



Fall 2010 ROML 2550 Latino Culture and Literature
in the United States

Call # 05-138 2:30-3:20 MWF SLC 248

Lopez's *Portrait of the Artist as the Virgin of Guadalupe*

Instructor:

• **Dr. John Ross**

Lecturer of Business Spanish
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Office Hours: walk-in MW 3:30-4:30
(or by email appointment)

Teaching Assistants

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Graduate Assistant:

Course Description: An introduction to Latina/o literature and culture in the United States, with a focus on the artistic production and experiences of Mexican Americans/Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Cuban Americans and Dominican Americans. A selection of print works (novel, autobiography, short story, poetry) and films (feature, documentary, 'mockumentary') from the 1970s to the present will be studied for their aesthetic significance and social impact. The cartoon imagery of Lalo Alcaraz and interpretations of history by Ilan Stavans and Juan González will provide popular and scholarly contextualization for our discussions. Themes of the course include: ethnic and cultural mixture/*mestizaje*, spiritual heritages, representations of love and familial bonds, Spanish language in art, responses to violence, immigrant experiences, and Latinos in Georgia.

Course Learning Objectives:

1. To develop a richer understanding of Latina/o aesthetics (sensory and emotional experiences) and identities as represented in literary works, film and visual art.
2. To increase competency in interacting with people from a variety cultural and ethnic backgrounds in multiple contexts.
3. To expand critical skills and demonstrate independent thinking when speaking and writing.
4. To be able to describe multifaceted U.S. social perspectives and discuss how these are linked to value judgments about art and culture.

Required Readings and Films:

Print works (UGA Bookstore, Off Campus Bookstore):

Ilan Stavans and Lalo Alcaraz, *Latino USA: A Cartoon History* (2000)
Juan Gonzalez, *Harvest of Empire* (2000)
Rudolfo Anaya, *Bless Me, Ultima* (1972)
Mona Ruiz, *Two Badges* (1997)
Judith Ortiz Cofer, *Latin Deli* (1993)
Cristina Garcia, *Dreaming in Cuban* (1992)
Junot Díaz, *Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2007)

Films:

Zoot Suit (1981) Luis Valdez, Dir.

Maldeamores (2007) Carlos Ruíz Ruíz and Mariem Pérez Riera, Co-directors

Balseros (2003) Josep Domenech, Dir.

My American Girls (2001) Aaron Mathews, Dir.

A Day without a Mexican (2004) Serio Arau, Dir.

The New Georgians (2001) UGA, Inst. Comm. & Area Dev.

ELC: This class will use ELC for student journal entries. Additional materials for assignments and class work will also be posted here, such as short readings and project topics. You are expected to check ELC regularly to keep up with important announcements and the progress of the class.

Requirements and Grade Distribution:

20% Participation

30% Partial exams (2x15%)

15% Weekly Journals

15% Poster Presentation

20% Final Paper

Participation and Attendance: Students are expected to read the material assigned for each day before class and to come to our meetings prepared to articulate your reactions based on your study of the readings and films and your own research. Large and small group discussions form an essential part of the learning process in this class (see course objectives). At the end of each class, the instructors will assign each student a participation grade of 0-4:

0 (F) is assigned if student is absent.

1 (D) if student is present but sleeping, studying for other classes, reading newspaper or otherwise mentally absent.

2 (C) if student answers questions when called upon and offers some extemporaneous contributions on the themes and issues of the class.

3 (B) if student actively asks and answers questions without being called upon, and demonstrates knowledge and/or analysis of assigned materials.

4 (A) is reserved for exceptional preparation and participation that synthesizes and evaluates the works we are studying, through specific examples from the readings and films, and/or asks questions that challenge others to think critically.

The participation grade is an average of all of these grades. Please recognize that there are no excused or unexcused absences in this class and that this system allows a student to miss one or two classes without adversely affecting his/her final grade. If a student has anxiety about speaking often in class, he/she should contact the instructor immediately in order to discuss other options for participation (e.g., writing extra ELC journal entries).

Tests: There will be 2 in-class tests that will require students to demonstrate knowledge and comprehension of the readings and films and the ability to discuss this material logically in a written essay and short answers.

Journals: Students are expected to keep a journal on the discussion forum of ELC with at least one entry of approximately 150 words per week. Each week is from Monday to Sunday. The journal should contain thoughtful first impressions or reactions to what we have read, viewed or discussed. Because of our focus on aesthetics, your understandings of the sensory and emotional effects created by the literary and film works are important to include. Especially appreciated are questions / topics you want to discuss in class, as well as follow-up comments.

Paper/Project: The midterm paper is required in order to help students start the final project early in the semester. As such, a grade is not recorded for this paper at midterm; however, failure to complete the assignment will result in a 10 point deduction from the final class grade. It is expected that the final project (worth 15%) will be based upon this midterm paper, which should be a polished essay, *not* a draft (5-6 pages). Suggested topics and guidelines will be provided in class on August 23 and 25. During your research process you are encouraged to talk with your instructors and a UGA librarian. Consult this site: <http://www.libs.uga.edu/research.html>

Final Project Presentation: This Final will include the presentation of a poster based on the problematic of this course. Date: Beginning in class on December 6, 7 and finishing on December 13 p.m.

