

Spain as Seen Through Its Movies: 1980s to Today

COURSE DETAILS

Course Designator and Number: BCLA 3014

Number of Credits: 3

Language of Instruction: English

Contact Hours: 45

Instructor: On-Site Faculty

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The main goal of this course is to provide students with a general understanding of Spain, taking into consideration its recent past, but focusing mainly on some of the most relevant and controversial issues of the current situation. The use of movies as a vehicular tool allows not only for the introduction of the cultural factor, but also the very Spanish perspective(s) that helps explain how the country sees and understands itself.

The course will address the following general questions: a) what it means to speak of a "national cinema;" b) how cinema constructs and/or contests of his or her story; c) cinema's impact on shifting notions of what constitutes the human condition; d) how the formal qualities of cinematic narrative shape on-screen stories; e) where and how issues of gender, sexuality, class, and ethnicity surface in cinematic articulations of the relationship between national identity, global trends, and personal history.

There are five sections or blocks to this course. The first block will cover the Spanish Civil War and the subsequent dictatorship, indispensable to understand the last 40 years of democracy in Spain. The second block is almost a monography to the figure of Pedro Almodóvar, his time, and the 'España' his movies depict. The third focuses on the genre of horror, very rich in the recent Spanish production and quite 'imitated' by Hollywood. These last

two blocks serve as a good opportunity to reflect about the political/national/identity aspects of the cinema industry.

In an attempt to reverse the perspective, the last two blocks approach current Spanish issues with an important impact in the society as a whole and its citizens as individuals. The fourth block discusses Spanish politics and its most recent developments. And the fifth one is a gender approach to the demographics of the country.

Course Objectives

This course seeks to provide an understanding of “culture” in cinematic form and the development of a vocabulary particular to the formal and thematic study of contemporary commercial cinema. To achieve this goal, the student will learn terminology (shot, sequence, frame, etc.) specific to discussion of the cinematic text. By the end of the course, the student should be able to critically examine the connection between cultural content and cinematic form.

Developmental Outcomes

Students should demonstrate:

- Responsibility and accountability
- Independence and interdependence
- Goal orientation
- Self-confidence
- Resilience
- Appreciation of differences

Methodology

Other than the introductory and the ‘bureaucratic’ sessions when the theoretical and methodological keys of the course will be set clearly, the semester is conceived as five differentiated blocks of three sessions. Each block includes a Spanish movie, a lecture, and an in-class reflection/debate about the topics and subtopics derived.

Required Readings/Materials

- Selection of articles and book chapters compiled by the professor (these will be available either electronically or as handouts)
- Tim Corrigan’s *A Short Guide to Writing About Film* (4th edition or newer, though any edition is fine, as I will clarify assignments in class)
- [IMDb](#) is an important resource for students to find basic information on each film. They must print out the basic information and the names of the characters/actors for use as a resource in class.

Recommended Bibliography

– BARTON, Simon, *A History of Spain*, Palgrave MacMillan, 2009.

- CHAPMAN, Charles, *A History of Spain: Founded on the Historia de España y de la Civilización Española of Rafael Altamira*, Forgotten Books, 2012.
- CHISLETT, William, *Spain. What Everyone Needs to Know*, Oxford University Press, 2013.
- DELGADO, Maria M., *Spanish Cinema 1973-2010*, Manchester UP, 2014.
- FAULKNER, Sally, *A History of Spanish Film*, Bloomsbury Academic, 2013.
- GUNTHER, Richard, *The Politics of Spain*, Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- HOOPER, John, *The New Spaniards*, Penguin, 2006.
- JORDAN, Barry, *Spanish Culture and Society*, Hodder Education, 2002.
- LABANYI, Jo, *Constructing Identity in Contemporary Spain*, Oxford UP, 2002.
- *A Companion to Spanish Cinema*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2015.
- McKENDRICK, Melveena, *Spain: A History*, New York City, 2016.
- ORTI, Pilar, *The A to Z of Spanish Culture*, lulu.com, 2012.
- PAYNE, Stanley G., *Spain, A Unique History*, University of Wisconsin, 2011.
- PHILIPS, William D. & PHILIPS, Carla Rahn, *A Concise History of Spain*, Cambridge, 2010.
- PLATT PARMELE, Mary, *A Short History of Spain*, Enhanced Media Publishing, 2016.
- REQUEJO, Ferran, *Multinational Federalism and Value Pluralism: The Spanish Case*, Routledge, 2005.
- RODGERS, Eamonn, *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Spanish Culture*, Routledge, 2001.
- SMITH, Paul Julian, *Contemporary Spanish Culture*, Polity Press, 2002.
- *Spanish Visual Culture*, Manchester University Press, 2006
- STONE, Rob, *Spanish Cinema*, Routledge, 2001.
- TATLOCK, R.R., *Spanish Art*, Read Books, 2011.
- TREMLETT, GILES, *Ghosts of Spain*, Faber & Faber, 2007.

