

SPAN 3360 / RS 3350 / MAIS 5350

## Al-Andalus: The Cultures of Muslim Spain

Fall 2019 CRNs: 18430 / 16801 / 16520

Professor: **Matthew V. Desing**  
Class schedule: **Tuesday/Thursday 9:00-10:20**  
Classroom: **Liberal Arts 206**  
Office location: **Liberal Arts 115**  
Office hours: **Tuesdays 10:30-11:30**  
**Tuesdays 4:00-6:00**  
**or by appointment**  
Email address: **mvdesing2@utep.edu**

**It is the student's responsibility to read the syllabus in its entirety and be aware of the requirements, evaluation criteria, schedule of events, and topics covered in the course**

### **COURSE TOPIC:**

This class is an exploration of the cultures of Al-Andalus (Muslim Spain) during the period of 711-1492 when parts of the Iberian Peninsula were under Muslim political rule. The course will begin with an introduction to the origins of Islam and its early political successes throughout the Middle East and North Africa. The course will take an interdisciplinary cultural studies approach to the Muslim experience in the Iberian Peninsula by examining literary texts and applying literary analysis to other forms of cultural production, but also by incorporating perspectives from the fields of art, cultural history, linguistics, architecture, medicine, philosophy, political history, religious studies, etc. Finally, the course will examine how Muslim Spain has been retrospectively re-imagined since the time of the defeat of the last Muslim kingdom of Granada in 1492 and the eventual expulsion of the *Moriscos* (descendants of Muslims) from Spain in 1609, which includes the continued influence of this period of cultural convivencia on the Spanish-speaking and LatinX worlds up until today.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The primary objective of this course is to acquire a basic knowledge of the cultures of Al-Andalus through careful reading of the course materials and active discussion of the same. Students will also be developing skills in scholarly criticism that will be useful in other courses involving literary and cultural analysis. Writing with clarity and the logical organization of ideas are important skills in almost every academic discipline and in most aspects of modern life; for this reason, students in this course will continue to polish their academic writing skills through completing a series of writing exercises that will culminate in the composition and revising of a formal paper. Finally, it is hoped that through this course the participants will develop an appreciation for the contributions of Muslim cultures to the LatinX world.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

- \* Catlos, Brian A. *Kingdoms of Faith: A New History of Islamic Spain*. New York: Basic Books, 2018.
- \* Fletcher, Richard A. *Moorish Spain*. New York: H. Holt, 1992.
- \* Various academic articles available through UTEP library databases.
- \* Freely accessible online resources.

### **GRADING COMPONENTS:**

	<u>Undergradates</u>	<u>Graduate Students</u>
I. Participation, homework, quizzes	15%	10%
II. Exams (3 X 15%)	45%	45%
III. Presentation	10%	10%
IV. Short essay	15%	10%
V. Writing Portfolio	15%	
VI. Graduate final essay		25%

**WARNING:** The materials and themes of this course are not meant to scandalize or offend. All students should carefully review the syllabus and course materials to ensure that the themes presented will not cause significant conflict with their moral, ethical, or religious beliefs. If a student finds that she or he may have a conflict with some aspect of the class, the student should carefully consider her/his continued enrollment in the course and should also speak with the professor about the issue prior to the end of the first week of the semester.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** The University Catalog describes scholastic integrity in this way: "The University of Texas at El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence. In all matters of intellectual pursuit, UTEP faculty and students must strive to achieve excellence based on the quality of work produced by the individual. In the classroom and in all other academic activities, students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of academic dishonesty is an affront to the pursuit of knowledge and jeopardizes the quality of the degree awarded to all graduates of UTEP. It is imperative, therefore, that the members of this academic community understand the regulations pertaining to academic integrity and that all faculty insist on adherence to these standards. Any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP), and available in the Office of the Dean of Students and on the homepage of the Dean of Students at: <http://www.utep.edu/dos> may result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation, to a failing grade on the work in question, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or dismissal, among others." UTEP's library offers additional information and resources regarding academic integrity and how to avoid infractions at the following website: <http://libraryweb.utep.edu/research/plagiarism.php>

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at [www.sa.utep.edu/cass](http://www.sa.utep.edu/cass). *CASS' Staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.*