Academic honesty: All academic work must meet UGA's Culture of Honesty standards: http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm Each student is responsible for knowing about those standards before performing any academic work. **Please be aware that plagiarism of any form in this course will result in serious consequences.**

Course program:

Unit 1 Initial Questions and Contexts

August 16 - Introduction to course (*Undergrad Drop - August 16-19*) (*Undergrad Add - August 16-20*)

August 18 - Elizabeth Martínez "A Question of Terminology" (ELC) from De Colores Means All of Us (1998).

August 20 - Ilan Stavans and Lalo Alcaraz Latino USA: A Cartoon History (2000) pp. ix-xv and 1-85

August 23 - Latino USA: A Cartoon History pp. 46-167; Juan Gonzalez Harvest of Empire (2000) "Introduction" pp. IX-XX

August 25 - Harvest of Empire "Conquerors and Victims: The Image of America Forms (1500-1800)"

pp. 3-26 23 How to write a paper; midterm paper/final project topics will be distributed; Raymond Williams "Culture" (1983) (ELC)

August 27 - Breakout sessions: Suggested topics and guidelines for the Midterm paper will be given in this session

Unit 2 Mexican American Culture of the Southwest in the 1940s-90s

1898)" pp. 27-57; watch 30 minute interview with John Dyer and Lionel Sosa, authors of El Vaquero Real: The Original American Cowboy (2007) ELC (click "News" on Original American Cowboy website)

September 1 - Rudolfo Anaya Bless Me, Ultima (1972) pp. 1-85

September 3 - Bless Me, Ultima pp. 86-199

September 6 - (Holiday from class) Labor Day

September 8 - Bless Me, Ultima pp. 200-end

September 10 - Breakout sessions

September 13 - Screening of first half of **Zoot Suit (1981, 104 minutes)** (ARRIVE TO CLASS ON TIME BECAUSE THE FILM WILL BEGIN EXACTLY AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS)

September 15 - Finish **Zoot Suit**

September 17 - Discuss **Zoot Suit**; ELC: History of Marijuana

September 20 - Mona Ruiz with Geoff Boucher Two Badges: The Lives of Mona Ruiz (1997) pp. 1-118

September 22 - Two Badges pp. 119-202

September 24 - Two Badges pp. 203-end

September 27 - Breakout sessions

September 29 - **Test 1**

Unit 3 "Puerto Ricans: Citizens Yet Foreigners"

October 1 - Juan Gonzalez Harvest of Empire "Puerto Ricans: Citizens Yet Foreigners" pp. 81-95 and "Speak Spanish, You're in America!: El Huracán over Language and Culture" pp. 206-227

October 4 - Screening of **Maldeamores (2007, 88 minutes)**

October 6 - Finish and discuss **Maldeamores**

October 8 - Judith Ortiz Cofer "Corazon's Café" from Latin Deli

October 11 - Judith Ortiz Cofer "Not for Sale" from Latin Deli. **Midterm paper due**

Unit 4 Cuban Experiences

October 13 - Harvest of Empire "Banana Republics and Bonds: Taming the Empire's Backyard (1898-1950) pp. 58-78, and "Cubans: Special Refugees" pp. 108-116

October 15 - Cristina García Dreaming in Cuban (1992) pp. 1-104

October 18 - Dreaming in Cuban pp. 105-212

October 20 - Dreaming in Cuban pp. 213-end. **Turn in Final version of paper**

October 21 - Midpoint Withdrawal Point

October 22 - Screening of Balseros (2003), 120 minutes)

October 25 - Balseros

October 27 - Finish Balseros, Breakout sessions

October 29 - (Holiday from class) Fall Break

Unit 5 Between North America and the Dominican Republic

November 1- Juan Gonzalez Harvest of Empire Dominicans: From the Duarte to the George Washington Bridge” pp. 117-128. **Screening of My American Girls (2001, 63 minutes)**

November 3 - Finish and discuss My American Girls

November 5 - Junot Díaz The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao (2007) pp. beginning-75

November 8 - Díaz The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao pp. 75-151

November 10 - Díaz The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao pp. 152-223

November 12 - Díaz The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao pp. 224-275

November 15 - Díaz The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao pp. 276-335

November 17 - Breakout sessions

November 19 - **test 2**

November 22-26 (Holiday from class) Thanksgiving

Unit 6 New Latino Immigration in the United States

November 29 - Harvest of Empire “Immigrants Old and New: Closing Borders of the Mind” pp. 190-205; and “Free Trade: The Final Conquest of Latin America” pp. 228-245

December 1 - **Screening of A Day Without a Mexican (2004, 98 minutes)**

December 3 - A Day Without a Mexican

December 6 - **Project presentations**

December 7 - **Project presentations**