Filmography

Watched in class

- Agustí Villaronga, *Pa negre*, 2010.
- Pedro Almodóvar, *Todo sobre mi madre*, 1999.
- Jaume Balagueró, *[Rec]*, 2007.
- Daniel Calparsoro, *Cien años de perdón*, 2016.
- Icíar Bollaín, *Te doy mis ojos*, 2003.

Others recommended

- Santiago Aguilar, *Justino*, 1994.
- Pedro Almodóvar, *La mala educación*, 2004.
- Alejandro Amenábar, *Tesis*, 1996.
- *Mar Adentro*, 2004.
- Vicente Aranda, *Libertarias*, 1996.
- Dunia Ayaso, *Perdona bonita, però Lucas me quería a mí*, 1997.
- Juanma Bajo Ulloa, *Airbag*, 1997.
- Jaume Balagueró, *Mientras duermes*, 2011.
- J.A. Bayona, *El Orfanato*, 2007.
- Luis Buñuel, *Un chien andalou*, 1929.
- *Viridiana*, 1961.
- Isabel Coixet, *La vida secreta de las Palabras*, 2005.
- *La librería*, 2017.
- José Corbacho, *Tapas*, 2005.

- Miguel Courtois, *El Lobo*, 2004.
- José Luis Cuerda, *La Lengua de las Mariposas*, 1999.
- Agustín Díaz Yanes, *Alatriste*, 2006.
- Javier Fesser, *El Milagro de P. Tinto*, 1998.
- Luis García Berlanga, *Bienvenido Mr. Marshall*, 1953.
Plácido, 1961.
- Álex de la Iglesia, *El día de la Bestia*, 1995.
Balada triste de trompeta, 2010.
- Fernando León de Aranoa, *Los Lunes al sol*, 2002.
Princesas, 2005.
- Ken Loach, *Tierra y Libertad*, 1995.
- Bigas Luna, *Jamón, jamón*, 1992.
Yo soy la Juani, 2006.
- Emilio Martínez Lázaro, *Ocho Apellidos Vascos*, 2014.
Ocho Apellidos Catalanes, 2015.
- Julio Medem, *Lucía y el sexo*, 2001.
- Pilar Miró, *El crimen de Cuenca*, 1980.
- Josefina Molina, *Función de noche*, 1981.
- Daniel Monzón, *Celda 211*, 2009.
- Chema de la Peña, *23-F*, 2011.
- María Ripoll, *Tu vida en 65'*, 2006
Ahora o nunca, 2015.
- José Luis Sáenz de Heredia, *Raza*, 1942.
- Carlos Saura, *Cría cuervos*, 1976.
Bodas de Sangre, 1981.
- Santiago Segura, *Torrente, el brazo tonto de la ley*, 1998.
- Guillermo del Toro, *El Laberinto del Fauno*, 2006.
- David Trueba, *Soldados de Salamina*, 2003.
Vivir es fácil con los ojos cerrados, 2013.
- Fernando Trueba, *Belle Époque*, 1992.
Chico y Rita, 2010.
- Enrique Urbizu, *La caja 507*, 2002.

Grading

Grading Rubric

Letter grade	Score or percentage	Description
A	93–100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to

		meet course requirements.
A-	90-92	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B+	87-89	
B	83-86	
B-	80-82	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C+	77-79	
C	73-76	
C-	70-72	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
D+	67-69	
D	60-66	
F	0-59	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.

Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

Assignments	Percentage of grade
Preparation and participation	20%
Movie reviews	30%
Three group analytical essays	30%
Remake of film (final project)	20%

Overall grade	100%
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Assessment

Movie(s) Analysis (5 x 7% = 35%)

For each of the five movies watched in class, students must write a 1-2 page article in the shape of a magazine article that proves not only the personal interpretation of the film, but also the capacity of learning about the Spanish reality through it. A rubric is provided later in this syllabus that specifies the information to be included and the format of these movie analyses.

Midterm (15%)

This midterm exam will consist of a multiple-choice exercise with around 50 questions about the specific data covered during the sessions so that students can prove a detailed and specific knowledge of the main historical/political/cultural/artistic events and characters.

Research and Presentation (20%)

Throughout the semester, students will work on a project that they will present to their classmates. The students are to choose a Spanish director and conduct research about his/her work (including watching at least three of his/her movies), and his/her significance for the Spanish cinematography and for the understanding of the Spanish reality in general. A rubric is provided later in this syllabus that specifies the information to be included, the format of the presentation, and the different deadlines.

