

Hispanic Studies 229

Cuba: Art, Literature, & Popular Culture



Fall 2006

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Class hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays: 1:30 to 2:45

Office Hours:

Tuesdays and Thursdays: 2:45 to 4:45
or by appointment.

Course Description:

Class Dynamics: Classes will be based on dialogue, open discussion and specific student questions. Lectures will be provided occasionally to guide and inform discussion of particular concepts or texts but will not substitute for student participation. Therefore students are responsible for coming to class prepared, having read and/or viewed assigned materials, and ready to comment on them.

Students are responsible for bringing to my attention any problems they may encounter during the semester. This includes issues of comprehension, individual assignments or other concerns that may affect student performance.

Required Work:

There are three types of written work required for class.

1. Four brief responses (150 words each) to the readings assigned to be discussed in class. Look below for dates due. The responses are due by 5pm of the evening before class and should be posted on our Blackboard site. Postings must be in Spanish, and although you should strive for clarity and accuracy in the language, they will be graded on their content

only. You are welcome to respond to any postings and are responsible for reading all your classmates' postings by class time.

2. A short midterm paper (1200 words minimum) focused on the analysis of a text or topic discussed in class. The papers are to be written in Spanish and will be graded on both content and use of the language. See below for dates due. The specific focus is your choice.
3. A 2500-word research paper on a topic chosen in consultation with instructor.

If, in the course of writing any of the required work you should make use of the ideas or wording of a consulted source, you must provide documentation to that effect following the guidelines established in the *MLA Handbook* or *Chicago Manual of Style*. If you are unclear as to what requires documentation, consult the *Manual*, the pamphlet on *Originality and Attribution: A Guide for Student Writers at Vassar College*, or myself. Failure to acknowledge sources constitutes a breach of academic integrity and will be referred to the College's Academic Panel. This applies equally to material taken from the worldwide web.

Attendance Policy

Attendance to class meetings is **obligatory**. Absence from class will not constitute a valid excuse for lack of preparedness or late work. Students can keep abreast of course assignments through Blackboard or through contact with fellow students or the instructor. After the first unexcused absence from class, subsequent absences will result in a corresponding reduction of the final grade (see below).

Students with Disabilities

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities who are registered with the Office of Disability and Support Services. Please schedule an appointment with the instructor early in the semester to discuss any accommodations for this course which have been approved by the Director of Disability and Support Services as indicated in your DSS accommodation letter.

Assistance and Tutoring

Assistance is available from the Hispanic Studies academic intern. Please check the bulletin board outside the department's lounge for hours.

Required Texts (available at College Bookstore):

Richard Gott's *Cuba: A New History*
Mayra Montero's *Como un mensajero tuyo*
Leonardo Padura Fuente's *Máscaras*

SHORT STORIES AND OTHER READING MATERIALS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH BLACKBOARD.

Films to be discussed in class will be available in the Reserve Room of the Library.

Music cd's will be distributed at the beginning of semester. They are strictly for class use and must not be reproduced or shared.

Discussion Schedule:

August 31

30 Introduction

PART I: CUBAN INDEPENDENCE AND ITS AFTERMATH (1895-1952)

September

- 5 José Martí, "Nuestra América"
Brief response to this text due by Monday September 4 by 5pm.
Gott, Chapter 3, "Wars of Independence and Occupation, 1868-1902"
- 7 Fernando Ortiz, from *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar*
- 12 Fernando Ortiz, continued
Gott, Chapter 4, "The Cuban Republic, 1902-1952"
- 14 Paintings: Eduardo Abela and Wilfredo Lam
- 19 Library Research Training
- 21 The Cuban *son*, continued
- 26 Nicolás Guillén, poems
- 28 Alejo Carpentier's "Viaje a la semilla"

October

PART II: THE BATISTA REGIME

- 3 Cabrera Infante, "Ella cantaba boleros"
Gott, Chapter 5, "The Revolution Takes Shape, 1953-1961"
- 5 Film: *La bella de la Alhambra*
Brief response to this film due by Wednesday October 4 by 5pm
- 10 Cuban bolero
- 12 Bolero, continued
- 24 Humberto Arenal's "Cerdos o perros amaestrados para encontrar trufas"
- 26 Photography: Alberto Korda
Gott, Chapter 6, "The Revolution in Power, 1961-1968"
- 31 Film: *Muerte de un burócrata*

November

2 La nueva trova cubana

7 La nueva trova cubana

9 Cuban Revolutionary Posters

Gott, Chapter 7, "Inside the Soviet Camp, 1968-1985"

14 Library Research Session

16 Leonardo Padura Fuentes

Brief response to this text due by Monday November 13 by 5pm

16 Padura Fuentes, continued

Luis Manuel García, ¿Tú qué sabes, Vivian?

Gott, Chapter 8, "Cuba Stands Alone, 1985-2003"

28 Nancy Alonso's "Domicilio desconocido" and "El séptimo trueno"

30 Mayra Montero's *Como un mensajero tuyo*

Brief response to this text due by Wednesday November 29 by 5pm

December

5 Montero, continued

7 Film: *Guantanamo*

Class Evaluation

10% Class Attendance (Please note that after the first unexcused absence from the class you will forfeit 5 percentage points off your final grade for every subsequent absence).

10% Class participation

10% Oral report

20% Brief responses

20% Midterm paper

30% Final paper