

Spanish 4324: Literature of Mexico

To Build and To Break: Discourses of Formation and Fragmentation of National Identities in Post-Revolutionary Mexican Literature

Fall 2015

Professor: Dr. Sara Potter

Class: TR 1:30-2:50pm Liberal Arts Building, Rm. 208

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Office Hours: T 3-5pm, W 3-4pm, or by appointment

Texts: All texts will be posted on Blackboard or otherwise made available online or in the UTEP library. * It is your responsibility to obtain these texts and to read them carefully before each class. If there are any problems finding a text, or with the format, *please* let me know immediately. Showing up to class and informing me that the text could not be found is not acceptable. Primary texts include:

*If you have not done so already, please make sure you can access online books and journal articles from the UTEP library (lib.utep.edu). There is a signup process that can take a day or two to be approved, so please do this as soon as possible to ensure that you have access to these important resources. For more information please visit the following page:

<http://libanswers.utep.edu/a.php?qid=57186>.

Class description: In this course, we will engage in readings of the construction and fragmentation of *lo mexicano* from the Revolution (1910-1920) to the present, both within and without the literary canon. Students will first examine and question what constitutes the canonical discourses of national identity and history and then contrast these discourses with non-canonical texts that question and problematize these idealized constructions, with a continuing focus on presentations of race, gender, sexuality, and class. Readings will draw from narrative, *crónica*, essays, and films. Authors to be read include but are not limited to: Nellie Campobello, Mariano Azuela, Arqueles Vela, Xavier Villaurrutia, Samuel Ramos, Octavio Paz, Elena Garro, Elena Poniatowska, Inés Arredondo, Amparo Dávila, Remedios Varo*, Juan Rulfo, Carlos Fuentes, and Edgar Clément.

Course objectives: Students will familiarize themselves with major literary, philosophical, and theoretical currents and conversations in Mexican intellectual circles and engage in critical verbal and written analysis of each text in written and spoken Spanish, all the while considering the historical, social, and political context in which each text was produced. Issues and presentations of gender, race, and class will be considered constantly over the course of the semester.

Students will develop the skills of critical and analytical reading and writing of the narratives addressed in this course, with particular emphasis given to the processes of close reading and

academic writing. In all cases, but most particularly for those who are Spanish majors, the essays and in-class presentations will evaluate the student's ability to do the following:

- The student must demonstrate evidence of a careful and attentive reading through the analysis and/or synthesis of assigned texts.
- The student must consider the text in terms of its historical, cultural, political, and social context and be able to explain how it fits into the greater intellectual conversation.
- The student should be able to identify connections between and across texts and historical events.
- The student will be able to present his or her ideas in a well-organized manner, with a clear thesis statement and supporting paragraphs with good transitions and a conclusion. This, evidently, will be done in clear, correct academic Spanish.

Course Outcomes:

Students will produce written texts and oral presentations that demonstrate ever-increasing mastery of the above objectives. Students will also have a solid working knowledge of critical theory as it relates to Mexican literature and the development of *lo mexicano* and *mexicanidad* as social and political constructs and have a broad critical vocabulary for discussing audiovisual media as well as textual analysis.

Attendance, Late Arrivals, and Participation:

Attendance is extremely important in a class of this nature, as is punctuality. For these sixteen weeks, we are forming a community of readers, writers, and thinkers, and as such it is vitally important to be mentally and physically present. Part of this attendance grade involves a short and informal one-on-one meeting with me during the first three weeks of class (that is, by **Friday, September 11, 2015**). This is for all students, even if you have had me before—though if you happen to be taking another class from me this semester as well, only one meeting is necessary. I am more than happy to work with your schedules to make this possible, as these meetings are a place for you to tell me about yourself, your studies and interests, your expectations, hopes, and/or concerns for the class, and anything else that is important for me to know. Each class is worth 5 points, as is that first meeting with me. Certain days (such as writing workshops or in-class presentations) will count double. If you are here but arrive late (10 minutes or less), you earn 3 attendance points for the day. If you are more than ten minutes late, it is considered an absence.

Participation means that you are awake, pay attention to the lecture/discussion, and contribute to class discussion by coming prepared (with your texts and with the homework/reading complete), asking relevant and productive questions about the readings, engaging with and thoughtfully responding to other students, and participating actively in small group work. It is important to me to create an environment in which we are 'comfortable being uncomfortable;' that is, in which it is safe to take intellectual risks and to explore new or difficult or uncomfortable ideas.

