Contemporary Spanish History through Film

COURSE DETAILS

Course Designator and Number: MADR 3027
Number of Credits: 3
Language of Instruction: English
Contact Hours: 45
Instructor: Marta López Beriso

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Spanish cinema provides an excellent route for understanding social and political change throughout the 20th and 21st Centuries. As the most important artistic medium of modernity, cinema allows one to construct and deconstruct many myths and identities. This course will analyze the most relevant Spanish film productions primarily as socio-historical documents (content). Topics in Spain may include the Republic and Civil War (Fernán Gómez and Buñuel), the ‘60s comic criticism of dictatorship (García Berlanga), and censorship (Lazaga), the transition to democracy (Garci and Almodóvar), and the new ‘90s cinema (Amenábar, de la Iglesia, Medem, Coixet, and Bollaín).

Course Objectives

- Acquire a holistic understanding of the history of 20th- and 21st-Century Spain.
- Gain knowledge of the most important figures in Spanish cinema.
- Participate in meaningful discussions about the Spanish history and culture.
- Learn to contrast the theoretical concepts with the socio-cultural reality outside of the classroom.
- Apply basic methodologies and critical thought to current historical controversies.
Methodology

Class will be discussion based with viewing of pertinent movies in class and discussion of readings and their historical context

Required Readings/Materials

- All mandatory readings, films, and course activities compiled by the professor will be given to students in a pen drive.
- Films will be provided to the students to view before/during class

Readings

- Agawu-Kakraba, Yaw "Where Do We Go From Here?" Section VIII:
- Hooper, John, "From Hunger to Prosperity" Section IV:
- Hooper, John "From Dictatorship to Democracy" Section V:
- Hooper, John "Arts and Artists: No Limits" Section VII:
- Hooper, John "The New Spaniards" Section IX:
- Smith, Paul Julian "The 'Movida' Relocated: Press, Chronicle, Novel" Section VI:
- Williams, Mark, "Best of times, worst of times:" Section I:
- Williams, Mark "The Age of Franco:" Section III:
## Grading

### Grading Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter grade</th>
<th>Score or percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93–100</td>
<td>Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90–92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87–89</td>
<td>Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83–86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80–82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77–79</td>
<td>Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73–76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70–72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67–69</td>
<td>Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60–66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0–59</td>
<td>Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Percentage of grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class preparation and participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion &amp; opinion essays (2)</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final reflection</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall grade</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Details

**Lectures, Film Screenings, & Study Visits**
Classes will present slideshows and partial screenings to motivate students into class debate and discussion.

As part of the coursework, students must also screen movies weekly on their own. Students are encouraged to organize group screening at their homes. Students will watch each movie and respond to a general question in the form of a brief essay linking the plot and the period of the History of Spain it relates to (see below).

As a part of the class contents, students will meet for the following study visits:
- Visit to Reina Sofía on Picasso's "Guernica"
- Visit to Atocha Train Station on "From War to Terrorism"

**Class Preparation & Participation**
Students are expected to do the readings assigned for each class meeting beforehand, and to actively participate in class discussions. These readings, as part of the course materials, are sources they also need to contemplate and include when completing assignments and written requirements. Along with the mandatory film screenings included in this class, students are encouraged to watch as many as possible Spanish films on their own. A complete list is accessible at the library on free rental.

**Discussion & Opinion Essays**
Students must complete an assignment (two in total) responding to a precise question linking the plot and the period of the history of Spain it relates to. Topics will be announced by professor in class and debated among students and the professor. Students are expected to critically discuss the given topic including—but not limited to—his/her opinion and in the form of a brief essay. Papers must be two pages long, typed, double-spaced, in Times New Roman.
Final Reflection Paper
As a final exercise, students will reflect on what they have learned in the course about Spanish history and Spanish cinema. Students will respond to a generic question, in the form of a brief essay, to demonstrate their understanding of how historical events are portrayed in the course films and in one more film of their choice. They are expected to use at least two sources from course readings and two additional scholarly sources (journal articles, book chapters, documentaries, newspapers, social media contributions, etc.) to support their arguments. Papers must be 4–5 pages long, typed, double-spaced, in Times New Roman (12pt), with 2.5cm/1-inch margins on all four sides. The final reflection paper should reflect the student’s point of view, critical thinking, and interpretive skills, and will be submitted in class. Email submissions will not be accepted.

COURSE CONTENT

Unit 1

Introduction
- Spanish history and cinema
- Key concepts
- Spain’s second republic
- Reader’s section I: Mark Williams, “Best of times, worst of times”
- FILM: La vaquilla by Luis Garcia Berlanga

Unit 2: ONLY CLASS SECTION A

The Civil War
- Reader’s Section III: Mark Williams, “The Age of Franco”
- FILM: Viridiana by Luis Buñuel
- From War to Terrorism through Persecution, Violence and Exile
- Reader’s section IV: John Hooper, “From Hunger to Prosperity”
- Study visit to Museo Reina Sofia
- Study visit to Atocha Train Station

Unit 3: ONLY CLASS SECTION B

Franco’s Era
- Reader’s Section III: Mark Williams, “The Age of Franco”
- FILM: Viridiana by Luis Buñuel
• From War to Terrorism through Persecution, Violence and Exile
• Reader’s section IV: John Hooper, “From Hunger to Prosperity”
• Study visit to Atocha Train Station

Unit 4

The Transition to Democracy
• Reader’s section V: John Hooper, “From Dictatorship to Democracy”
• Discussion essay #1

Unit 5

“La Movida”
• Reader’s section VI: Paul Julian Smith “The ‘Movida’ Relocated: Press, Chronicle, Novel”
• FILM: Átame by Pedro Almodóvar

Unit 6

Spain in the World
• Reader’s section VII: John Hooper, “Arts and Artists: No Limits”
• FILM: Abre los ojos by Alejandro Amenábar
• Discussion essay #2

Unit 7

Post-Modern Spain
• Reader’s Section VIII: Yaw Agawu-Kakraba, “Where Do We Go From Here? The Allegorical Paradigm of Spanish Science Fiction and the Post-modernized Spanish Culture”

Unit 8

21st-Century Spain
• Reader’s Section IX: John Hooper, “The New Spaniards”
• Final reflection paper due
Unit 9

Joint Session with All Faculty & Students to Debate on Overall Course Conclusions

POLICIES

Attendance Policy
Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the on-site syllabus for specific class requirements.

University of Minnesota Policies & Procedures
Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty
Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an “F” or “N” for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

Student Conduct
The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found on the Learning Abroad Center website.