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## **SPAN 340 - HISPANIC CULTURE TODAY: A TRANSATLANTIC PERSPECTIVE**

***Pre-requisites: SPAN 290 or Instructor's consent.***

### **Course Objectives**

This is an introductory-level study of key issues in Hispanic culture today through the study of different cultural manifestations, mostly literature but also film, music, media, and television. The purpose of the course is twofold: To introduce the students to major themes in recent Hispanic society and culture and, to develop the necessary skills to read and analyze literary texts and other cultural forms. Topics to be discussed include dictatorship and democracy, women and representation, political and domestic violence, national identity, immigration, and mass culture. The selected materials will include texts by authors like Carlos Fuentes (“Los Estados Unidos por dos lenguas”), Cristina Peri Rossi (“El prócer”), Dolores Prida (“Coser y cantar”), Roberto Bolaño (“2666”), and others.

### **Course Format**

This is a discussion based class so it is very important the students read the materials assigned for each class beforehand and participate actively in class discussion, both of which will be directly reflected in the students’ participation grade. Students will be required to write a one page commentary about some of the literary texts, films or art pieces to be discussed in class. These commentaries should be at least one page long double-spaced and analyze works in detail from an original point of view.

In addition there will be a number of film viewings and, at least two cultural activities out of the classroom. In the past, we visited the ‘Centro de Integración y Participación de la Comunidad de Madrid’ for the Dominican community living in Madrid, and Latino, a free newspaper for the Latin American community living in Spain. These activities will be mandatory.

Students are expected to give a short oral presentation (10 minutes) based on daily news on Latin American issues and/or Latin American-Spain relations. Students will need to write a final research paper (6+ pages, doubled-spaced) regarding a class-related topic which must include bibliographical references.

### **Evaluation**

Active class participation	20%
Commentaries	10%
Oral presentation (10-15 minutes)	10%
Final Essay	20%
Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	20%

### **Attendance**

Suffolk University Madrid Campus allows only two unjustified absences. After two absences without the required justification the final grade will be lowered.

### **Class Rules**

1. Nobody is permitted to enter the classroom 15 minutes after the scheduled class time.
2. Leaving the classroom is not allowed unless an imperative need arises, in which case you should ask for the professor’s permission before leaving.
3. Eating or drinking (except water) in the classroom is not allowed.
4. Students are permitted the use of laptops to take notes in class. However, if a student uses it for a different purpose, he or she will not be allowed to bring it again.
5. Cell phones should be disconnected.

## Tentative work schedule

- 1 Presentation of the syllabus. Introduction to the study of Hispanic cultures today: The question of name and identity.
- 2 Latinoamérica a vista de pájaro I: Spain and Spanish America cultural relations  
Arturo A. Fox, *Latinoamérica, presente y pasado*, pp. 109-131.
- 3 Latin America's Sociopolitical Issues from 20th Century to Present Time  
Arturo A. Fox, *Latinoamérica, presente y pasado*, pp. 133-156.
- 4 Bicentenary of Latin American's independence from Spain. What do we celebrate?  
Arturo A. Fox, *Latinoamérica, presente y pasado*, pp. 91-108
- 5 Panorama del siglo XX en España e Hispanoamérica  
Carmen Pereira-Muro, *Culturas de España*, pp. 203-215.
- 6 A common history of dictatorships and utopias  
Cristina Peri Rossi, "El prócer".
- 7 Literature and Politics: Whom to blame for Latin American underdevelopment?  
Alberto Galeano, *Las venas abiertas de América Latina* (excerpt of the Introduction).
- 8 The indigenous question in Latin America.  
Rigoberta Menchú, "Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú y así me nació la Conciencia"(excerpts).
- 9 Authoritarianism and revolution: The case of Cuba  
John Charles Chasteen, "Revolution".  
Fidel Castro, "Palabras a los intelectuales" (excerpts).
- 10 Documentary showing: "Balseros" I (España, Carlos Bosh and Josep Maria Domènech, 2002)
- 11 Documentary showing: "Balseros" II. Class discussion.
- 12 **MIDTERM EXAM**
- 13 Globalization and Mass Culture: Telenovelas and talk shows  
Daniel Mato, "Telenovelas: transnacionalización de la industria y transformaciones del género"  
(excerpts)  
**To turn in: Análisis of a soap opera episode**  
Class discusión of student's analysis
- 14 Spring Break
- 15 Spring Break
- 16 Crossing Over: La internacionalization of Hispanic cultures  
Arturo A. Fox, "Los hispanos en los EE.UU.", pp. 341-359.
- 17 Carlos Fuentes, "Los Estados Unidos por dos lenguas".
- 18 Dolores Prida, "Coser y cantar" (Dramatic reading in class)
- 19 Latin American women in Spain: Poverty and immigration  
Film showing: Flores de otro mundo (España, Iciar Bollaín, 1999)
- 20 **Turn in film commentary.** Class discussion

- 21 A social malady both sides of the Atlantic Ocean: Domestic violence.  
Mexico: The “femicidios” in Ciudad Juárez  
Documentary on Ciudad Juárez  
Short: El otro sueño americano (Enrique Arroyo, 2004)
- 22 A social malady both sides of the Atlantic Ocean: Domestic violence.  
Mexico: The “femicidios” in Ciudad Juárez II  
Roberto Bolaño, 2666: “La parte de los crímenes” (excerpts).
- 23 Latinos in Spain: A new melting pot?  
Field trip.
- 24 Film showing: Amores perros (México, Alejandro González Iñárritu, 2000)
- 25 Film showing continues. Class discussion
- 26 Field trip: Centro de Participación e Integración de Inmigrantes (CEPI) Hispano-Dominicano.
- 27 Holiday - Holy Thursday
- 28 Latin American modernity: The paradoxes of globalization  
Conclusions: Spain and its contribution to the modernization of Latin America. Cooperation or recolonization?
- 29 Last day of class. Final Review