



SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY

MADRID CAMPUS

SPAN 410/SPCS 410 - REPRESENTATION AND REALITY IN SPANISH CINEMA

Instructor Information:

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Course Information:

Catalog Description: This course offers the students a panoramic view of the most representative Spanish films from the 1950s until today, with special emphasis on their social, political, artistic and cultural context. Films will be viewed in Spanish with English subtitles. Conducted in English, the course will be open to both non-majors in Spanish as well as to advanced-level Spanish majors and minors, with the latter carrying out their written work and individual meetings with the instructor in Spanish.

Instructor's Additional Course Description: Since the 1990's, Spanish cinema has entered a global film market, offering fascinating representations of Spain and its people to wider audiences in the country and abroad, as well as gaining international recognition for a handful of very original filmmakers such as Pedro Almodóvar, Alejandro Aménabar, Fernando León de Aranoa and Icíar Bolláin. We will discuss the role that filmmakers from diverse backgrounds have taken in interpreting the most relevant trends in Spanish culture and society. The language of film as an art form will be an important part of this course in order to explore the interplay between reality and its cinematic representation.

This course will be *conducted in English* to allow students whose majors may be in a number of different departments to obtain a deeper understanding of Spain and its cinema while living in Madrid. ***Spanish majors and minors with an appropriate level of Spanish may count this course towards their major/minor. In that case they must submit all written assignments, including papers and exams, in that language and must meet regularly with the instructor to discuss their work in Spanish.***

Prerequisites: None

Credit Hours: 4

This course follows the US Federal Government's Credit Hour definition: "An amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutional established equivalence that reasonably approximates no less than:

- (1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
- (2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours."

For full up-to-date statement:

[https://cihe.neasc.org/sites/cihe.neasc.org/files/downloads/POLICIES/Pp111 Policy On Credits-And-Degrees.pdf](https://cihe.neasc.org/sites/cihe.neasc.org/files/downloads/POLICIES/Pp111_Policy_On_Credits-And-Degrees.pdf)

To complete this course, students will need to dedicate, at a minimum, the following amount of time to the listed activities:

Assignment/Activity	Engagement Estimate	Engagement Estimate
Course readings	249 pages x 10 minutes per page	42
Journal essays readings	99 pages x 8 minutes per page	13
Viewing required	2 films, 3 videos, clips	10
Research questions	14 hours preparation	14
Class attendance	3 hours x 15 weeks	45
Tests preparation	5 hours	5
Final paper preparation	25 hours	25
Critical analysis papers prep.	2 x 10 hours each	20
Film responses on Forum	10 x 1 hour each	10
Oral presentations	2 x 5 hours each	10
Spanish credit (optional)	2 extra films x 2 hours each	4
TOTAL		194-198 HOURS

Textbook/Course Materials:

Barry Jordan and Mark Allinson. *Spanish Cinema: A Student's Guide*. London: Hodder Arnold, 2005.

Scholarly articles and critical reviews pertaining to the films will be available either as PDF files on Blackboard or from the University database, JSTOR. If you are unfamiliar with this bibliographic source, please sign up for a tutorial at Suffolk Madrid Library.

The Films: These films will be shown in class. Students are required to read all the material prior to class as preparation for the viewing.

- *Bienvenido Mr. Marshall/Welcome Mr. Marshall* (Luis García Berlanga, 1953)
- *Viridiana* (Luis Buñuel, 1961)
- *El espíritu de la colmena/The Spirit of the Beehive* (Víctor Érice, 1973)
- *Cría cuervos/Raise Ravens* (Carlos Saura, 1976)
- *¿Qué he hecho yo para merecer esto? / What Have I Done to Deserve This?* (Pedro Almodóvar, 1984)
- *Tesis/Thesis* (Alejandro Amenábar, 1996)
- *Los lunes al sol/Mondays in the Sun* (Fernando León de Aranoa, 2002)
- *Te doy mis ojos/Take my Eyes* (Icíar Bollaín, 2003)
- *Celda 211/Cell 211* (Daniel Monzón, 2011)
- *La isla mínima/Marshland* (Alberto Rodríguez, 2014)

Additional films for individual viewings: These are films on reserve in the library. Students are required to select at least two for viewing and a write a short comparative analysis about each of them (3+ pages).