**COURSE COMPONENTS:**

**I. Participation, homework, and attendance:** Respect for the individual (the student and the professor), for the group, and for the work of teaching and learning are basic components of a successful class. We can all contribute to a respectful class environment by consistently engaging in a series of basic behaviors. Attending every class assures that all participants will always be able to benefit from the unique contributions of each student. Respecting the class schedule by always arriving to class (and leaving class) at the indicated hour avoids unnecessary interruptions. We can all feel comfortable and valued in the classroom if we keep our attention to the activities of the class,

participate actively, and respect the opinions and contributions of others. Intellectual exchange in class is always better if there has been careful preparation beforehand including a close reading of the texts for the day. These are just a few keys for respectful and successful participation. Each student has the responsibility to know the material assigned for and covered in class in the case of excused or unexcused absence. The professor will not re-teach the class individually in case of a student absence, so the best way to access material in such a case is by asking for notes from a classmate. After reviewing the readings and notes from the missed class, the professor will be happy to answer any questions or discuss the material further during office hours. Excused absences (that do not affect one's grade) are allowed in the following circumstances: personal medical emergencies (not those of friends or family members), the death of a close family member, or a required absence for a University sanctioned activity (in which case UTEP provides an absence note). In order to justify/excuse an absence, the student must provide a photocopy of written documentation. The use of electronic devices (cellphones, smartphones, tablets, laptops, etc.) during class for reasons not related to the class will result in the student being counted as absent for the day. The professor may drop a student from the course for lack of respect, academic initiative, or attendance at any moment during the semester, but especially in the first weeks of the semester. Attendance is essential in this course: after 2 absences, each additional absence will result in the reduction of the final grade for the course by one percentage point. Attendance and participation, along with occasional assignments and brief quizzes (both announced and unannounced) is worth 15% of the final undergraduate grade.

**II. Exams:** There will be three exams during semester that will cover the readings and discussions since the previous exam (in other words, the exams are not accumulative). Each exam will take place during the class period. The format of the exams will be combination of short answer and essay questions. Each exam is worth 15% of the final undergraduate grade (3 X 15% = 45% total).

**III. Presentation:** Each student will do one individual presentation during the semester. Each presentation will have four parts. First, the student will briefly summarize the material presented in the previous class period (2-4 minutes). Second, the student will present an overview of the main points of the readings for that day (8-10 minutes). Third, the student will present a brief introduction to the topic that will be the subject of his/her short paper; the topics are listed on the course calendar and correspond to a specific date on the syllabus (4-6 minutes). Fourth, the presenter will organize a short interactive activity to review the material in way that requires the participation of the entire class (4-6 minutes). The presentation should last between 20 and 25 minutes. Students may use audio-visual presentations (such as PowerPoint), posters, or other materials, but these are not required. The presentation is worth 10% of the final undergraduate grade.

**IV. Short Essay:** Each student will write an essay on a topic chosen at the beginning of the semester, which will be the same topic covered as part of the presentation described above. The essay will be a formal and objective review of a published academic article on the topic. The academic article must be at least 12 pages long and must be approved by the professor before the date listed on the syllabus. The genre or type of essay is a scholarly review (like a book review, but on shorter text); it must contain the following parts: 1) the bibliographical information of the article in MLA format at the beginning of the essay (which will serve as the essay's title); 2) an introduction to the essay that must include the essay's thesis (in other words, the student's general evaluation of the article); 3) information about the author of the academic article being reviewed; 4) information on the academic journal in which the article was published; 5) an overview/explanation of any material that the essay's audience (the other members of the class) may need in order to understand the content of the article/essay (this may require additional research); 6) a summary of the main points of the article; 7) an objective evaluation of the article; 8) a conclusion. In addition, it is expected that student will cite the article throughout the

essay, in the form of both direct quotations and summary quotations. Each student will write his/her essay in a series of drafts outlined below, but the final essay must be between five and seven pages long and follow MLA guidelines for citation. The short essay will count for 15% of the final undergraduate grade.

**V. Writing Portfolio:** In order to write better essays, the class members will develop their final research papers in a series of stages or drafts. These stages, along with various writing and editing exercises, will be compiled into a portfolio that will be handed in prior to the due date of the final paper. The stages of this process to be included in this portfolio are indicated on the course calendar below. Handing in this portfolio with all the stages of the writing process will be worth 15% of the final undergraduate grade.

**VI. Graduate Final Essay:** Graduate students enrolled in the course will write an additional paper in the course. The paper will be analytical in nature, involving research and at least 5 academic sources. The paper is not lengthy (it should be between ten and twelve pages), but it will require more independent research and analysis than the short essay. Graduate students will develop the topic of final papers in consultation with and approval from the professor. The final graduate essay will count for 25% of the final graduate grade.

