Latino Literature/Spanish American Literature
English 290, Sec #86074-B10, fall 2011
Instructor: Dr. Esperanza Cintrón, Office room 214 Downtown Campus, Fridays by appt.
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Tech questions for computer/program access or use contact: Distance Learning Department at (866) 846-8494 or www.wcccd.edu, click Distance Learning, then click Blackboard Technical Support

Class Policies:

IMPORTANT!
Although this is a computer-based class, I am not a computer. I am flesh and blood and I have feelings. With that in mind, please remember to use basic rules of etiquette and respect when you are addressing me, your instructor. I will, in turn, treat you respectfully. Further, please read and adhere to the rules below:

1) Use complete sentence when asking questions.
2) Do not use computer slang and/or acronyms in your assignments or when you are addressing me.
3) Never send email or assignments using all capital letters. To do so, means that you are screaming and/or cursing the recipient. Correspondence or assignments sent as such will be disregarded.
4) Unlike your computer, I am not available 24/7. When you email me with questions, I will try to get back to you within 24 to 48 hours. However, there are many of you and only one of me and I am teaching several classes. Emails sent early in the week, Monday through Wednesday, are apt to get responses that are more prompt. Please identify the class you are in when you contact me.
5) When sending email and/or assignments, always include your name, the name of the class, section number, and the name of the assignment to which you are referring.

Adhering to these rules will improve your chances of successfully completing this class.

Class Meeting Times:
There are no mandatory meeting times. All learning is done within a set weekly schedule. See Calendar of Assignments.

Textbooks:    Literatures of Latin America by Willis Barnstone
               The Prentice Hall Anthology of Latino Literature by Eduardo del Rio

Additional Materials Needed:
1) You will need to select, access, and view one of the movies on the list of movies provided.
2) You might want to purchase a Spanish/English dictionary because some passages and/or phrases in the text may be in Spanish.
3) You will also need a computer with a Microsoft Word processing program. Computers for your use are available at the College during specified times. Please contact the College to determine days and times the computer lab is open.
4) You need a thumb drive or space on your computer on which to save corrected assignments.
5) Further, a paperback or electronic dictionary and/or thesaurus would be useful, as you will be expected to write creative and coherent assignments that reflect a college level vocabulary.
6) A business size envelope, and two 44-cent stamps with which to mail the test forms.

Online Prerequisites:
You must have access to the Internet.
You must have an active e-mail account.
You must be able to word process documents using Microsoft Word.
You must be able to upload and download documents.
Traditional Prerequisites: English 110 required, 120 highly recommended.

Course overview:
The purpose of this course is to help you to become familiar with works of literature written by contemporary Latinos, and to help you begin to understand the diversity within the Spanish-American culture that has fueled these writers.

Course Credits: 3

Course Objectives:
Students who successfully complete this course will be able to
- Identify major Latino poets and authors of fiction and their work;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the literary and artistic elements of the literature;
- Highlight the historical development of the major U.S. Latino cultures;
- Discern the varied cultures and ethnic groups that comprise Hispanic America;
- Recognize some of the major themes that appear in the literature;
- Initiate research that will help them to better access the literature;
- Demonstrate with some sensitivity an understanding of the literature, its relationship to the culture of the artist and its limitations with regard to representing that culture.

Academic Honesty:
Plagiarized work will not be accepted and will automatically be scored as a zero. Further, students found guilty of plagiarizing can be subject to additional disciplinary measures up to and including permanent expulsion.

Assignments:
Weekly Quizzes
Beginning with the second week of class, weekly quizzes will be posted in the Quizzes folder. They will consist of 10-20 questions. Although they will be available for 3 days, students will only be allowed to open them once. Once the quiz is open, you must complete it. You will not be allowed to open it again. The instructor will not reset or reopen quizzes. You will only have the one chance with each quiz so make sure you have done the reading so that you are prepared to complete the quiz in one sitting. There will be five quizzes in all.

Movie Review
Students must view one of the movies listed on the Movie List and write an analysis of approximately two to three pages (500-1000 words). The review should begin with a clearly stated thesis that reveals your attitude towards the movie and serves to preview the primary points your essay will make. Determine who produced/made the movie and whether or not there was a Latino presence in the production (other than actors). The review should discuss the storyline, dialogue, set and setting, and costumes as they relate to your thesis. Consider how the filmmakers present the culture. Is the presentation positive, derogatory, believable or realistic? What, specifically, makes you believe this? Give examples such as actions of characters, dialogue, quotes from other movie reviews. If movie (DVD) comes with extras, the review might incorporate statements made by directors, scriptwriters, etc. Further, consider the assigned readings and knowledge gained during the course of this class. Incorporating information gained in class readings will help to authenticate your review. Be sure to cite the sources of these and any other references you may use in the body of your essay by using endnotes in the MLA (Modern Language Association) style. Please use writing etiquette. Proofread, spell check, and revise as often as necessary to enhance the presentation of your response. Above all, your review should be a cohesive and coherent essay.

