Introduction to Latin American Literature and Culture
Spanish 940:208 (Fall 2020)
Rutgers University–Newark, Department of Spanish and Portuguese Studies

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Office Hours (online): weekly on Bb Collaborate after synchronous sessions and by appointment

Course Description
In this course, we will learn about the development of Latin American literature, culture, and history. Over the semester, we will consider the writings (and representations) of Christopher Columbus and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz; discuss the artwork of Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo, and Wilfredo Lam; and engage with the fiction of Jorge Luis Borges, Gabriel García Márquez, and Isabel Allende, among others. We will also work to improve our ability to think and write critically, and to approach writing as both a process and a skill that can be learned. This writing-intensive course is taught in Spanish and meets the core curriculum Other Liberal Arts requirement.

Course Delivery & Time Commitment
This course is taught online. The course site can be accessed through Blackboard (Bb): https://blackboard.rutgers.edu. To be successful in this course, you will need a computer, Internet access, and a webcam with microphone (or headphones with a microphone). You will also need software that can save a file in the format of Microsoft Word or PDF. Please contact me as soon as possible if you have any concerns about these tech requirements, so that we can think of possible solutions.

This course is designed to be flexible, so that you can complete assignments when it works best for you. We will have one class meeting each week on Blackboard Collaborate: you will receive a Doodle poll during the first week of the term asking you to vote on the day and time we will meet, so be sure to check your email and respond! You will also have weekly assignments that you will need to complete and submit each week online.
In general, to be successful in this course, you should plan to commit to an estimated average of 9 hours of coursework per week for the fifteen-week semester. (Some weeks will require more time, some less.) This is the same amount of time required in a traditional, face-to-face three-credit class.

**Learning Objectives**

As a General Requirement course, Introduction to Latin American Literature and Culture is designed to help you develop and improve the reading, writing, oral communication, and critical analysis skills that you need to successfully complete your university education.

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. identify a minimum of five different types (or genres) of literary texts, and describe the key characteristics of each;
2. summarize and analyze the plots of a minimum of ten texts from Latin America, and explain their historical importance and cultural context;
3. compose a clear and coherent argument about a literary, filmic, or cultural text, and develop this argument orally and in writing;
4. assess and critique the merit of scholarly journal articles and books written on Latin American literature, film, and culture, and defend your own argument in relation to these;
5. correctly use MLA citation;
6. create a digital humanities project on a topic discussed in class, and present this work to your classmates;
7. evaluate your own strengths and learning skills, and determine the areas in which you need to improve to achieve course objectives.

**Required Texts**

Most texts are available on Blackboard: https://blackboard.newark.rutgers.edu. Please download all readings from Bb when you register for the course, to be prepared in the event of a service disruption.

You should purchase the following text, which is available at the Bookstore and may also be purchased from online vendors such as Amazon (please refer to the ISBN number when ordering):


All films will be streamed through the Dana Library and/or Amazon Prime.

**Recommended Text**

The following text is recommended (but not required). It is available for purchase from online vendors such as Amazon:


**Evaluation & Expectations**

Homework Assignments & Participation in Online and In-Class Discussions (20%)

You should complete all required readings, and screen all required films, as listed on the Course Schedule and on Blackboard; complete brief homework assignments, as detailed below; participate in online and in-class discussions; and demonstrate respect for the ideas of others.
Homework and Participation grades will be based on the following:

- **Homework.** In addition to completing the assigned readings, you will be required to complete 5 brief homework assignments over the semester, and to post these to the Bb Discussion Board. Assignments will be detailed on Bb, and will be designed to strengthen critical writing and thinking skills. *Each homework assignment is worth 10 points; late homework will be awarded no more than 5 points.*

- **Responses.** After posting your own homework assignments, you will be required to respond to two of your classmates’ posts. *Each set of responses is worth 10 points; late responses will be awarded no more than 5 points.*

- **Participation.** We will have one synchronous session each week on Blackboard Collaborate. If you are not able to attend a session, you should plan to watch the session recording and participate in the discussion online (through the Discussion Board). *Participation will be evaluated for each class session on a 1-10 scale.*

Rubrics detailing criteria for Homework and Participation grades will be posted on Bb. You are responsible for checking your homework and participation grades on Bb, where they will be posted on a regular basis. Please contact me with any questions or concerns regarding these grades.

