

William Martínez, Jr.
Office 47-26A
Office Hours:
Phone: 756-1212

SPANISH 351
LATINO(A) LITERATURE IN THE U.S.

Email: wmartine@calpoly.edu

Course Description

Analysis and exploration of the major themes of Latino(a) literature in the United States today. Emphasis on Chicano(a), Puertorican, Cuban American and other Caribbean writers.

This course will specifically focus on novel writers who are not as well known or read by traditional Latino(a) courses. All readings, discussions, and assignments are in English.

Textbooks

Dreaming in Cuban by Cristina García (Cuban)
When I was Puertorican, by Esmeralda Santiago (Puertorican)
The Last of the Menu Girls by Denise Chávez (Chicano)
Contemporary Short Stories from Central America, Enrique Jaramillo, ed.
Texts on Reserve available at the Library.

Grades

Grades will be based on a straight percentage on the following

1) Three 2-3 page reaction papers	450 pts.	150 Pts. each.
2) One Final critical essay (10-15 pp.)	250 pts.	
3) One Formal presentation	100 pts.	
4) Class participation	200 pts.	
Total	1000 pts.	

Please follow this chart to receive the credit in the classification you desire. No substitutions will be allowed after the second week.

Grade Breakdown

1000-950	A	899-875	B+	799-775	C+	699-660	D+
949-900	A-	874-840	B	774-740	C	659-610	D
		839-800	B-	739-700	C-	609-000	F

Class participation. (Value 200 pts.)

I plan to run this class as a SEMINAR-type course. This means that I will serve as FACILITATOR to the discussion; Students must, therefore, come prepared to class and ready to discuss, in detail, particular aspects of the novels being read. If students are not prepared, this class will not be very enjoyable. Periodically, I will assign students responsibility for leading the discussion on a particular topic. Reference material for these times will be found on reserve in the library.

Reaction Papers. (Value 150 pts. each)

At the end of the first three novels discussed you will write a 2-3 page reaction to that work. You may focus your discussion on A) The novel as a whole; B) One of the main Characters and how they are developed in the text; C) A negative reaction, and why; D) A particular aspect of the text studied. All discussions MUST BE MADE IN A CRITICAL MANNER. I will not accept "Book Report" type essays, nor generalizations. I am looking for in-depth analysis.

Final Critical Essay (Value 250 Pts.)

All students are to write a final critical essay. If they wish to use any of the texts discussed in class, the analysis must vary "significantly" than that done in class. I do NOT want to read class notes, nor my ideas. Other options are to choose another Latino(a) author and analyze the work, characters, or a particular aspect in that text. This can either be a novel or a collection of short stories by that single author. The essay will follow MLA guidelines in presentation.

Please note that our library, while it has a good collection of Chicano(a) authors, it drastically lacks material about all other ethnic groups and critical writings about any of these. Thus, I suggest that you begin doing the research well in advance of the due date for your essay.

Presentation (Value 100 Pts.)

All students will be required to give a five minute presentation dealing with the topic that they are researching. The presentation will not be a reading of the research, but more of an outline of what you are doing, and why you are interested in this topic/author/text. In this manner, others will be informed about the work that everyone is doing, and students may gain valuable insight from questions and/or suggestions coming from the audience.

Reading and Due Dates Schedule

Week #

- 1 Introduction. Historical/ Theoretical Background.
- 2 What is Cuban? Dreaming in Cuban
- 3 Dreaming in Cuban
Wednesday: **REACTION PAPER #1 DUE**
- 4 The Puerto Rican Experience: When I was Puerto Rican.
- 5 When I was Puerto Rican
- 6 The construction of a Chicana self. Last of the Menu Girls
REACTION PAPER #2 DUE
- 7 Last of the Menu Girls
- 8 Other Latino Writings: Contemporary Short Stories
- 9 Contemporary Short Stories
REACTION PAPER #3 DUE
- 10 Presentations
- Final Essay Due on or before the last class meeting.
Late work WILL NOT be accepted,
UNLESS PRIOR CONCENT WAS GRANTED.
PLEASE NOTE THERE IS NO FINAL IN THIS CLASS.