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FILM 365.01: Latin American Civilization Through Literature and Film

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LATIN AMERICAN CIVILIZATION THROUGH LITERATURE AND FILM

FILM 365

Spring 2019

Professor Clary Loisel

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Class Meeting Times: MW 2:00-4:30 Class Location: LA 305

Office Hours: MWR 10:30-11:00, 12:00-12:50 and by appointment

Announcement:

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. [The Code is available for review online.](#)

Announcement:

If you are a student with a disability and wish to discuss reasonable accommodations for this course, please contact me immediately via an office visit to discuss the specific course accommodations you wish to request. Please be advised that I request you to provide a letter from Disability Services for Students verifying your right to reasonable modifications. If you have not yet contacted Disability Services located in Lommasson Center 154, please do so in order to verify your disability and to coordinate your reasonable modifications. For more information, visit the Disability Services website at www.umt.edu/dss/.

Objectives:

It is my hope that your knowledge of Latin 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 films with a critical eye. 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.

Learning Outcomes:

This course seeks to provide an explanation of Latin American civilization through selected films and novels and will foster an empathy with the peoples and cultures of Latin America. Students are encouraged to keep up with current events and local activities concerning the Latin American experience.

Required Texts:

- *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez (Columbian)

- *House of the Spirits* by Isabel Allende (Chilean)
- *Captains of the Sands* by Jorge Amado (Brazilian)

I have also placed the library's copies of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *House of the Spirits*, and *Captains of the Sands* on reserve at the Mansfield Library for your convenience. Ask for FILM 365 Loisel. All films and videos that we will see in this course are also on reserve at the Mansfield Library. Again, please ask for FILM 365 Loisel.

Assessment:

The course is structured so that the student regularly receives feedback so that (s)he can achieve the stated outcomes. Progress toward the stated outcomes is assessed using the following criteria:

Course Requirement	Percentage
Attendance:	10%
Response Cards:	15%
Reading/Film Quizzes:	10%
Film Review (traditional)	15%
Film Commentary (creative)	10%
Literature Analysis (traditional)	10%
Literature Commentary	15%
(creative) Term Project:	15%

Attendance:

Class participation is essential for this course. Students who show evidence of thoughtful preparation and who listen attentively and participate enthusiastically will receive high marks. More than four unexcused absences will result in the loss of 1 point off your final grade per absence. Legitimate grounds for absences are: (1) pre-arranged, university sponsored activities; (2) your own illness; (3) death or severe illness in your immediate family. In case of illness or death, written proof will be required.

Response Cards:

Please see the separate attachment that I emailed you along with this syllabus.

Quizzes:

Short objective quizzes (T/F, fill-in-the-blank, short identifications, etc.) to make sure you are prepared.

There are no make-ups for the quizzes. For any one you miss, I will substitute whatever grade you make on the final exam for your missing quiz grade(s). The final exam is cumulative.

Papers:

Students will write four (4-5 page) papers during the semester. I will give you specific instructions at least a week before each paper is due.

If you do not turn in your paper at this stated time, your grade for the paper will be zero. I will only accept a late paper if you can provide a verifiable, documented excuse. I will NOT accept any type of

technical problem as an excuse. If you are sick on the day in which a paper is due, be sure to get a note from your doctor; otherwise, I cannot accept your paper.

Final Project:

Students will organize a team formed by three or four members. They will give a presentation about the culture and history of one of the films we studied in this course following the format of a radio or television program and role-play exercise. It will last twenty-five minutes of speaking plus five minutes of images, music, or the screening of fragments of (other) films. Students have to choose a movie from a particular historical period, and within this period or event you can concentrate on something very specific but try to convey diverse experiences or points of view. For instance, if you decide select *Water for Chocolate*, you have to provide a broad historical background of the Mexican Revolution then concentrate on your topic. You can talk about 1910-20's music, cinema, or art in Mexico. To follow the format of a radio or television program, students should include interviews with actors, directors, politicians film critiques, and ordinary people to show different perspectives. This will be a role-play exercise in which a team member plays the role of a journalist or broadcaster and others are historical actors. One member can play more than one role at different times. Students have to use their imagination to put themselves in other persons' shoes. You can come in costume or record your presentation or parts of it to play them in the classroom. Feel free to be creative, but keep in mind that you have to prepare your presentation based on a serious and profound investigation of a wide range of sources such as academic books, literature, cinema, newspapers, journal articles, databases, images, and art. In other words, you should read and refer to various sources in order to have the necessary elements to represent and re-enact a particular situation. Students will meet periodically out of the classroom to share their findings, plan their presentation, write scripts, and rehearse. There should be a balance in the amount of time each member of the team talks and participates. Students are encouraged to present images to support their presentation. You can include a fragment of films and/or song but these should not last more than five minutes, time that will not count for the twenty-five minutes of your presentation. On the last two days of class, each group will submit a final bibliography with at least ten sources.

