



# SPANISH 2215F: ENCOUNTERING HISPANIC CULTURES I

**Professor: Marjorie Ratcliffe**

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**Office Hours: W 11.30-12.30 or by appointment**

## Course Content and Objectives

This course is an introduction to reading, writing and researching in the Hispanic visual, performing, literary cultural production and in Hispanic socio-linguistics. We will explore cultural productions from the Hispanic world, meaning cultural manifestations from Europe, Africa and the Americas (North and Latin America). The course's objectives are to improve the Spanish language skills in conversation, reading and writing of all students; and, through the realization of individual projects to improve research abilities. This year, we will be focussing on the Hispanic world at war. Students will be doing research on major literary figures and the impact of their work on world literature. There will be an introduction to the history of the Spanish language as seen over time in a variety of texts.

## Methodology

This is a course based on an active-learning teaching model. It entails that students will be at the center of the process and therefore they, along with the instructor, will be responsible for the construction and negotiation of knowledge through in-class discussions, written and oral assignments, as well as multi-media projects and activities. Students are expected to participate actively by making critical comments or asking questions to enliven the discussion. The course will be enriched by the contributions of 4 invited guest lecturers who are specialists in their areas of research expertise.

## Learning outcomes

- At the end of the course students will have acquired an overall knowledge of different historical, cultural and linguistic aspects of Hispanic cultures
- Students will have improved their writing, reading skills and understanding of the Spanish language
- Students will have improved their analytical skills through the study of cultural artifacts
- Students will have improved their research abilities on Arts and Humanities subjects.

## Grade distribution

|                            |      |
|----------------------------|------|
| First written assignment   | 20%  |
| Oral presentation          | 10 % |
| Quiz                       | 15%  |
| Final essay                | 30%  |
| Annotated bibliography     | 15%  |
| Participation and progress | 10%  |

## Texts (required)

Carmen Aguirre, *The Refugee Hotel*, Vancouver: Talon Books (2015)

All other texts will be available on line

## Texts (background)

M. Ratcliffe, *An Introduction to Spanish Civilization and Literature* (background reading only) online

## 4 Assignments: Annotated bibliographies, written assignment, oral presentation and final essay:

Each student may choose a topic from the list of possibilities posted on the class web site for the combined four (4) research pieces. An alternative topic that reflects personal choice is encouraged **BUT** please check with the instructor before beginning your work.

### a) the annotated bibliography:

- Find at least 7 entries of scholarly books or articles (at least 2 of them in Spanish).
- Write brief abstracts of the information found in each of the texts that explain why the texts are likely to be useful to the written assignments and the oral presentation.
- Each abstract must be preceded by the source's bibliographical information that must include author's name, text's title, city where published, publisher, date of publication, etc. (follow the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7<sup>th</sup> edition available at Weldon). (**Due on 12 Oct.**)

### b) the first written assignment:

- Three pages, double spaced.
- The paper must include references to seven secondary sources (at least two of them in Spanish).
- It should have a clearly articulated point of view (a thesis), be well written, and well structured.
- **Due on Oct.26.**

**c) the oral presentation**

Each student will present the results of all the research to the rest of class. Presentation will be between 5 and 10 minutes depending on class size. **Oral presentations in Spanish will take place in the last classes of the term.**

**d) the final essay**

- Based on the research skills acquired through the other research pieces, students will write an essay based on at least seven secondary sources (at least two of them in Spanish).

- The essay must be 10 pages long, not including the bibliography. More instructions will be given in class about the format of the essay. The final essay must be an expansion of the first written assignment and it will be the source for the oral presentation.

- **Due on 23 Nov.**