**Quizzes (15%)**

You will have four short quizzes over the course of the semester; the lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Quizzes are designed to ensure that you are reading and understanding course materials for meaning and informed analysis, and that you are paying attention during lectures and presentations. Quizzes will be posted to Blackboard by 9 a.m. on the dates listed on the syllabus and must be submitted by midnight that same day, unless there is an academic reason approved by the Dean or a justified medical reason.

**Hojas (15%) and Final Essay (20%)**

You will write three short (1- to 2-page) essays, or *hojas,* in this course; you will expand one of these into a final (5-page) essay and complete a peer review, or *informe del lector,* to give a peer feedback on his/her final essay.

- **Hojas** are designed to allow you to practice writing skills and get feedback on your ideas. *Hojas* must be posted to Blackboard by midnight the day they are due.

  *You may choose to revise and resubmit your hojas based on the professor’s feedback.* If you opt to do so, you will have one week to resubmit an *hoja* after you receive the (graded) draft back from the professor, and will receive the average of the two grades as your final grade on the *hoja.*

- **Final Essay.** In keeping with the course’s emphasis on writing as a process, you will be required to submit a thesis and abstract for approval before writing their final essay; to complete pre-writing exercises; and to revise your work based on feedback from peers and the professor. The final essay should be 5 double-spaced pages, including Works Cited.

- **Informe del lector.** You will read a draft of a classmate’s final essay and complete a peer review, or *informe del lector,* to provide feedback. *Informes* will be graded on a 1-20 scale, and will count toward your participation grade.

  *All essay assignments must be completed for students to pass the course.*
• All essay assignments must follow the MLA format (http://www.mla.org/style) and be submitted in print and on Blackboard.

• All writing assignments must be submitted by the deadline for full credit unless you receive the explicit advance permission of the professor. Essays/hojas turned in after the deadline will be reduced by 2 percentage points per day that they are late, up to a maximum of 10 points. For example, if you receive a grade of 87 on a paper (B) but turn in the paper four days late, a total of 8 points will be deducted, for a final grade of 79 (C+).

• All work submitted must be your own. You are encouraged to discuss your ideas with classmates, the professor, and the Writing Center’s peer tutors (http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter), but plagiarism is not allowed and will result, at minimum, in a 0 on the assignment.

Further details on essay requirements, including criteria for grading and guidelines for informes, will be posted on Blackboard.

Presentations (15%)

You will make one presentation this term, in which you will introduce your classmates to a topic to be covered in class (ie, an author or artist, or an important literary or cultural movement). A sign-up sheet for presentations will be circulated during the first weeks of the term.

You will have two options for the format of your presentation:

• You can prepare PowerPoint (or Prezi) slides for presentation on Bb. If you choose this option, please email me your slides no later than 9 a.m. the day of the presentation: el431@newark.rutgers.edu.

• You can create a “written” presentation and post it to Bb. If you choose this option, please post the presentation to Bb no later than 9 a.m. the day of the presentation.

Final Digital Humanities Project (15%)

You will complete a final digital humanities project related to a key text or theme discussed in the course, and will share this project to the class. Further details on project requirements, including criteria for grading, will be posted to Blackboard.

Grading

All grades will be posted to Blackboard. The final average will determine the final grade, with letter grades corresponding to the following levels of achievement (as stated in the college-wide policy determined by the University’s Faculty Senate):

- **A** 90-100 achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
- **B** 80-87 (88-89 B+) achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
- **C** 70-77 (78-79 C+) achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect
- **D** 60-69 achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements
- **F/N** 0-59 represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was
either:
(1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit; or
(2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I (incomplete).

Course Policies
Late Submission Policy
Unless otherwise noted, all written assignments, group projects, etc., are due at the time and date listed in the Course Schedule. If you experience an unavoidable personal situation that prevents you from completing work on time, please let me know prior to the date the work is due. Late work will result in points taken off, a lowering of the assignment grade, and/or an “F,” depending on the assignment.