- *Calle Mayor/Main Street* (Juan Antonio Bardem, 1956)
- *Los santos inocentes/The Holy Innocents* (Mario Camus, 1983)
- *Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios/Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* (P. Almodóvar, 1988)
- *Historias del Kronen/Stories from the Kronen* (Montxo Armendáriz, 1995)
- *Belle Époque* (Fernando Trueba, 1992)
- *El día de la bestia/The Day of the Beast* (Alex de la Iglesia, 1995)
- *La niña de tus ojos/The Girl of Your Dreams* (Fernando Trueba, 1998)
- *Barrio* (Fernando León de Aranoa, 1998)
- *Los amantes del círculo polar/Lovers of the Artic Circle* (Julio Medem, 1998)

- *Flores de otro mundo/Flowers from Another World* (Icíar Bollain, 1999)
- *La lengua de las mariposas/ Butterfly Tongues* (José Luis Cuerda, 1999)
- *El Bola* (Acheró Mañas, 2000)
- *Volver* (Pedro Almodóvar, 2006)
- *El laberinto del fauno/Pan's Labyrinth* (Guillermo del Toro, 2006)
- *El Orfanato/The Orphanage* (Juan Antonio Bayona, 2007)

Course Goals & Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will know/understand	Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to	How the student will be assessed on these learning outcomes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the most important Spanish filmmakers and work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the most important filmmakers and cinematic style. • Identify the most relevant films from the last years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly responses to films viewed in class • Oral presentations • Class participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how social, political and economic circumstances have conditioned Spanish cinema. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relate the work of particular filmmakers to period constraints. • Identify most important characteristics of Spanish film industry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Short comparative film analysis • Final paper
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the basic language of film as an art form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply the vocabulary of film studies to particular films. • Analyze films in terms of cinematic style, genre and representation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class discussions • Quiz on film analysis terminology • In class film written responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the cultural and social repercussions of Spanish cinema. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpret the role of film in Spanish society. • Evaluate the reception of Spanish cinema. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film analysis • Final paper

Assignments/Exams/Papers/Projects:

Students will view Spanish films produced during the second half of the 20th Century and the beginning of the 21st Century, considering these cultural productions in conjunction with readings on current events affecting Spain, social issues in the country, and theoretical considerations of Spanish film. **Films and film excerpts will be shown in Spanish with English subtitles.** During classroom activities and discussions, students will analyze texts and films in terms of their subject matter, cinematic and technical style, historical and contemporary resonance, critical and popular reception, the filmmakers' background and vision, and secondary critical sources. The participation grade is based on the students' engagement in classroom discussion as well as during short oral presentations over the course of the semester.

Students will also be required to participate actively in the class blackboard forum discussions by writing weekly critical responses to the films viewed in class analyzing specific thematic and technical elements of the film.

Students will also be expected to view two additional contemporary Spanish films (chosen from a list provided by the professor)*, and write a comparative and culturally contextualized analysis.

The final paper will be a more general reflection on the relationship between reality and representation in Spanish cinema in a particular period or cinematographer(s). Students will need to present a proposal with a thesis, outline and bibliographical resources for approval by the scheduled date.

***Students taking this course for credit towards the Spanish major or minor must choose among the films showing in Madrid theaters for this assignment.**

Grading/Evaluation:

Class participation and preparedness:	20%
Quiz Film language:	10%
Film responses (Forum on Blackboard):	20%
2 Comparative Critical Analysis on alternative films (3+ pages):	20%
Oral presentations:	10%
Final paper (8+ pages):	20%

Course and Classroom Policies:

The course will meet once a week for three hours. The first part of the class will be dedicated to the review of the assigned readings pertaining to the film of the week. Each week a team of two students will present the critical material related to the film. After the screening, the film will be discussed in detail. Students will be required to turn in a short response concentrating on one of the aspects of film technique and style prior to the next meeting.

This is a discussion-based class so it is very important that the students prepare the assignments and do the readings beforehand to ensure their participation. Attendance in every class and at required activities is mandatory. All students are expected to complete the readings and required activities before class to ensure active participation in class discussions, for this is an important part of the grade.

In the event that a class meeting is unexpectedly cancelled, students will be expected to continue with readings or other assignments as originally scheduled. Any assignments due or class activities (e.g., a quiz, exam or presentation) planned for such a cancelled class are due at the next class meeting unless other instructions are communicated.

Late assignments will only be accepted in case of illness. Students missing class for other reasons must turn in their assignments by email on the due date.

