

## SPANISH: Introduction to Literature and Film

SPAN 301, 62280  
Fall 2020  
MW 12:00-1:50 pm

Professor Sarah Skillen  
Office Hours: W 2:00-3:00 pm  
Email: [skillen@usc.edu](mailto:skillen@usc.edu)

### **Description:**

In this course, students will develop their critical reading, writing, and argumentation through engagement with a varied corpus of Spanish and Latin American cultural production. By looking to different time periods from the Spanish *Reconquista* and colonization of the “New World” to contemporary works on imperialism and immigration, students will examine texts from various periods, movements, and styles as well as literary genres (poetry, fiction, drama) and film. This course emphasizes students’ mastery of written Spanish as well as the acquisition of the vocabulary and concepts needed for the interpretation and discussion of a variety of Spanish-language texts. This course will also seek to challenge the discourse of genre and the circumscription of cultural-linguistic belonging. We will approach these texts and images in an endeavor to engage with their cultural context as well as the distinct forms of knowledge and language that they present to their audience.



Image: Wifredo Lam (Cuba, 1902-1982), “Ibaya,” 1950. © Tate.

### **Learning Objectives:**

Students will:

- Become familiar with and be able to employ methods of critical analysis of literary and cinematic texts in Spanish.
- Acquire fluency in the oral and written discussion of literary and cinematic texts, and, more broadly, improve mastery of Spanish grammar and vocabulary.
- Learn to utilize the basic terms necessary for textual analysis, the terminology of literary and film criticism and its fundamental concerns, and the necessary tools to realize the comparative analysis of different genres (poetry, theater, narrative, film).
- Learn to interpret literature and film actively and creatively, and to think and write critically and persuasively about texts.
- Cultivate a critical appreciation for the literature and cinema of the Spanish-speaking world, and understand the aesthetic, cultural and political environment that they inhabit.

## Schedule:

### I. Poetry

#### WEEK 1:

M, August 17

Introduction, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (Nueva España, 1651-1695), “A su retrato,” “A una rosa,” “Respuesta a Sor Filotea”

W, August 19

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (Nueva España, 1651-1695), “A una rosa,” “A su retrato,” “Respuesta a Sor Filotea”

**\*Students choose topic and date for oral presentation\***

#### WEEK 2:

M, August 24

José Martí (Cuba, 1853-1895); “Dos patrias”; “Musa traviesa,” *Ismaelillo* (1882); “I, III” *Versos sencillos* (1881)

Rubén Darío (Nicaragua, 1867-1916), “De invierno,” “Canción de Otoño en Primavera,” “El cisne”

W, August 26

Federico García Lorca (Spain, 1898-1936), *Poeta en Nueva York* (1929-1930)

#### WEEK 3:

M, August 31

Nicolás Guillén (Cuba, 1902-1989), “Songoro Cosongo,” “Sensemayá”

Nancy Morejón (Cuba, 1944-present), “Mujer negra,” “Madre”

### II. Theater

W, September 2

Tirso de Molina (España, 1579-1648), *El burlador de Sevilla* (1616/1630)

**\*1<sup>st</sup> Creative project due\***

WEEK 4:

M, September 7 (**Labor Day, No Classes**)

W, September 8

Tirso de Molina (España, 1579-1648), *El burlador de Sevilla* (1616/1630)

WEEK 5:

M, September 14

Federico García Lorca (España, 1898-1936), *La casa de Bernarda Alba* (1936)

W, September 16

Federico García Lorca (España, 1898-1936), *La casa de Bernarda Alba* (1936)

**\*Short critical essay due Sunday 9/20 by 11:59pm\***

### **III. Narrative Fiction: Short Story**

WEEK 6:

M, September 21

Jorge Luis Borges (Argentina, 1899-1986), “El etnógrafo” (1969)

W, September 23

Julio Cortázar (Argentina, 1914-1984), “Axolotl” (1956)

WEEK 7:

M, September 28

Rosario Ferré (Puerto Rico, 1938-2016), “La muñeca menor” (1976)

W, September 30

Cristina Peri Rosi (Uruguay, 1941-present), “El Museo de los Esfuerzos Inútiles” (1983)