Communication Policy
• Course announcements. Announcements will be posted on Bb and e-mailed to students. You are responsible for providing the instructor with a current e-mail address that you check regularly, and for reading all announcements posted to Bb. You should log into the course on Bb and your e-mail at least three days per week to check for new announcements and/or messages.
• Course-related questions. Please post course-related questions to the Questions and Answers Discussion Board on Bb. Asking course-related questions in this way allows other participants with the same question to benefit from the responses. For this reason, please make sure you review this forum prior to posting a question; it may have already been asked and answered in previous posts.
• Personal and/or confidential matters. For course-related questions, please use the Questions and Answers Discussion Board within the course. For personal and/or confidential matters, please e-mail me at el431@newark.rutgers.edu. Except for weekends and holidays, you can expect a response to e-mail messages within 24 business hours.

Attendance and Participation Policy
You are expected to log in to the course at least three days per week to ensure you do not miss pertinent postings, messages, or announcements.

Participation in the course discussion boards is required. Unless otherwise stated, you will be required to (1) post one original comment and (2) reply to at least two of your classmates for each discussion board assignment. To ensure that we have a productive discussion, please post by the specified due dates.

Dropping the Course
In order to withdraw from a course, it is not sufficient to stop posting assignments or contributing to discussion. In accordance with university policy, students wishing to withdraw from a course must do so formally through the Registrar’s office. It is the student’s responsibility to complete all forms. If this is not done, the instructor must assign a grade of F at the end of the semester.
Copyright Policy
Lectures and materials utilized in this course, including but not limited to videocasts, podcasts, visual presentations, assessments, and assignments, are protected by United States copyright laws as well as Rutgers University policy. As the instructor of this course, I possess sole copyright ownership. You are permitted to take notes for personal use or to provide to a classmate also currently enrolled in this course. Under no other circumstances is distribution of recorded or written materials associated with this course permitted to any Internet site or similar information-sharing platform without my express written consent. Doing so is a violation of the university’s Academic Integrity Policy. Similarly, these copyright protections extend to original papers you produce for this course. In the event that I seek to share your work further, I will first obtain your written consent to do so.

Tech Resources
Rutgers-Newark (R-N) has a number of resources available to help with technology and access. If you have tech issues that you cannot resolve on your own, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can think of possible solutions.

- **R-N Technology LaunchPad.** The LaunchPad offers the following resources: student support, tutorials and documentation; resources to help with Internet connections both on and from off-campus; and computer recommendations, discounted and free software. You can access the LaunchPad here: [https://runit.rutgers.edu/technology-launch-pad/](https://runit.rutgers.edu/technology-launch-pad/)

- **Student Help Desk.** The Student Help Desk offers assistance with technical issues. You can access the Student Help Desk here: help@newark.rutgers.edu / 973-353-5083 / [http://ncs.newark.rutgers.edu/hd](http://ncs.newark.rutgers.edu/hd)

Additional Resources
R-N is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students. R-N has identified the following resources to further the mission of access and support:

- **Students with Disabilities.** Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact ODS, register, have an initial appointment, and provide documentation. Once a student has completed the ODS process (registration, initial appointment, and documentation submitted) and reasonable accommodations are determined to be necessary and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be provided to the student. The student must give the LOA to each course instructor, followed by a discussion with the instructor. This should be completed as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at ods.rutgers.edu. Contact ODS: (973) 353-5375 or ods@newark.rutgers.edu.

- **Religious Holiday Policy and Accommodations.** Students are advised to provide timely notification to instructors about necessary absences for religious observances and are responsible for making up the work or exams according to an agreed-upon schedule. The Division of Student Affairs is available to verify absences for religious observance, as needed: (973) 353-5063 or DeanofStudents@newark.rutgers.edu.
• **Counseling Services.** Counseling Center Room 101, Blumenthal Hall, (973) 353-5805 or http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/.

• **Students with Temporary Conditions/Injuries.** Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury that is adversely affecting their ability to fully participate in their courses should submit a request for assistance at: https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu.

• **Students who Are Pregnant.** The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist students with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy: (973) 353-1906 or TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu.

• **Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment.** Students experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, should know that help and support are available. To report an incident, contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance: (973) 353-1906 or TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. To submit an incident report: tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm. To speak with a staff member who is confidential and does NOT have a reporting responsibility, contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance: (973) 353-1918 or run.vpva@rutgers.edu.