Late work will not be accepted except in extraordinary circumstances. If you are unable to come to class, you are responsible for finding out what you have missed from your classmates. If you miss an in-class quiz or assignment, contact me as soon as possible for a make-up. Except in

exceptional circumstances, I will not accept late any work that has been assigned in advance (appearing on the syllabus).

Attendance policy: If you are absent an excessive number of times during the drop period—four consecutive absences or six sporadic ones—from the first day after the end of late registration (Friday, August 28) through the last day for faculty to drop students (Friday, October 30), you risk being dropped from the course. I will not do this without contacting you first; students who simply stop coming to class will *not* be automatically dropped but will instead earn an F in the course. Once the last day for faculty to drop students has passed, your course grade will drop two percentage points per absence once you have reached four absences. (4 absences is 2% off; 5 absences is 4% off, etc.)

Late arrivals and early departures also carry penalties for purposes of dropping or lowering the course grade: two late arrivals equal one absence, two early departures equal one absence, and one late arrival plus one early departure equal one absence. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to tell me at the end of the class period that you were indeed present so that I do not accidentally mark you absent. It is *extremely* important to be on time for class in order to take full advantage of the short 80 minutes we have together twice a week.

Important dates to keep in mind:

(The Fall 2015 Calendar: <http://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=75421>)

- Wednesday, September 9: Census Day
- Friday, September 18: Last day to select Pass/Fail option
- Monday, October 26: Midterm grades distributed
- **Friday, October 30: Course Drop Deadline**
- **Thursday, November 26: No class (Thanksgiving)**
- **Thursday, December 10, 1pm-3:45pm: Final Exam**

On Technology In Class:

Personal computers, iPads, tablets, etc., are allowed in class as long as they are used only for class-related activities (reviewing texts, taking notes, etc.). Please turn off or silence all cell phones, beepers, or anything else that goes off, beeps, or otherwise makes noise. Any student caught doing otherwise (texting, checking email, etc.) will be asked to put away the distracting device and will lose participation points as well.

Grading Scale:

A = 100-90 B = 89-80 C = 79-70 D = 69-60 F = 59-0

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP). It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports.

Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents another persons' words or ideas as ones' own. This most frequently happens when someone quotes part of a text written by someone else, either verbatim or paraphrased, without proper citation. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions. Please consult the Handbook of Operating Procedures (admin.utep.edu/hoop/) for the complete University policy on academic dishonesty. You may also consult with Dr. Catie McCorry-Andalis, the Assistant Dean of Students, by calling 915-747-5648 or emailing cmandalis@utep.edu.

Students with Disabilities

If you have or believe you have a disability, you may wish to self-identify. You can do so by providing documentation to the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS, <http://sa.utep.edu/cass/>) located in the Student Union Building East, Room 106. They may be reached by phone (915-747-5148) or e-mail (cass@utep.edu). If you have a condition that may affect your ability to exit safely from the premises in an emergency or that may cause an emergency during class, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with me and/or the CASS.

Composition of Grade:

Participation and Attendance:	15%
Midterm:	20%
Essays:	25% (2 with rewrites; 10% and 15%)
In-class presentations:	20%
Final exam:	20%

Calendario del curso

Semana 1: Introducciones a la clase y a “lo mexicano”/ “la mexicanidad”

Martes 25/08: Introducción a la clase, revisión del sílabus, actividades de conocimiento

Jueves 27/08:

- Leer Roger Bartra, “Prólogo”, 11-21
- Leer Ezequiel A. Chávez, “La sensibilidad del mexicano”, pp. 15-34
- Contestar preguntas de lectura, con enfoque particular en el concepto de “lo mexicano”

Semana 2: ¡Viva la Revolución!