Participation/Attendance Policy:

The SUMC Student Handbook states the following:

Once a student is registered for a course, attendance at every meeting of every class is expected, including those held in the first week of the semester. A maximum of two unjustified absences is permitted. Each additional absence will cause the final course grade to be lowered by one-third of a letter grade, i.e., from A to A-; A- to B+; B+ to B, etc.

Excessive absences in a course will have a negative effect on the final grade. When a student is absent, the quality of his or her work in a course will deteriorate since material missed in class sessions can rarely be made up satisfactorily, even though the student remains responsible for that work.

Please note that even when a student has a justified reason for missing class, such as illness, the negative academic impact on learning will be the same as if the absence were for spurious reasons.

Since this course meets once a week, only one unjustified absence is allowed. Any absence due to illness should be justified by a note from the student's physician or other health professional confirming the day(s) on which the student was unable to attend class. A written excuse from a student's host parent or residence supervisor, will also be accepted. Students are responsible for all material and assignments for the days missed, regardless of the reason for the absence.

In the event that a class meeting is unexpectedly cancelled, students will be expected to continue with readings or other assignments as originally scheduled. Any assignments due or class activities (e.g., a quiz, exam or presentation) planned for such a cancelled class are due at the next class meeting unless other instructions are communicated.

Disability Statement:

If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with me. I would like us to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in my classroom.

If formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, it is very important that you be registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at the main Campus in Boston so that I am notified of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. We can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations. Check the ODS web site at www.suffolk.edu/disability for information on accommodations.

Student Resources:

SUMC provides a range of student services, both academic and personal. To learn more about course-related tutorials and academic workshops, refer to the SUMC Student Handbook, Section 2 "Academic Policies and Services". Section 5, "Living in Madrid", contains information on the medical and mental health resources, including an English-speaking therapist, available to you.

Midterm Review

At midterm, around week 6, you will be given a midterm grade based on your progress to date and performance on assignments, quizzes and midterm exam. Midterm grades of C- or below will be reported to the Madrid Campus Academic Standing Committee, with an explanation of what I believe has contributed to that grade: excessive absences, poor time management or study skills, lack of effort, difficulty with the course material or with writing or language skills, etc. The Academic Standing Committee or I may contact you to suggest strategies for addressing these difficulties. I strongly encourage you to visit me during my office hours so we may discuss how you can be successful in this class. You may also take advantage of SUMC Writing Center especially when writing your final paper.

Academic Misconduct:

www.suffolk.edu/about/mission-history/policies-procedures/academic-misconduct-policy

Suffolk University expects all students to be responsible individuals with high standards of conduct. Students are expected to practice ethical behavior in all learning environments and scenarios, including classrooms and laboratories, internships and practica, and study groups and academic teams. Cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, use of unauthorized electronic devices, self-plagiarism, fabrication or falsification of data, and other types of academic misconduct are treated as serious offenses that initiate a formal process of inquiry, one that may lead to disciplinary sanctions.

Student work will be thoroughly examined for academic integrity and may be scanned using plagiarism detection software. A faculty member suspecting academic misconduct will contact the student using the Suffolk email address to schedule a meeting and will make all effort to do so within five business days of detecting the incident. During the meeting, the faculty member will present the documentation that led to suspected academic misconduct. Resolution of the incident will be according to the procedures outlined in the SUMC Student Handbook.

Academic Grievances Policy:

www.suffolk.edu/student-life/student-services/student-handbook/university-policies-for-student-cas-sbs/grievances-academics

Course Schedule:

The schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, by mutual agreement, and/or to ensure better student learning.

Week 1: Introduction to the course

Review of history of Spain and its cinema

Film Studies Basics: Technique, Narrative and Style

Reading: *Spanish Cinema: A Student's Guide*, 33-54

Video: [A Glossary of Film Style Analysis](#)

[Film Analysis I and II](#)

Week 2: History of Spanish Cinema (1896-1950)

Reading: SC, 3-20

Clips: *La verbena de la Paloma (1935)*, *Morena clara (1936)*

Film Studies Basics II: Technique, Narrative and Style

Reading: SC 54-69

Short film: *El perro andaluz (1929)*

Week 3: The Spanish comedy of the 50s

Film: *Bienvenido Mr. Marshall/Welcome Mr. Marshall* (Luis García Berlanga, 1953)