Novel Review/Analysis
You must read one of the novels listed on the supplemental reading list and write a four to five page (1000-1500 words) essay with an attached Works Cited (Bibliography) page. Remember this is not a book report. This is an analysis of the novel. In addition to the novel, you will want to read what critics have to say
about the author and his or her works as well as biographical information about the author. This research should help you to formulate your thesis.

Your review should begin with a thesis/premise statement that clearly reveals your attitude towards the novel and serves to preview the primary points your essay will make. Those points may include your observations regarding how the characters were drawn. Are they positive, derogatory, believable, and so forth. The review should also discuss the storyline, dialogue, setting, as they relate to your thesis.

In your essay, you may consider the quality of the writing, the novel in relation to events that occurred during the time it was written, how this novel relates to similar works, how it relates to Latino history or what the author was trying to say about being human. Remember, you are not expected to cover all of these elements. Your thesis should reveal a primary point of the novel, one on which you wish to focus. The rest of the essay is your support and clarification of that point. Do not simply retell the facts of the story as you would in a 6th grade book report. You are analyzing the novel based on the things you have learned about Latino culture and literature in this class. Your grade will be based on how well you convey what you have learned.

To enhance your review, you should Google your author and possibly any historical events alluded to in the novel. This will help you to interpret the book more effectively. Be sure to identify the most significant element of the novel and explain the novel’s importance to the history of fiction written by Latinos. This information must, of course, be seamlessly woven into the fabric of your essay.

Further, you must consider the assigned readings and the knowledge gained from them. The review should indicate how the novel supports or contests information gained during the course of this class. Incorporating information gained in class readings will help to authenticate your review. Be sure to cite the sources of these and any other references you use in the body of your essay and by using endnotes in the MLA (Modern Language Association) style. Please use writing etiquette. Proofread, spell check, and revise as often as necessary to enhance the presentation of your essay. Above all, your analysis should be a cohesive and coherent essay.

Exams

There will be a mid-term and a final exam. Both are multiple choice and will require Scantron test forms that can be purchased at any college bookstore. Each will consist of 100 questions and all exams are cumulative. Completed test forms will be mailed to me at: Dr. Esperanza Cintrón, P.O. Box 441883, Detroit, MI 48244-1883 by the date specified when exam is posted.

Discussion Board

Questions designed to provoke thought about the readings will be posted periodically on the Discussion Board. You are required to review and respond to the questions weekly. Responses should be based on student perceptions and observations as they relate to the assigned readings. Additionally, you should read and respond to the comments of other students. The idea is to create a dialogue. The Board is meant to be a student forum and is designed to enhance your understanding of the readings. As such, the instructor will observe, but not participate. At the end of the semester, students will receive points based on the quality, frequency, and relevancy of their responses. Decorum and an awareness of your classmates’ feelings should always be exercised when using the Discussion Board.

In General

Assignments are graded on quality of content, completeness of presentation, and effort. Proper attention should be paid to punctuation, grammar, and construction of ideas. Failures to proofread, spell check, or adhere to basic writing etiquette will negatively affect your grade. All assignments must be turned in on time. No late assignments will be accepted. Please review the Calendar of Assignments for due dates.

Save your files in Microsoft Word as a rich text file (.rtf) and send them to me through the Digital Dropbox. Assignments saved incorrectly cannot be opened and read by the instructor. Therefore, they will be returned ungraded. These assignments will receive a zero and cannot be resubmitted.
Grading Policy:
The number of points you accumulate during the semester as you successfully complete the various assignments will determine your course grade.

Essays will be judged on both content and writing. Remember that this is an English class. A full credit essay must be free of grammatical errors. PLEASE PROOFREAD! Further, a successful essay should be organized well, clear, insightful, demonstrate an understanding of the subject, reflect that time and effort has been put forth and must be sent in on time.

Although participation on the Discussion Board is required, you may earn extra credit. Discussion Board values depend on the quality and quantity of your responses. Check the Discussion Board weekly for new questions.

Exams are multiple choice and are normally 100 questions each. Questions are drawn from the assigned readings. Exams are cumulative.

Late Assignments:
All assignments must be submitted by the due date. No late assignments or exams will be accepted. Note, no late exams or reviews will be accepted for any reason. Please check the Calendar of Assignments often to determine due dates.

Grading Scale:
- Quizzes 25 (5 quizzes @ 5 pts each)
- Mid-Term Exam 20 (% earned x2. Ex: 75% or 7.5 x 2 = 15 points.)
- Final Exam 20
- Discussion Board 10 (can earn up to an additional 10 extra credit pts)
- Movie Review 10
- Novel Analysis 20

Using the following scale, you can calculate your course grade based on the number and success of your completed assignments. The course grading scale is as follows: 105-90= A, 89-80=B, 79-70=C, 69-60=D, 59-0=E.

The information in this syllabus is subject to change in the event of unforeseen circumstances. If such changes occur, you will be notified as soon as possible.