**ALL WRITTEN WORK:** Students have the responsibility of handing in all formal written work (homework, essays, writing portfolio, etc.) typed on a word processor equipped with spell check and grammar check, as well as following formatting guidelines: double spaced, one-inch margins, Times New Roman font style, and 12 point font size. All paragraphs should be indented and there ought not be additional spaces between paragraphs. Introductory material (name, course number, date, title, etc.) and the bibliography do not count toward the required length of the assignment. Students in this particular course may hand in their written work in either formal English or formal Spanish (but not a mix of both).

### COURSE CALENDAR (Subject to change)

Date of Course	Dates in History	Readings Catlos Fletcher	Homework, Professor-led activities/discussions, <i>Student presentation topics</i>
<b>Week 1</b> Tuesday 27 of August Thursday 29 of August		C. Intro.	
		C. Prelude	<b>Homework activity with brief descriptions of each of the semester's presentation topics</b>
<b>Week 2</b> Tuesday 3 of September Thursday 5 of September	711-715 715-750	C. 1 F. 1 C. 2	Make schedule of presentations Scholarly articles; what are they? How do I find scholarly articles using library resources.
<b>Week 3</b> Tuesday 10 of September Thursday 12 of September	750-800 711-780	C. 3-4 F. 2	<i>Presentation: Rodrigo/ Julian in later poetry</i> Review of students' 3 options for scholarly articles
<b>Week 4</b> Tuesday 17 of September Thursday 19 of September	780-860 840-900	C. 5-6 C. 7-8	<i>Presentation: Halal and common Andalusí foods</i> Deadline for having final scholarly article

			approved by the professor for short essay
<b>Week 5</b> Tuesday 24 of September	750-920	F. 3	<i>Presentation: Pilgrimage in medieval Islam and Christianity</i>
Thursday 26 of September	<b>Exam 1</b>		<b>Exam 1</b>
<b>Week 6</b> Tuesday 1 of October	920-960	C. 9-10	<i>Presentation: Ceuta in the Middle Ages</i>
Thursday 3 of October	920-960	C. 11	How to find information about journals and authors
<b>Week 7</b> Tuesday 8 of October	920-980	C. 12-13	<i>Presentation: Spice trade</i>
Thursday 10 of October	970-1000	C. 14	<b>First draft of essay</b>
<b>Week 8</b> Tuesday 15 of October	910-980	F. 4	<i>Presentation: Medicine</i>
Thursday 17 of October	980-1020	C. 15	UMN Pre-Modern Food Conference
<b>Week 9</b> Tuesday 22 of October	1040-1080	C. 16-17	<i>Presentation: Moaxaja/ Muwashshahat</i>
Thursday 24 of October	1020-1130	C. 18-19	<b>Second draft of essay</b> SCMLA Conference
<b>Week 10</b> Tuesday 29 of October	1010-1150	C. 20 F. 5	<i>Presentation: Muhammad al-Idrisi</i>
Thursday 31 of October	1140-1220	C. 21-22	
<b>Week 11</b> Tuesday 5 of November	1060-1230	F.6	<i>Presentation: Ibn Rushd (Averroes)</i>
Thursday 7 of November	<b>Exam 2</b>		<b>Exam 2</b>
<b>Week 12</b> Tuesday 12 of November	1220-1280	C. 23-24	<i>Presentation: Paper/technologies of writing</i>
Thursday 14 of November	1270-1330	C. 25-26	<b>Third draft of essay</b>
<b>Week 13</b> Tuesday 19 of November	1180-1270	F. 7	<i>Presentation: Ibn Battuta</i>
Thursday 21 of November	1350-1470	C. 27-28	
<b>Week 14</b> Tuesday 26 of November	1470-1620	C. 29-30	<i>Presentation: Hammam/Muslim Baths</i>
Thursday 28 of November	1240-1570	F. 8	<b>Thanksgiving</b>
<b>Week 15</b> Tuesday 3 of December	1500-1620	C. Epilogue F. 9	<i>Presentation: Role of Virgin Mary in Islam</i>
Thursday 5 of December	<b>Exam 3</b>		<b>Exam 3</b>
<b>Final draft of essay due at scheduled final exam time: Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 10:00am –12:45pm</b>			

**End of Course**