Grading Criteria for papers and exams:

A

"A" papers and exams advance a striking and original hypothesis about the text or texts under consideration and support that hypothesis by ample and well-organized arguments. Documentation consists of well chosen quotations from the text; these in their turn are interpreted carefully and persuasively, so that the reader not only understands why they have been introduced but is persuaded that they have been rightly used; secondary (i.e., critical and /or biographical) materials should also be quoted at appropriate moments--and footnoted--and their relevance to the argument made clear. BUT: even should all these criteria be met, no paper or exam which contains numerous grammatical, vocabulary, and/or mechanical errors will receive an A. My general response to a paper which deserves an A is that it has been extremely well written. It should demonstrate stylistic complexities and even linguistic elegance. An A paper or exam has shown me something I had previously overlooked and convinced me that I can no longer afford to ignore it.

B

“B” papers or exams, while somewhat less striking in their novelty and brilliance than those which receive an A, are nevertheless significantly above average, both in the manner in which they are written and in what they have to say. They advance an interesting and highly plausible though often somewhat less sophisticated hypothesis and support it convincingly with carefully interpreted quotations from appropriate sources.

C

“C” papers or exams are average in quality. They offer plausible but simplistic hypothesis and are less skillful in presenting the necessary supporting evidence. Often the logic of the paper or exam as a whole is imperfect or somewhat unclear: paragraphs do not flow smoothly into one another, thus leaving the reader startled by a point for which there has not been sufficient preparation. Individual sentences contain grammatical and mechanical flaws as well as inappropriate or misused word and are generally undistinguished.

D

“D” papers or exams treat the text or texts only superficially. They create the impression that the writer has not grasped his or her subject fully: statements are so general as to be merely vague, and there is little or no supporting evidence; quotations are frequently taken out of context, misinterpreted, and poorly integrated. D papers or exams are also very poorly organized: paragraphs are out of sequence, as are many of the sentences within them. Grammatical and mechanical errors are numerous.

F

“F” A grade of F means that the paper or exam is considered to be unacceptable as the work of a student who has presumably taken the prerequisite for this course. It indicates an almost total failure on the writer’s part to comprehend his or her subject and an almost total lack of attention to the writing of the paper or exam itself. Sentences seem to have been set down at random, grammatically incorrect sentences outnumber those that are correct, and paragraph breaks and transitions seem entirely arbitrary.

Grading Scale:

- 95-100 A
- 90-94 A-
- 87-89 B+
- 84-86 B
- 80-83 B-
- 70-73 C-
- 74-76 C
- 77-79 C+
- 60- 63 D-
- 64-66 D
- 67-69 D+
- 0-59 F

Latin American Film Bibliography (Most of the following works are available at the library. If our library does not own the book, you may order it from Interlibrary Loan). South American Cinema: A Critical Filmography, 1915-1994

Latin American Cinema: Film and History

Cinema and Social Change in Latin America: Conversations with Filmmakers Mexican Cinema/Mexican Women, 1940-1950

Mexican Cinema: Reflections of a Society, 1896-1988

New Latin American Cinema: A Continental Project

Based on a True Story: Latin American History at the Movies

Framing Latin American Cinema: Contemporary Critical Perspectives

NOTE: Cell Phone Notice:

You do not have to turn off your cell phone completely. You are, however, REQUIRED to put in on mute or vibrate. If your phone “rings” in any manner, (i.e. a song, etc.), I will ask you to leave class immediately. You will receive a five-point deduction from your course grade (which is only known after you complete the final exam) for each incident. In other words, should you bring your cell phone to class and it goes off and your course grade at the end of the semester is 92, I will deduct five points leaving you with an 87. Should the incident happen again, I will deduct another five points, and so on. It’s a shame that I have to do this, but there have been so many cases of cell phones going off in my class, I have decided to try to put an end to it.

Calendar (Tentative)

January

- 14: Introduction to the course
- 16: Gabriel Garcia Marquez: Magic and Reality. DVD 863.64 GAB.
- Read the first three “segments” in One Hundred Years of Solitude.
- 21: Martin Luther King Jr. Day. No class.
- 23: Read “segments” four through six in One Hundred Years of Solitude
- 28: Like Water for Chocolate. DVD 05195. Read “segments” seven through nine in One Hundred Years of Solitude
- 30: Read “segments” ten through twelve in One Hundred Years of Solitude

February

- 04: Paper One. El Norte. DVD 03351
- 06: Read through “segment” fifteen in One Hundred Years of Solitude
- 11: Pan’s Labyrinth. DVD 04229
- 13: Finish One Hundred Years of Solitude. Reading Quiz
- 18: President’s Day. No class.
- 20: Read through chapter seven in House of the Spirits
- 25: Machuca. DVD 03424

- 27: Read through chapter eleven in House of the Spirits

March

- 04: Paper Two. Missing. VT 08838
- 06: Read through chapter twelve in House of the Spirits
- 11: Death and the Maiden. DVD 04878
- 13: Finish House of the Spirits
- 18: Love's a Bitch. DVD 05865
- 20: Captains of the Sands
- 25: Spring Break. No class.
- 27: Spring Break. No class.

April

- 01: Central Station. DVD 03917
- 03: Paper Three. Captains of the Sands
- 08: City of God. DVD 02200
- 10: Captains of the Sands
- 15: Captains of the Sands DVD 791.43655 CAP 17: Fourth Paper. Finish Captains of the Sands
- 22: Landfill Harmonic DVD 784.44
- 24: Last Class Day. Conclusion; Review for Final Exam

Final Exam:

Monday, April 29, from 3:20 to 5:20 in this classroom.

Good luck! "¡Buena suerte!"