SPN 4521 Topics on Spanish American Culture (U01) or
SPN 5525 Spanish American Culture. (U01)
Dr. Joan Torres-Pou  E-mail: pouj@fiu.edu  ext#6223
Office : DM492 A  Office hours : Mondays from 1:00 to 2:00.
Class hours: Mondays from 2:00 to 4:50 Classroom: to be determined

Prerequisites:

SPN 4521 is a course that requires an advanced level of Spanish since it may be counted
as Spanish Capstone Seminar.

SPN 5525 is a course open to all levels of graduate students.

Course Description:

Topics on Spanish American Culture explores different aspects of Spanish-American
identity and society through a series of literary texts, films and news articles. Concepts as
national identity, miscegenation, cultural diversity, social dynamics and behavior, the role
played by religion over society, Spanish-American political trends and USA and Latin
American relationship will all be aspects discussed in the light of lectures and texts.
It is a course entirely conducted in Spanish, which may count as the Spanish Capstone
Seminar for undergraduate students, and as an elective literature courses for graduate
students.

Course Objectives:

For undergraduate students:
Students will learn how to develop assigned topics providing ideas, examples and conclusions in
focused, coherent short essays with adequate grammar, punctuation and spelling. It is entirely
conducted as

For graduate students:
Students will learn how to write a focused, coherent text analysis which will develop an original
thesis in a 10 to 12 pages essay (native or near native Spanish level) on an assigned reading. It is
a valuable course for those students with little or no knowledge of Spanish-American societies
and history, as well as to those students planning to major in Latin American studies and/or
literatures.

Learning Outcomes:

Undergraduate students:
To improve written and oral language skills.
To achieve a general understanding of Spanish American culture and society.
To learn how to formulate a paper on Spanish-American culture.
Graduate students:
To complete their education on Spanish American culture and society.
To learn how to formulate a paper on Spanish-American cultural issues relating them to fictional literary works.

Readings:

For undergraduate students and graduate students: A selection of excerpts and texts to be assigned by the professor from:

*Cuando era puertorriqueña* Esmeralda Santiago (USA and LA)
*Borderland/La frontera* Gloria Anzaldúa (identidad-diversidad- USA and LA)
*Mundo del fin del mundo* Luis Sepúlveda (relación con naturaleza)
*El laberinto de la soledad* Octavio Paz (identidad)

(as well as a series of educational/cultural texts, and)

For graduate students:

*Sin rumbo* Eugenio Cambaceres. (caudillismo)
*Sirena* Francisco Arrivi (mestizaje-racismo)
*La gesta del marrano* Marcos Aguinis (diversidad cultural)
*El beso de la mujer araña* Manuel Puig (dictaduras-opresión-sexualidad)
Excerpts from: *Memorias de Bernardo Vega* César Andreu Iglesias (relación con USA)

Films:

*Doña Bárbara*
*Pubis angelical*
*Doña Herlinda y su hijo*
*Cama adentro*
*Machuca*

Class and Homework:
Assigned readings will be discussed in class and will be complemented by lectures and videos.

A take home exam in which you will have to develop one of the topics discussed or presented in class.

It is mandatory that students take notes while listening the lectures and watching the videos. Readings, lectures and videos are material of exam. Class notes must be typed and turned in at the end of the semester; they will represent the 20% of your final grade.

- Undergraduate students must write a 8 pages essay on one of the topics studied in class.
- Graduate students must analyze from a cultural perspective one of the readings in the Graduate Reading List in a 8 to 10 pages essays.
The following aspects will be taken into consideration at the moment or grading essays:

- Demonstrate competence in the correct and formal usage of written Spanish.
- Demonstrate familiarity with the major components of language.
- Apply readings and research to the essay.
- Demonstrate competence in analysis and interpretation of the cultural topic discussed.
- Demonstrate the ability to describe cultural, socio-economic and politic fabric of Spanish-American society.

The chosen topic must be presented in an oral presentation (no more than 10 minutes) to the class. The following aspects will be taken into consideration at the moment of grading presentations:

- Demonstrate competence in analysis and interpretation of the cultural topic discussed.
- Ideas presented clearly and effectively.
- Demonstrate competence in the correct and formal usage of oral Spanish.
- Delivery: eye contact, movement, voice, fluency.

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100-93 A// 93-90 A-// 89-87 B+ // 86-83B // 82-80 B- // 79-77 C+ // 76-73 C//
72-70 C-// 69-67 D+ // 66-63 D // 62-60 D- // 59-0 F

Course Policies (See information on attendance, participation and make-ups):

**General Course Policies:**
1. Cell phones must be disconnected. No texting. During exams, cell phones must be left on my desk.
2. Papers (when requested to be submitted) must be turned in typed.
3. Papers and other exercises must be turned in when assigned. I will not accept anything turned in late.
4. Because an incomplete only can be given in a pending paper and your paper will be the same presentation you must deliver in class, no incompletes will be possible under any circumstances.
5. No make-up exams or quizzes will be given to students who miss class the day of the scheduled test. A graduate student is expected to attend every single day of class.
6. Attendance to graduate classes is mandatory. Students missing class (regardless of the reason) will see their participation and attendance grade affected.
7. Comments and questions on grades must be done 48 hours after the test or paper has been returned corrected.
8. Participation is expected and encouraged, but students are also expected to be tactful and neither be confrontational nor interrupt class lectures or another student participation.
9. There will not be extra work to improve grades.
10. Laptops should be only used for class related work.
11. Papers and presentations must be original and individual.

     What does it mean original? They are not supposed to be a summary of what has been discussed in class, neither a copy of your readings. Papers require research of sources and documentation, analysis of selected texts and original conclusions.

     What does it mean individual? A personal work that the student has done by him/herself without requesting the services of companies who sell papers or provide them for free.

12. Cheating and/or plagiarism will be penalized with an F and University policies will be followed:

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

University Drop-Date:
November 2, 2015, 12:05 AM Last day to drop a course with a DR grade.

Tentative Schedule

Agosto

24 Introducción al curso.
31 La geografía y la historia de Hispanoamérica: Un continente en movimiento.

Septiembre

7 University Closed
14 Los sistemas de poder: Caudillismo, populismo, dictadura y democracia. Video: Doña Bárbara (part 1.)
21 Civilización y barbarie: La ciudad y la naturaleza. Dominio y explotación. Video: Doña Bárbara (part 2.)
28 Exilios políticos y migraciones. Video: Pubis angelical (part.1)
Octubre

5 Emigrantes del siglo XIX y XX: europeos, judíos, musulmanes y asiáticos. Video: Pubis angelical (part. 2)


19 Mestizaje: El mestizaje cultural: Las religiones, las lenguas, los hábitos y las costumbres. Video Américas.

26 La sociedad hispanoamericana: hábitos sociales y usos amorosos. Video: Cama adentro (Part 1.)

Noviembre

2 La sociedad hispanoamericana: las clases sociales. Video: Cama adentro (Part 2.)

9 ¿Sociedades tradicionales o no? Video: Doña Herlinda y su hijo (Part 1.)

16 Video: Doña Herlinda y su hijo (Part 2). Hispanoamérica y Estados Unidos.

23 Hispanoamérica y Estados Unidos

30 Presentaciones orales. Entrega de los trabajos finales.