Hispanic Studies 387

"Todos Cantaban Boleros": The Bolero and the Novel in Latin America

Spring 2006

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Class hours: Tuesdays: 3:10 to 5:10

Office Hours:
Tuesdays 1:00 to 3:00
Wednesdays 10:00 to 12:00
And by appointment.

Course Description:

The bolero, the "most popular lyric tradition in Latin America," has had a significant impact on the development of the novel in Latin America and the Hispanic Caribbean, from the literary "Boom" of the sixties and seventies to the present. The seminar will examine the impact of the bolero on the development of the contemporary Latin American novel.

Class Dynamics: Classes will be based on dialogue, 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. A series of brief responses (150 words each) to the novels 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 midterm paper (1500 words minimum) focused on the analysis of a text 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 3000-word research paper on a topic chosen in consultation with the 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 though 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):

Mario Vargas Llosa, *¿Quién mató a Palomino Molero?*
Guillermo Cabrera Infante, *Delito por bailar el cha cha cha*
Pedro Vergés, *Sólo cenizas hallarás: bolero*
Alfredo Bryce Echenique, *La amigdalitis de Tarzán*
Mayra Montero, *La última noche que pasé contigo*
Mayra Santos Febres, *Sirena Selena, vestida de pena*

Texts Recommended for research papers (copies available at the Bookstore):
Angeles Mastreta, *Arráncame la vida*
Zoé Valdés, *Te di la vida entera*
Manuel Puig, *Pubis angelical*

For each book-length text read in class there will be a number of critical papers available through Blackboard, which you are invited to consult.

Discussion Schedule:

September

4   Introduction
Carlos Monsiváis, "History of the Bolero" (Blackboard)

11   **Mario Vargas Llosa, *¿Quién mató a Palomino Molero?***

18   **¿*Quién mató a Palomino Molero?***
Brief response to this text due by Monday September 10 by 5pm.

25   **Guillermo Cabrera Infante, *Delito por bailar el cha cha cha***

October

2   **Pedro Vergés, *Sólo cenizas hallarás: bolero***

9   **Sólo cenizas hallarás: bolero**
Brief response to this text due by Monday October 8 by 5pm.

23   **Alfredo Bryce Echenique, *La amigdalitis de Tarzán***

30   ***La amigdalitis de Tarzán***
        Brief response to this text due by Monday October 29 by 5pm.

FIRST PAPER DUE BY 5PM ON NOVEMBER 1st.

November

6   **Mayra Montero, *La última noche que pasé contigo***

13   ***La última noche que pasé contigo***
        Brief response to this text due by Monday November 12 by 5pm.

20   No class (conference).

27   **Mayra Santos Febres, *Sirena Selena, vestida de pena***

December

4   ***Sirena Selena***
        Brief response to this text due by Monday December 3 by 5pm.

We will add a make-up class on the evening of December 9 if needed to replace the class lost on November 20th.

FINAL PAPERS ARE DUE BY 5PM ON THE SECOND DAY OF FINAL EXAMS

Course Evaluation Criteria

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).
20%   Class participation
20%   Brief responses
20%   Midterm paper
30%   Final paper