

Spring 2015
Stony Brook University
Department of Hispanic Languages and Literature
College of Arts and Sciences

SPN 312 Introduction to Literary Studies

M, Wed 2:30-3:50, Library N3063

This course satisfies the DEC category G & Skill 3

This course satisfies the SBC category HFA+, SPK

Course Instructor: Joseph M. Pierce

Section: 01

Office Hours: Mon. 11:30-12:30 PM; Wed 11:30-12:30, or by appointment.

Instructor contact information: Melville Library N3013, joseph.pierce@stonybrook.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduction to Literary Studies

This course will introduce students to major works of prose, poetry and film from the contemporary period of Latin American history. In addition, it seeks to develop critical skills of literary and cultural analysis with regard to these works, and improve students' writing and speaking abilities. Finally, it will situate major currents in Latin American social thought with contemporary concerns regarding class, race, gender, sexuality, and colonialism.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Introduce students to the diverse histories, cultures, societies, economies and political systems of modern Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Explore the historical, cultural, literary, and visual representations of diverse Latin American populations.
- Analyze literary and cultural texts about these populations to learn how literature and visual representations, as objects of study of the Humanities, convey information that enriches and adds complexity of meaning to our understanding of a given object or social/ historical event.
- Learn how fiction constructs a world of its own to be analyzed on its own terms, at the same time that it relates to, comments about and influences the society to which it belongs.

Required Texts (available at Stony Brook Bookstore):

Clorinda Matto de Turner, *Aves sin nido*

Manuel Puig, *El beso de la mujer araña*

Claudia Salazar-Jiménez, *La sangre de la aurora* (will be purchased directly from author)

Additional readings available on Blackboard in .pdf format.

Attendance: Consistent attendance and thoughtful participation are crucial to your success in this class. Arriving late causes a disruption, and will reflect negatively on your participation grade. After three absences your grade will be lowered by a half point and so on successively for further unexcused absences. If you have more than 6 absences, your final grade will be an F.

Participation: To receive an A for participation you must have excellent attendance, come prepared, and participate actively and thoughtfully in class discussions. If you participate occasionally and with little preparation or insight, you will receive a B. If you rarely participate in class, you will receive a C; if you hardly contribute, are distracted, and often miss class, you can expect an F in this category.

Position Essays: You will be responsible for writing 4 short essays that rehearse and hone your skills in literary interpretation. Each of these essays will take the form of a 2-page analysis (double-spaced) of a literary text or texts that we have studied in class, but each will have a different prompt meant to guide your analysis. No late work will be accepted.

Reaction Diary: You will maintain a separate notebook (yes, a paper one) in which you ‘react’ to each day’s assigned reading/material. (What literary themes do you recognize? What formal elements can you identify? What voices, textures, rhythms, do you sense? How does this work make you feel? What ‘message’ is the author trying to convey? Etc.) This should be done before class and will form the basis of your participation in class discussions. You should bring this notebook to class each day, and will be asked to hand it in occasionally. You may take notes in English or in Spanish, but your class participation and oral presentation will be in Spanish.

Oral Presentation: Each student will prepare a 7 to 8 minute conference style presentation on a topic designed in consultation with the professor. These mini-conferences (panels) will have a unifying theme. Presentations may be read or delivered extemporaneously and may use audio-visual support if appropriate. There will be two panels for each of these class days and each panel will be followed by a Q&A session. You may source part of this material from your Reaction Diary and/or your Position Essays.

Special Guest Lectures: This course has been linked with two other undergraduate courses around the theme of indigeneity in the Americas. We will have three guest lectures this semester on that theme, and will coordinate readings around each. Your attendance is required at each of these lectures, and you should reflect on each in your Reaction Diary. These lectures will take place in the Humanities Institute and attendance will be recorded.

Evaluation criteria:

Position Essays (4): 40%

Reaction Diary: 20%

Oral Presentation: 20%

In-class Participation: 20%

Grading System

100-93	A	79-77	C+
92-90	A-	76-73	C
89-87	B+	72-70	C-
86-83	B	69-67	D+
82-80	B-	66-60	D
		59-0	F

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)

If you have a physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services (631) 632-6748 or <http://studentaffairs.stonybrook.edu/dss/>. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Students who require assistance during emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and Disability Support Services. For procedures and information go to the following website: <http://www.stonybrook.edu/ehs/fire/disabilities/asp>.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report any suspected instance of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at <http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/>

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, and/or inhibits students' ability to learn.

MEETING SCHEDULE

Part I: Signs, Worlds, Literature

- August 24** Introduction: “What is literature and why are you yelling at me?”
- August 26** Some Preliminary Notes: Figurative vs. Literal Meanings
José Martí, from *Versos Sencillos* (selection)
Pablo Neruda, “Walking Around”
- August 31** **Reading/Watching/Doing (Short stories)**
Julio Cortázar, “La casa tomada”

Part II: Territories

- September 2** Film: *Made in USA*
Position Essay 1: Close Reading
- September 7** No Class: Labor Day
- September 9** Clorinda Matto de Turner, *Aves sin nido* (Primera Parte, Ch. I-XIII)
- September 14** Clorinda Matto de Turner, *Aves sin nido* (Ch. XIV-XXVI)
- September 16** Clorinda Matto de Turner, *Aves sin nido* (Segunda Parte, Ch. I-XV)
- September 21** Clorinda Matto de Turner, *Aves sin nido* (Ch. XVI-end)
- September 23** **Oral Presentations (I. On territories, lands, and people)**
- September 28** Poetry by Nicanor Parra (selection)
- September 30** **Special Guest Lecture: Judith Zeitlin**

Part III: Politics

- October 5** Manuel Puig, *El beso de la mujer araña* (Ch. 1-4)
- October 7** Manuel Puig, *El beso de la mujer araña* (Ch. 5-8)
- October 12** Manuel Puig, *El beso de la mujer araña* (Ch. 9-12)
Position Essay 2: On a Key Word
- October 14** Manuel Puig, *El beso de la mujer araña* (Ch. 13-16)
- October 19** **CLASS SUSPENDED** [read *I, Rigoberta Menchú* (selection)]

October 21 Special Guest Lecture: Shannon Speed

Part IV: Violence

October 26 Claudia Salazar Jiménez, *La sangre de la aurora* (pp. 1-53)

October 28 Claudia Salazar Jiménez, *La sangre de la aurora* (pp. 54-88)

November 2 Dossier: *No soy indio* (.pdf)

Position Essay 3: Combined Analysis (in pairs)

November 4 Special Guest Lecture: Luis Cárcamo Huechante

November 9 Gabriela Cabezón Cámara, “Primavera árabe”

November 11 Oral Presentations (II. On politics, social conflict, and violence)

Part V: Desire

November 16 Film: *El norte* (Dir. Gregory Nava)

November 18 *Ruben Darío*, “Cantos de vida y esperanza”

Position Essay 4: Comparative Analysis (individual)

November 23 Pedro Lemebel, *Loco afán* (selection)

November 25 No Class: Thanksgiving Holiday

November 30 Film: *El secreto de sus ojos* (Dir. Juan José Campanella)

December 2 Oral Presentations (III. On the spectacle of desire)

Conclusions