Other helpful resources include the following:

• **Rutgers Learning Center (tutoring services)***
  Room 140, Bradley Hall
  (973) 353-5608
  https://sasn.rutgers.edu/student-support/tutoring-academic-support/learning-center

• **Writing Center (tutoring and writing workshops)***
  Room 126, Conklin Hall
  (973) 353-5847
  nwc@rutgers.edu
  https://sasn.rutgers.edu/student-support/tutoring-academic-support/writing-center

**Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is of the utmost importance in this class, as it is at the University (http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/). In a writing course, it is particularly important to remember that *plagiarism is not allowed.* Rutgers University defines plagiarism as follows:

“the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic work. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks, or by appropriate indentation, and must be cited properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline. Acknowledgment is also required when material from any source is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one's own words. [...] Information that is common knowledge, such as names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc, need not be cited; however, the sources of all facts or information obtained in reading or research that are not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. In addition to materials specifically cited in the text, other materials that contribute to one's general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography” (http://wp.rutgers.edu/courses/plagiarism).
Any student who turns in a work that has been plagiarized in part or in totality will be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs, and students guilty of plagiarism will jeopardize their academic careers. *Any student who turns in work that is plagiarized in part or in totality will receive, at minimum, a 0 on the assignment; depending on the extent of plagiarism, he or she may receive an F in the class, a note in his or her academic record, or expulsion from the university.*
Programa de estudios

☐ Reading (to be completed before class, for discussion on date listed on syllabus)
⌥ Film (to be screened online)
✍ Visual culture or artwork (to be viewed on Bb, unless otherwise noted)
☑ Writing topic or strategy to be discussed in class
_BG “Big Think” idea or concept to be discussed in class

Homework assignment (to be posted to Blackboard Tablero de discusión by midnight on date listed on syllabus, unless otherwise indicated; worth points toward homework grade, as detailed on Tablero de discusión)
☐ Essay pre-writing assignment (to be posted to Blackboard Tablero de discusión by midnight on date listed on syllabus, unless otherwise indicated; worth points toward Essay grade, as outlined on Essay Assignment sheet)

2/9 Presentación del curso 1
Presentaciones: escribir una presentación en Bb, para el 4/9; y responder a dos compañeros de clase, para el 6/9
Preparación: leer ¡Empieza aquí! en Bb y descargar todas las lecturas del semestre de Bb
Preparación: completar la encuesta de Doodle (en ¡Empieza aquí!) para seleccionar el horario para nuestras reuniones semanales

7/9 No hay clase: ¡Feliz Labor Day!

Conquista y colonización: el “Nuevo Mundo” americano

¿Cómo se retrata el “Nuevo Mundo” en la época de conquista y colonización? ¿Cómo se retratan los conquistadores y los sujetos coloniales, y cómo pensamos en estas figuras hoy en día?

8/9 ☐ Cristóbal Colón, Diario (selecciones) 2
☐ El colonialismo

9/9 ☐ Popul Vuh (pp. 16-17) 3
☐ La oralidad

14/9 ☐ Bartolomé de las Casas, “Historia de las Indias” (pp. 28-36)
☐ Margarita Zamora, “Reading Columbus” (de Reading Columbus, pp. 39-62)
☐ El resumen
☐ La tesis y la evidencia
☐ Estrategia de escritura: dos razones
☐ Comentario y respuestas: Bartolomé de las Casas

16/9 ☐ Bernal Díaz del Castillo, “Historia verdadera de la conquista” (pp. 37-47)
☐ La transculturación
☐ La introducción / La conclusión
Prueba #1

La época colonial: construyendo “las Américas”

¿Cómo se construyen las sociedades coloniales? ¿Cómo se retratan la raza y el género en los textos e imágenes de la época, y cómo se cuestionan las identidades fijas?

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1 Any changes to the class schedule will be communicated on Blackboard and by e-mail. Students are responsible for checking the course Blackboard site and their email at least three times a week during the semester for this class.
2 11 Sept: Last day to add classes. 14 Sept.: Last day for students to drop a class without a “W” grade.
3 Unless otherwise indicated, page numbers refer to selections from Voces de Hispanoamérica (3rd ed.) posted on Blackboard.
### Hoja #1

| 21/9 | El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, *Comentarios reales de los incas* (pp. 61-69)  
|      | Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (selecciones)  
|      | La raza y la “ciudad letrada”  
|      | Comentario y respuestas: El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega  

| 23/9 | Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, “Respuesta de la poetisa” (pp. 75-80)  
|      | El género y lo performativo  
|      | Estrategia de escritura: argumentos en contra/hombre de paja  

La independencia: ¿civilización y/o barbarie?

