in literary production and reception? What critical approaches are the appropriate for a particular text? As we discuss these questions, we will pay attention to ways of constructing convincing arguments about literature and its contexts, especially when that literature comes from backgrounds other than our own. Although our focus will be on theoretical and methodological inquiries and on protocols of reading, we will emphasize practical criticism of particular works, writing about literature, and peer critiquing.

ENGLISH 365-20: Studies in Postcolonial Lit.: Caribbean Drama

Instructor: Paul Breslin

Caribbean drama is remarkable for its energetic fusion of music, dance, and widely varied language, and for its inventive syntheses of Caribbean oral culture with influences from Europe, Africa—and beyond. The plays we will read were written—some in English, some in French— during the period of widespread decolonization following World War II. Theater, as a communal art form, was important in conceiving of Caribbean identity, especially as a broad cultural continuity uniting the separate islands of the archipelago. We will consider the poems both as literary texts and as scripts intended for the theater, with excerpts performed by students in class.

HISTORY 300-32: New Lectures in History: Spain 1500-1700

Instructor: Regina Grafe

This course studies the social, political and economic history of the largest early modern European Empire. By the mid-sixteenth century the Spanish crown famously reigned

over an empire ‘in which the sun never set’, controlling not only the Iberian Peninsula, but also the Netherlands, large parts of Italy, overseas possessions in the Americas and Asia and holding the German Imperial Crown. It was also one of the most vibrant European societies and economies. After 1640 Spain successively lost its European possessions and receded into the periphery of European intellectual and social life while its economy entered a prolonged phase of stagnation, although it continued to control its Latin American colonies. The course starts out by examining the genesis of peninsular Spain into a union of reigns and peoples loosely integrated under a common monarchy. It looks at the diverse religious (Muslim, Jewish, Christian) and linguistic origins that shaped Spanish society, as well as the contrast between urban and rural worlds and the urban rebellion of the comuneros of the early 16th century. It examines the origins and consequences of renewed social control in the 16th century in the form of the famous Spanish Inquisition and asks if religious and political attempts at ‘unifying’ Spanish society and economy were successful. The program then turns to comparing the peninsular Spanish experience to that of the Dutch, Italian, Portuguese and German subjects of the Spanish crown and investigates the origins of the revolts that eventually led in some cases to their departure from common rule. It also seeks to understand how the ‘discovery’ of the Americas made Europeans reflect about their own society. By examining the diversity and the unifying elements of the Hispanic experience in the light of its other possessions the course offers an overview of one of the most important European players of the early modern period.

History 300-30: New Lectures in History: Latino History During the 20th Century

Instructor: Cadava

The growth of various Latino groups has transformed communities throughout the United States, and has led to heightened debates about their political power, cultural characteristics, and ethnic and racial status. While increasing attention to Latinos may in fact feel “new,” Latino communities have played a pivotal role in U.S. history throughout the 20th Century. This course explores the development of Latina and Latino communities in Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, and elsewhere. We will address themes including migration, labor, race, and empire through comparisons of Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Central Americans, and Cubans. Although we will focus on the United States, we also will look at the movement of Latinas and Latinos within and between the United States, Latin America, and Caribbean. Their histories argue for an international approach to U.S. history and for an analysis of Latin America that is more attentive to the importance of Latina and Latino communities in the United States. We will look at a variety of media, including literature, film, art, political cartoons, and more traditional historical interpretations.

HISTORY 366: Latin America in the Independence Era

Instructor: Frank R. Safford

This course deals with Latin America's transition from colonial status to political independence and the problem of forming new states (and nations?) in the nineteenth century. Topics include patterns of economic and social change, including economic dependency and changes in modes of social stratification, as well as political patterns, including caudillismo, political ideologies, and Church-State conflict. Attention is focused particularly on the cases of Mexico, Colombia, Chile, the Rio de la Plata, and Brazil.

LATINO 201-2: Intro to Latina/o Social and Cultural Analysis

Instructor: Angelica Rivera

This course aims to introduce students to the broad themes, concepts, and questions raised in the field of Latina/Latino Studies. A relatively new and growing field, Latina/Latino Studies focuses on the social formation of Latinas/Latinos in the United States as well as their origins and connections to Latin America. Specifically in this course we will address the following questions:

- *Who are Latinas/Latinos? Do they have distinctive characteristics?
- *Are Latinas/Latinos a racial group? A cultural, ethnic or linguistic group?
- *How and why did Latinas/Latinos come to be identified as a distinctive social group?
- *Are there differences or particularities across Latinas/Latinos of varying national origins?
- *What is the utility of using the term Latina/Latino? What are the drawbacks?
- *Why does Latina/Latino Studies matter? What does it contribute to the academy?

LATINO 342: Latino Social Movements

Instructor: Ana Aparicio

This course offers a review of theory and research on Latino/a social movements and of their social and political impact in the U.S. Operating with the understanding that social movements are ways in which people organize collectively to effect social change, this course emphasizes key movements, moments, and figures of the 20th and early 21st centuries. Students will engage in a critical review of movements and the context within which they were birthed; such movements include the United Farm Workers struggles, Chicano rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s, Puerto Rican radicalism from the 1960s through the present, and contemporary manifestations of these struggles. This course will also call attention to emerging forms of inter-group or multi-ethnic/racial collaborative efforts of which Latinos/as are a part. While examining the ideologies, goals, and outcome of particular movements, we will also discuss the relationship between Latino/a social movements and the politics of cultural production.