**\*Midsemester essay (10/4) / exam due\***

WEEK 8:

M, October 5

Ana María Matute (Cataluña, 1926-2014), “La rama seca” (1987)

W, October 7

José Miguel Sánchez (Yoss) (Cuba, 1969-present), “La causa que refresca” (1998)

**IV. Film**

WEEK 9:

M, October 12

Luis Buñuel (Spain), *El ángel exterminador* (1962) [on YouTube]

W, October 14

Carlos Saura (Spain), *Cria cuervos* (1976) [on Vimeo]

**\*2nd Creative Project due\***

WEEK 10:

M, October 19

Maria Luisa Bemberg (Argentina), *Yo, la peor de todas* (1990)

W, October 21

[pick one]

Tomás Gutiérrez Alea (Cuba), *Fresas y chocolate* (1994)

Fernando Pérez (Cuba), *Madagascar* (1994)

Pedro Almodóvar (Spain), *Todo sobre mi madre* (1999)

WEEK 11:

M, October 26

Raúl Ruiz (Chile), *La noche de enfrente* (2012)

W, October 28

Alejandro Brugués (Cuba), *Juan de los muertos* (2012)  
Alejandro González Iñárritu (México), *Birdman* (2014) \*trailer  
Paddy Breathnach (Ireland), *Viva* (2016) \*trailer

**\*Final Paper proposal due\***

## V. Narrative Fiction: Novel

### WEEK 12:

M, November 2

Carlos Fuentes (México, 1928-2012), *Aura* (1962)

W, November 4

María Luisa Bombal (Chile, 1910-1980), *La amortajada* (1938)

### WEEK 13:

M, November 9

María Luisa Bombal (Chile, 1910-1980), *La amortajada* (1938)

W, November 11

Workshop final papers/proposals and final paper presentations

**(Classes End, November 13)**

### WEEKS 14-15:

**(Study Days, November 14-16)**

**(Exams, November 17-24)**

**\*Final paper DUE November 23\***

## **Course Requirements:**

15%	Reading reflections
10%	Participation
10%	Short critical essay
15%	Mid-semester essay/exam
5%	Short story/Poetry project
5%	Social Media project
15%	Presentation
25%	Final paper and proposal

## **Synchronous / Asynchronous:**

- Classes will be conducted in two modalities according to student accessibility and preference.
- All students will be required to complete the readings, discussion posts, and any other assignments prior to class.
- Synchronous participation requires that a student attend the live class period (12:00-1:50 pm) on Mondays and Wednesdays. All synchronous sessions are recorded (per university policy and in order to make the class accessible asynchronously).
- If a student is unable to or chooses not to participate in the synchronous session, they may participate asynchronously. This means watching/listening to/reading the transcript for the recorded synchronous session and completing the alternative assignment. This alternative assignment is meant to supplement whatever discussion took place in class and will usually consist of a brief written response to the class discussion.

## **Assignments:**

### I. Readings:

- Students are required to have completed all readings/viewings/etc. prior to the class day in question. Students are expected to have thoroughly engaged with the text/media and be prepared to discuss with their fellow students. In addition to completing the readings for each course period, students are required to complete a brief analysis/reflection, including one question to be discussed in class. This response will be submitted online to the corresponding Blackboard Discussion Board by 11:59 PM the night before class. These reflections are worth 15% of the student's final grade.

### II. Participation:

- Participation is one of the most crucial elements of this course. Students are expected to interact and discuss actively with each other (in discussion posts, break-out rooms, group assignments, class discussion, etc.). Students must demonstrate that they have carefully read and considered each text and must push themselves to ask questions of each other and challenge their readings. In order to foster a nurturing and exciting learning environment, students are expected to be respectful of their colleagues, of differing opinions, and are

encouraged to affirm each student's/interlocutor's value and personhood. At the beginning of the semester we will work together to draft a code of ethics for course discussions. Participation is worth 10% of the final grade.