¿Cómo se definen las nuevas naciones latinoamericanas en la época de la independencia? ¿Cómo se retrata la civilización (y la barbarie)? ¿Cuáles son las características del modernismo latinoamericano?

| 30/9 | Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, *Sab* (selecciones)  
|      | Gabriel de la Concepción Valdés (Plácido), selecciones  
|      | El romanticismo y la “ficción fundacional”  
|      | Estrategia de escritura: la concesión  
|      | Citas y atribuciones: el formato MLA / La bibliografía anotada  
|      | **Prueba #2**  

| 5/10 | Esteban Echeverría, “El matadero” (pp. 120-136)  
|      | Civilización y barbarie  
|      | Comentario y respuestas: “El matadero”  

| 7/10 | José Martí, selecciones (pp. 207-220)  
|      | “La realidad americana y la renovación literaria (1882-1910)” (pp. 198-206)  
|      | **Hoja #2**  

| 12/10 | Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, “La mañana de San Juan” (pp. 222-231)  
|      | El modernismo  

| 14/10 | Rubén Darío, selecciones (pp. 240-254)  
|      | **Prueba #3**  

| 19/10 | *Zama* (Lucretia Martel, 2017)  
|      | Comentario y respuestas: Zama  

| 21/10 | **Taller de escritura / Promedio de medio semestre**  
|      | La comunicación escrita  

En busca de lo nuevo: las vanguardias y las nuevas expresiones americanas

¿Cómo son las vanguardias poéticas y artísticas latinoamericanas? ¿Cuál es el impacto de la Revolución Mexicana (1910-20)? ¿Y de Guerra Civil Española (1936-39)?

| 26/10 | Horacio Quiroga, “El hijo” (pp. 293-298)  
|      | Comentario y respuestas: Horacio Quiroga  

| 28/10 | Gabriela Mistral y Alfonsina Storni, selecciones (pp. 319-326 y 327-331)  
|      | Cómo escribir un primer borrador  
|      | **Hoja #3**  

2/11  
- César Vallejo, selecciones (pp. 332-337)  
- Diego Rivera y Frida Kahlo (selecciones: en clase)  
- Las vanguardias latinoamericanas  
- Cómo expandir un ensayo

4/11  
- Pablo Neruda, “Poema 20”, “Walking around” y “Oda a los calcetines” (pp. 392-401)  
- Nicolás Guillén, “La canción del bongó”, “Mujer nueva”, “Canto negro”  
- Wilfredo Lam (en clase)  
- Cómo pulir la escritura  

Prueba #4

El Boom latinoamericano (y el pos-Boom)

¿Qué es el “Boom” latinoamericano? ¿Cuáles son las características claves de la literatura fantástica, y del realismo mágico? ¿Cómo influye la Revolución Cubana (1959) en la producción literaria y cultural?

9/11  
- Jorge Luis Borges, “El sur” (pp. 354-363)  
- Xul Solar (en clase)  
- Lo fantástico  
- Cómo usar los marcadores textuales  
- Tesis/Abstract: Ensayo final

11/11  
- Gabriel García Márquez, El coronel no tiene quien le escriba  
- El Boom

16/11  
- El coronel no tiene quien le escriba  
- Preguntas de discusión: Gabriel García Márquez  
- Bibliografía anotada: Ensayo final

18/11  
- Gabriel García Márquez, El coronel no tiene quien le escriba

23/11  
- Isabel Allende, Cuentos de Eva Luna (selecciones)  
- El realismo mágico  
- Borrador: Ensayo final

25/11  
- NO HAY CLASE: ¡FELIZ ACCION DE GRACIAS!

Conclusiones

¿Cómo se define “Nuestra América” hoy en día? ¿Qué es el decolonialismo, y cómo se puede practicarlo para apoyar la creación de una sociedad más igualitaria?

30/11  
- Taller de las humanidades digitales  
- Informe del lector

2/12  
- Ixcanul (film, 2015), dir. Jayro Bustamante  
- El decolonialismo

7/12  
- Presentación de proyectos finales

9/12  
- Conclusiones  
- Entrega de ensayo final

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4 3 Nov.: Last day students may drop courses (“W” grade assigned).