POLI_SCI 353: Politics in Latin America

Instructor: Edward L. Gibson

This is an introductory course on the politics of Latin America. It provides a historical perspective on the broad patterns of political change in the region, and considers alternative explanations about the causes of authoritarianism, socioeconomic conflict, and democratization. We will also look at politics during the current period of democratic change and free market reform. The course will examine both general themes and the politics of specific countries. Countries to be studied include Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, and Chile. No prior knowledge of the region is assumed or required.

PORTUGUESE 210: Icons, Legends and Myths in Brazil

Instructor: Teixeira (Muller-Bergh)

Representations of diverse historical, literary, and popular figures who have achieved iconic status. This course counts as a WCAS distro in area VI.

Religion 382: Becoming Sinners: Christianity and Colonialism

Instructor: J. Michelle Molina

What is "conversion" and how does it function in colonial contexts? What does it mean to try to convince someone that he or she is a sinner in need of redemption? This course is built upon the premise that often Europeans -- both missionaries and the governments that sponsored them -- sought to effect a fundamental change in consciousness beyond merely coercing natives to claim a belief in the Christian god. We will explore the myriad ways in which European colonizers enticed, cajoled and sometimes demanded an alteration in native consciousness through an examination of transformations in cultural practices, from formal ritual to one's everyday practices, culinary habits, expression of emotion, etc. We will evaluate the "successes" and "failures" of such ventures. Chronologically, the first half of the course will explore the interactions between missionaries, governments, and colonized, beginning with the first European overseas empires (Spain and Portugal in the 15th through 18th centuries). The second half of the course will draw from case studies from the era of modern colonialism (19th and 20th centuries), particularly regarding India, Africa, and with one example from Micronesia. The purpose of the course is not only to understand the narrative history of European attempts at "spiritual conquest" over time, but to explore various approaches to the concept of "culture" -- what it meant to Europeans and colonial "others" in particular locations and historical contexts. The course will explore Christian concepts of "self" and "other" that were operative in each time period. Drawing upon anthropological theories pertaining to culture, communication, and ritual, we will keep an eye trained to the unique historical experiences of actors in each context, but also aim to understand more generalized patterns of conversion in colonial contexts across time.

SPANISH 211: Icons, Legends and Myths in Latin America

Instructor: Maria Alejandra Uslenghi

Diverse representation of historical, literary, and popular figures in Latin America, such as the conquistador, the dictator, the gaucho, Simón Bolívar, Che Guevara, Evita, La Malinche, and Carlos Gardel. Focus on forms of representation such as films, documentaries, musical theater, biographies, narrative fiction, poetry, and commercial art.

SPANISH 232: Discovering Jewish Latin America

Instructor: Lucille Kerr

Discovering Jewish Latin America” is an introduction to the study of Latin American Jewish literature and culture. Focusing on literary texts, autobiographical and/or testimonial writing, and film produced mainly since the middle of the twentieth century, we will study representative works from the Jewish tradition in Latin America and will consider the historical and cultural frameworks that have shaped the Jewish presence in the region. Materials will be selected from the work of figures such as Marjorie Agosin, Ruth Behar, Daniel Burman, Alicia Freilich, Alberto Gerchunoff, Margo Glantz, Isaac Goldemberg, Mario Goloboff, Rossa Nissan, German Rosenmacher, Moacyr Scliar, Alicia Steimberg, among others. Our discussion will take up topics such as identity and difference, memory and history, immigration and assimilation, nationality and ethnicity, language and translation.

SPANISH 260: Literature in Latin American before 1888

Instructor: Yari M. Pérez Marín

Survey of pre-Hispanic, colonial, and Romantic traditions in Latin America. Focus on authors and texts such as Popul Vuh, Cistóbal Colón, Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, and Martín Fierro.

SPANISH 342: Region and Rootedness in Latin America

Instructor Jorge Coronado

Literary traditions evolving from Latin American conceptions of regional and indigenous cultures in the 19th and 20th centuries. Authors such as José María Arguedas, Miguel Ángel Asturias, Rosario Castellanos, Rómulo Gallegos, José Hernández, José Carlos Mariátegui, Clorinda Matteo de Turner, and José Eustasio Rivera.

SPANISH 347: Literature and Revolution in Latin America

Instructor: Emily Maguire

Revolutionary practices in Latin American literature as well as literary representations of revolution. Authors such as Mariano Azuela, Nellie Campobello, Alejo Carpentier, Roque Dalton, Carlos Fuentes, Pablo Neruda, and Rodolfo Usigli.

SPANISH 361: Latin America: Studies in Culture and Society

Instructor: Staff

SPANISH 380: Topics in Film: The Silver Screen

Instructor: Yari M Pérez Marín

This course explores the development of different national traditions within Latin American cinema. Paying close attention to the political and ideological climates in which the films were produced, we will study the intersection between fiction, aesthetics and moving image, as well as the uses of cinematographic techniques in the creation (or contesting) of meaning. Of special interest will be the ways in which a number of historical events in the Latin American textual and oral record, from colonial times to the present, have been refashioned and appropriated by filmmakers throughout the twentieth century as their work collectively gave rise to new forms of film discourse: from Mexican melodrama, Brazilian 'Cinema Novo', Revolutionary Cinema in Cuba and Post-Junta Argentine cinema, to the New Mexican Cinema and the Brazilian 'Retomada'.