Reading: SC, 20-33 and *Representation* 134-147

QUIZ: Film Studies Basic vocabulary

Week 4: Buñuel: The Spanish Master of Surrealism

Film: *Viridiana* (Luis Buñuel, 1961)

Reading: SC, *Authorship* 70-87, *Viridiana* 156-158

DUE: 1st Comparative Critical Analysis of Secondary Film (from list)

Week 5: Franco's Dictatorship as a Cinematic Monster: Circumventing Censorship

Film: *El espíritu de la colmena/The Spirit of the Beehive* (Víctor Erice, 1973)

Reading: Reading: SC, Víctor Erice 88-91

Jo Labanyi, "Censorship or the Fear of Mass Culture" in *Spanish cultural studies: an introduction: the struggle for modernity* (on reserve).

Paul Julian Smith, "The Spirit of the Beehive: Spanish Lessons"

Week 6: Authoritarian Father Figures and Democratic Change

Film: *Cría cuervos/Raise Ravens* (Carlos Saura, 1976)

Reading: SC, *Narrative in Cría cuervos* 61-63

Maria Delgado, "Raising Ravens: *Cría cuervos*, Saura and Spain"

Week 7: The Cinema of Pedro Almodóvar

Film: *¿Qué he hecho yo para merecer esto! / What Have I Done to Deserve This* (Pedro Almodóvar, 1984)

Reading: SC, *Stars* 117-133

Reading: Kathleen M. Vernon, "Melodrama against Itself. Pedro Almodóvar's *What Have I Done to Deserve This?*", *Film Quarterly* Vol.46, N°3 (Spring 1993) JSTOR

Week 8: The New Generations of Spanish Filmmakers

Film: *Tesis/Thesis* (Alejandro Amenábar, 1996)

Reading: SC, *Genre* 92-116

DUE: 2nd Comparative Critical Analysis of Secondary Film (from list)

Week 9: Social Cinema of the New Millennium

Film: *Los lunes al sol/Mondays in the Sun* (Fernando León de Aranoa, 2002)

Reading: SC, *Film Studies and Film Theory* 170-196

DUE: FINAL PAPER PROPOSAL AND OUTLINE

Week 10: Domestic Violence and Cultural Change

Film: *Te doy mis ojos/Take my Eyes* (Icíar Bollaín, 2003)

Reading: SC, Gender 152-169

Duncan Wheeler "The Representation of Domestic Violence in Spanish Cinema" [The Modern Language Review](#) Vol. 107, No. 2 (April 2012) (pp. 438-500) JSTOR

Week 11: Spanish Thrills

Film: *Celda 211/Cell 211* (Daniel Monzón, 2009)

Week 12: A revisited recent past: The transition to democracy

Film: *La isla mínima/Marshland* (Alberto Rodríguez, 2014)

Week 13: Recent shorts

Debate: The future of Spanish Cinema

Final Paper due: Students will present their paper to the class

Additional Bibliography:

Corrigan, Timothy, *A Short Guide to Writing About Film*, (NY: Longman, 2001).

David T.Gies, ed. *Modern Spanish Culture*, (Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Helen Graham and Jo Labanyi, eds. *Spanish Cultural Studies. An Introduction*, (Oxford University Press, 1995).

Barry Jordan and Rikki Morgan-Tamosunas, eds. *Contemporary Spanish Studies*, (London & NY: Routledge, 2000).

Jordan, Barry and Rikki Morgan-Tamosunas, *Contemporary Spanish Cinema* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998)

Kinder, Marsha, *Blood Cinema: The Reconstruction of National Identity in Spain* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1993)

Marsh, Steven and Parvati Nair (eds), *Gender and Spanish Cinema* (Oxford: Berg, 2004)

Mira, Alberto, *The A to Z of Spanish Cinema*, (Plymouth: Scarecrow Press, 2010).

--- (ed), *The Cinema of Spain and Portugal* (London: Wallflower Press, 2005)

Triana Toribio, Nuria, *Spanish National Cinema*. (London: Routledge, 2003)

Additional Resources:

List of all Spanish films on DVDs available in the Library posted on Blackboard.

**Cinergía* is another resource that will serve as our media guide for the semester. You are expected to acquaint yourself with the language of film and media literacy and apply it in your written assignments.

Cinergía: Critical Resource for Spanish and Latin American Film

www.personal.psu.edu/users/s/a/sam50/cinergia/cinergia.htm