### III. Written Assignments:

- Short critical essay: This essay is intended as an exercise in close reading. Students will be asked to pick a text from the course and provide a critical reading and argument. Students will be graded according to argumentation, attention to the text, and their writing ability in the target language. This is a 2-3 page paper (700-900 words) and is worth 10% of the final grade.
- Mid-semester essay: In this essay, I ask students to think about the contents of the course within a wider perspective. Students will be asked to choose one text from the course that will stand as the central interlocutor in their paper, though they may, of course, draw other texts into the dialogue of the paper. I then expect students to bring this central text into discussion either with a subject they are studying outside the course or an issue from daily life and the current political climate. I want students to reflect upon the ways in which they read this text in the world around them and question the tensions it raises. This is a 3-4 page paper (800-1000 words) and is worth 15% of the student's final grade.
  - o This paper may be substituted for a midterm exam. Students will vote between midterm and paper. This open-book exam will take the place of our class period and will require 1 hour and 20 minutes to complete. Students will be presented with a set of 3 optional questions and they may choose 2 of the three to answer (in Spanish) during this period. There will also be one mandatory question that functions as a personal reflection upon the course (answered in the language of the student's choosing).
- Final paper: The final paper is a scholarly research paper, written in Spanish, on a topic of the student's choosing.
  - o Students will begin by composing a short research proposal (~250 words), clearly identifying their proposed argument and including an annotated bibliography (at least 5 sources), which will be worth 5% of the final grade.
  - o Each student is also required to make an appointment with me (Zoom) to discuss the proposal. At this point, students must identify the kind of paper they will be writing. Students may choose to write a 1200-1500 word paper (roughly 4-5 pages), or they may write a shorter paper of 900-1200 words (3-4 pages) and briefly present the paper (5 minutes) in the final week of classes.
  - o All students will workshop their papers and/or proposals in the last week of class. Students will then have finals week to edit and refine their papers, which they will turn in to me via Blackboard during our scheduled final exam period. This will comprise 20% of the final grade.

### IV. Creative Assignments:

- Short story/Poetry project: Students will write a flash/micro-fiction and/or poetry (200-400 words) in the target language, engaging some of the concepts and themes discussed in the course. This project is worth 5% of the final grade.
- Social Media project: Students will adapt one of the readings or films to a social media or teleconferencing medium (Instagram, Twitter, Zoom, TikTok, etc.), placing the work into a contemporary context. Projects will be briefly and informally presented on the due date. This assignment is worth 5% of the final grade.

V. Presentation:

- Each student is required to give one presentation during the course. The student will pick a text of interest to them and come to class prepared to give a 5 minute presentation on the text in the target language. These presentations will be scheduled during the second class period after students have had a chance to review the syllabus and consider their topics. In the presentation students will provide a brief background covering anything from the historical context of the text, a breakdown of its intellectual field and/or movement, to the biography of its author. The student will then briefly summarize the text. The bulk of the presentation should come in the form of analysis and an outline for discussion. The student will then provide the class with at least three discussion questions or an activity for breakout rooms, as well as an alternative assignment for asynchronous participation. This presentation is worth 15% of the final grade.

**Texts:**

Tirso de Molina, *El burlador de Sevilla* (1616/1630)

Federico García Lorca, *La casa de Bernarda Alba* (1936)

María Luisa Bombal, *La amortajada* (1938)

**Optional:** Friedman, Valdivieso & Virgillo, *Aproximaciones al estudio de la literatura hispánica*

\* *Schedule and assignments subject to change at professor's discretion.*

## **Student Services and Academic Conduct**

**COVID-19 Resources:** <https://coronavirus.usc.edu/>

### **Students with Disabilities:**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible.

DSP is located at:  
3601 Watt Way  
Grace Ford Salvatori (GFS) 120  
Los Angeles, CA 90089  
[DSPPFrontDesk@usc.edu](mailto:DSPPFrontDesk@usc.edu)  
(213) 740-0776

DSP Testing Center  
910 Bloom Walk  
Seaver Science Library (SSL) 301  
Los Angeles, CA 90089  
[DSPTestingServices@usc.edu](mailto:DSPTestingServices@usc.edu)  
(213) 821-9620

Disability Services and Programs (DSP) is the unit at USC responsible for ensuring equal access for students with disabilities in compliance with state and federal law. DSP serves undergraduate, graduate and professional students; on-ground and on-line students; and students in all credit-granting courses and programs of study.