Martes 01/09:

- Leer *Los de abajo*, Mariano Azuela, 1a parte, pp. 2-34 (I-XXI)
- Preparar respuestas a las preguntas de lectura

Jueves 03/09:

- Leer *Los de abajo*, 2a parte, pp. 35-59 (I-XIII)

- Leer “Pasiones mexicanas”, Julio Guerrero (en Bartra) pp. 47-53
- Preguntas

Semana 3: La Revolución y la(s) novela(s) resultante(s)

Martes 08/09:

- Terminar *Los de abajo*, 3a parte, pp. 60-67 (I-VI)
- Leer “La novela de la Revolución Mexicana”, Juan Bruce-Novoa, pp. 36-44
- Preguntas

Jueves 10/09:

- Leer *Cartucho*, Nellie Campobello, pp. 45-84 (Parte I + Parte II hasta e incluso “El general Rueda”)
- Preguntas (A considerar: ¿Cómo cumple esta novela (o no) con las normas de la novela de la Revolución según Bruce-Novoa? ¿Qué semejanzas y diferencias ves entre este texto y *Los de abajo*? ¿Cómo se representa la muerte y la violencia en los dos textos?)

Semana 4: Villa lloró: Otras representaciones, otras perspectivas

**Para consultar y terminar al principio de la clase el jueves 17 de septiembre: Max Parra, Cap. 3 sobre *Cartucho*, pp. 48-76 (disponible electrónicamente en la biblioteca, *Writing Pancho Villa's Revolution*)

Martes 15/09:

- Leer *Cartucho* pp. 85-124 (de Parte II, “Las tripas del general Sobarzo” hasta Parte III, “Mi hermano y su baraja”).
- Preguntas (A considerar: ¿Cómo se comparan las representaciones de masculinidad y feminidad en *Cartucho* y *Los de abajo*? ¿La representación de/la reacción a la muerte de Villa?)

Jueves 17/09:

- Terminar *Cartucho* pp. 125-161
- Preguntas (A pensar: ¿Cómo se organiza el texto en el sentido narrativo? Es decir, ¿quién cuenta las historias y desde qué punto(s) de vista? ¿Qué recursos son empleados para cobrar autoridad textual y narrativo?)

Semana 5: En las secuelas de la Revolución: Reacciones vanguardistas

Martes 22/09:

Taller de escritura – traer dos (2) copias impresas del borrador completo del Ensayo 1

Jueves 24/09:

Risas estridentistas

- Leer Manuel Maples Arce, Actual No. 1 (8 pp.) y “Urbe: Super-Poema Bolchevique en 5 Cantos” (9 pp.)
- Leer Árcqueles Vela, “La señorita, etc.” (9 pp.)
- Preguntas (A considerar: ¿A qué responde el movimiento estridentista? ¿Cuáles son los objetivos del estridentismo según el manifiesto? ¿Cómo aparecen (o no) en el poema de Maples Arce y la novela* de Vela?)

Semana 6: Vanguardismo a continuación y La edad de oro del cine mexicano

Martes 29/09: ***Entregar todas las versiones del Ensayo 1* (borrador del taller + revisiones)**

Los Contemporáneos y l@s surrealistas

- Leer “Fonógrafos” y “Nocturno en que nada se oye”, Xavier Villaurrutia (2 pp.)
- Leer “Novela como nube”, Gilberto Owen (pp. 146-184)
- Preguntas (Para considerar: reacciones a y continuaciones de las inclinaciones revolucionarias y/o estridentistas, presentaciones de género (esp. masculinidades))

Jueves 10/01:

- Leer “El mesías mexicano”, Anita Brenner (Bartra)
- Leer “La raza cósmica”, José Vasconcelos (Bartra)
- Leer “De homo rodans”, Remedios Varo
- Preguntas

Semana 7

Martes 06/10:

- Recibir Ensayo 1 (corregido)
- Mirar *¡Que viva México!* (dir. Sergei Eisenstein, 90 min.)
- Leer “Eisenstein’s *¡Que viva México!*: “Prologue,” Prehistory, Anthropological and Nationalist Discourses”, Masha Salazkina (17 pp.)
- Leer “México eterno”, Antonin Artaud (Bartra), pp. 101-105
- Preguntas sobre la película / el capítulo de Salazkina / Artaud: representaciones visuales y estéticas de “lo mexicano”

Jueves 08/10:

- Mirar *Allá en el rancho grande* (dir. Fernando de Fuentes, 1936, 98 min.) en clase
- Leer “Función corrida”, Carlos Monsiváis, pp. 261-295
- Preguntas

Semana 8

Martes 13/10:

- Entregar Ensayo 1, versión 2 (todas las versiones)
- Leer “El complejo de inferioridad”, Samuel Ramos (en Bartra), pp. 109-120
- Leer “Los hijos de la Malinche”, Octavio Paz (en Bartra), pp. 159-178
- Preguntas (Para pensar: evoluciones y cambios en el discurso entre Ramos y Paz)

Jueves 15/10:

- Ver *María Candelaria* (dir. Emilio “el Indio” Fernández, 76 min.) en clase
- Leer “El Yo indígena”, Luis Villoro (en Bartra), pp. 203-214
- Preguntas

Semana 9

Martes 20/10:

- Leer “Diversity, difference and nation: Indigenous peoples on Mexican screen”, Armida de la Garza (pp. 413-424)
- Leer Juan Rulfo, “Acuérdate”, “El hombre” (*El llano en llamas*)
- Preguntas (A considerar: relaciones entre las lecturas y la película, más la evolución estética del cine de la edad dorada desde *¿Qué viva México!* hasta *María Candelaria*)

Jueves 22/10:

- Leer “Estío”, Inés Arredondo, “El gato”, Juan Garía Ponce”, “El huésped”, Ámparo Dávila
- Preguntas (¿A qué o a quiénes se refieren con esta generación? ¿Cuáles eran sus preocupaciones principales? ¿Cuáles se ven reflejadas en estos cuentos, y cómo?)

Semana 10

- Martes 27/10: Comenzar *Rojo amanecer* en clase (dir. Jorge Fons, 96 min.)
- Leer: “La memoria como “espectro” en *Rojo amanecer* de Jorge Fons”, J.J. Rojas
- Preguntas

Jueves 29/10: Taller de escritura, Ensayo 2

Semana 11

Martes 03/11:

- **Entregar todas las versiones de Ensayo 2**
- Evaluación en clase (50 minutos—no hay que preparar nada, pero es esencial estar aquí)
- En clase: terminar *Rojo amanecer* (dir. Jorge Fons, 96 min.)
- Leer “Tiempo mexicano”, Carlos Fuentes (en Bartra), pp. 257-265
- Preguntas

Jueves 05/11:

- Leer *Hasta no verte, Jesús mío*, Elena Poniatowska, Cap. 1-4, 7-8 (pp. 9-44, 65-91)
- Preguntas, con enfoque particular en el testimonio como género

Semana 12

Martes 10/11:

- Leer *Hasta no verte*, Cap. 9-14 (pp. 92-159)
- Preguntas, con enfoque en la experiencia de la soldadera y la presentación de Villa

Jueves 12/11:

- Leer *Hasta no verte*, Cap. 16-18, 29 (165-197, 304-316)
- Leer “Gallo-Gallina: Gender Performance and the Androgynous Imagination in Elena Poniatowska’s *Hasta no verte Jesús mío*”, Carmen Serrano (aprox. 23 pp.)

Semana 13: De NAFTA/TLC y novelas gráficas

Martes 17/11:

- Leer *Operación Bolívar*, Edgar Clément, pp. 1-55

- Preguntas, con enfoque particular en la estética y las imágenes repetidas--¿qué partes de México/de los mexicanos se representan ahí, y cómo?

Jueves 19/11:

- Leer *Operación Bolívar*, Clément, pp. 56-110
- Preguntas, con enfoque en las (MUCHAS) referencias históricas y culturales

Semana 14

Martes 24/11:

- Terminar *Operación Bolívar*, 110-160
- Leer “*Operación Bolívar* y la conspiración en la hiperabundancia de la información”, Rafael Acosta

Jueves 26/11: No hay clases -- ¡Feliz Día de Acción de Gracias!

Semana 15

Martes 01/12:

- (Antes de la clase) Mirar *Sleep Dealer* (dir. Alex Rivera, 90 min. – disponible gratis en Hulu o por \$3-4 en Google Play, iTunes, Amazon Instant Video o YouTube)
- Leer “La condición postmexicana”, Roger Bartra, pp. 303-310
- ¿Cómo se comunican (o no) *Operación Bolívar*, *Sleep Dealer* y esta condición de la que habla Bartra? ¿Qué preocupaciones se ven ahí presentes y cómo se dirige cada texto a estos problemas?

Jueves 03/12: Atar cabos sueltos; taller de escritura – ensayo final

Semana 16

Jueves 10/12: Examen final, 1:00-3:45pm