DSP strives to provide a welcoming and mutually respectful environment for our students, campus partners, our staff and the broader USC community. To that end, DSP welcomes interactions with all its constituencies in person, or via telephone, email, or virtual platform, that are respectful and that serve to professionally meet the needs of our students and the campus community.

Also refer to: <https://dornsife.usc.edu/usc-policies/#disabilities>

### **Student Basic Needs Technology Assistance Program:**

Attending classes online and completing coursework remotely requires access to technology that not all students have access to. If you need resources to successfully participate in this class, such as a laptop or internet hotspot, you may be eligible for the university's equipment rental program. You can [submit an application here](#). The Student Basic Needs team will contact all applicants in early August and distribute equipment to eligible applicants prior to the start of the fall semester. <https://studentbasicneeds.usc.edu/resources/technology-assistance/>

### **Health and Wellness Resources:**

Student Equity and Inclusion Programs: <https://seip.usc.edu/>

Mental Health Resources:

(213) 740-9355 (WELL)

<https://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling/>

<https://mindful.usc.edu/>

<https://inpathy.com/>

<https://kortschakcenter.usc.edu/>

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services / Sexual Assault and Survivor Support (provides 24/7 confidential support): <https://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault/>

**Academic Resources:** <https://undergrad.usc.edu/services/resources/>

The Writing Center: <https://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/>

The American Language Institute for students whose first language is one other than English: <https://ali.usc.edu/>

The Language Center: <https://dornsife.usc.edu/languages/>

### **Plagiarism:**

General principles of academic integrity include and incorporate the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles.

For more information on Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct visit Section 11 of the Student Conduct Code: <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/> .

### **Title IX:**

For students seeking assistance, please speak with the Title IX Office. The Title IX Office is responsible for conduct that falls within the below policy. For resources, to report prohibited conduct, or for other assistance, you can reach the Title IX Office by phone, email, mail, or in person.

Phone: **(213) 821-8298**

Email: [titleix@usc.edu](mailto:titleix@usc.edu)

Physical address:

Stonier Hall, Basement Suite

837 Downey Way, STO-B

Los Angeles, CA 90089

The Title IX Office will arrange for accessible meetings based on language or disability needs.

More information and resources are available at: <https://titleix.usc.edu/>

The Title IX Office is responsible for responding to reports of student harassment and student organization discrimination when the harassment or discrimination is based on a protected characteristic. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

Retaliation is strictly prohibited and will be treated as a separate offense. Any concerns about retaliation should be brought to the attention of the Title IX office immediately.

**Sexual, Interpersonal and Protected Class Misconduct:**

University Policy (<https://policy.usc.edu/student-misconduct/>) states:

The University of Southern California believes that all members of the university community – students, faculty, staff, and visitors – should pursue their work and education in a safe environment, free from harassment based on protected characteristics, sexual misconduct, and interpersonal violence. The university is committed to stopping prohibited conduct, preventing its recurrence, addressing its effects, and eliminating hostile environments. Our goal is a safe and transparent university community where these behaviors are universally recognized as intolerable, where those who are harmed are provided support, and where a fair and impartial process is provided to all parties. The university’s response to prohibited conduct is grounded in the fair application of policy and procedure.

The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures. Collectively, these behaviors are referred to as prohibited conduct.

The university is firmly committed to complying with all applicable laws and governmental regulations. This commitment applies to all educational programs and activities, including admissions, financial aid, and university programs. The university seeks compliance with all statutes prohibiting discrimination in education, including Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Act (as amended by the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act of 2008. This good-faith effort to comply is made even when such laws and regulations conflict with each other. Further, in compliance with Section 504, the university provides reasonable accommodations for students and applicants with disabilities.

**Also visit:** USC Commitment to Change <https://change.usc.edu/> and the Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/aboutocr.html> .

**Other:**

A more complete list of University policies and support services is available at <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/campus-resources/> .