Final Exam (10%)

One topic from the ones covered in class to be explained in an essay style. The approach and length of these questions will be completely free. The answer must prove the student's understanding of the specific topic by covering as much information from the theory lectures and from the classmates' presentations as possible, but also his/her ability to link the different lectures, readings, seminars and activities in order to enrich the answer.

Participation (20%)

This class has a mandatory attendance policy. The participation and behavior during the class sessions will be monitored throughout the whole semester. Attendance is taken at the beginning of every class. Each unauthorized absence from class will result in a 3 percent reduction of the final grade (for example: an A- [92] will become a B+ [89]). More than two unauthorized absences are considered a pattern of repeated absences and will result in failure of the course and possible dismissal from the program.

A 100% attendance does not immediately translate into the full grade in this part of the evaluation, since participation also implies interaction with the professor and classmates and an active and positive attitude throughout the semester. Inappropriate behaviors such as sleeping in class, or the use of computers or smartphones without permission (see ground rules for more), can lower this grade down to 0.

Ground Rules

- Students are to read and fully understand this syllabus. The information contained in it is very important and provides the guidelines for the whole semester. Students cannot allege ignorance of its content during a possible conflict.
- The classroom door will remain closed after the first 10 minutes. Students are not allowed to come in once the door has been closed. Even if accepted (during the first 10 min.) lateness also affects the participation grade.
- When emailing the professor, students must state their name and group. They should be aware that emails asking questions that can be solved by reading the syllabus will only receive the following response: "Answer to be found on the syllabus."
- Food and drinks are not allowed in class (only water bottles).
- There will be a 10-minute break.
- If a student needs to leave class early, they must tell the professor before the class starts.
- Students must leave the classroom during the session.
- Students are not allowed to record the classes by using any video or audio devices, nor to take pictures of the PowerPoint slides.
- Due to data and persona protection, it is absolutely forbidden to take pictures in the classroom that could include the professor or other classmates (breaks included) without an explicit consent.
- The use of smartphones during the class sessions is strictly prohibited.
- The use of laptops is not allowed during the class sessions, unless otherwise indicated.
- Students are not allowed to use any type of MP3, iPod, or similar while in class.
- Students who sleep in class will be called out and expelled.

Exam Rules

- Students who cheat in exams will be expelled and penalized for such behavior. They will lose the grade in that exam.
- Students must complete exams using a blue or black pen, never a pencil or a red pen. Exams written in red pen or pencil will not be graded.
- When necessary, students must use clear handwriting. Exams with difficult-to-read handwriting will not be graded.

COURSE CONTENT

Unit 1

- 1st session
 - Introductions and Syllabus

Unit 2

- 2nd session
 - Class Methodology and Materials

Unit 3

- 3rd session
 - How to Speak and Write About Cinema
- 4th session
 - Quick History of Spanish Cinema

Unit 4

- 5th session
 - Lecture: Spanish Civil War and Dictatorship
- 6th session
 - Movie: *Pa Negre*

Unit 5

- 7th session
 - Debate: The War and Dictatorship Today
- 8th session
 - Lecture: Almodóvar's '80s

Unit 6

- 9th session
 - Movie: *Todo sobre mi madre*
- 10th session
 - Debate: Civil Rights, Obtained and Pending

Unit 7

- 11th session
 - Guest Speaker: Experimental Cinema
- 12th session
 - Midterm

Unit 8

- 13th session
 - Lecture: Horror Comparisons: Spain v. USA.
- 14th session
 - Movie: *[Rec]*

Unit 9

- 15th session
 - Debate: National Perspectives in Cinema
- 16th session
 - Lecture: Spanish Politics Today

Unit 10

- 17th session
 - Movie: *Cien años de perdón*
- 18th session
 - Debate: Spanish Politics and Corruption

Unit 11

- 19th session
 - Lecture: Spanish Society and Gender
- 20th session
 - Movie: *Te doy mis ojos*

Unit 12

- 21st session
 - Debate: Inequalities and Minorities in Spain
- 22nd session
 - Outing: Barcelona Used as Scenery

Unit 13

- 23rd session
 - Presentations
- 24th session
 - Presentations

Unit 14

- 25th session
 - Review Session
- 26th session
 - Final Exam

Movie Analysis Worksheet

This worksheet is only a reference to remind students of everything that must be included. Students are encouraged to expand/enrich and include more information/details, but keep in mind that the 'final work' must look like a 1-2 page single space (or 700 to 1,400 words, Times New Roman, 12) **movie magazine article**, not a filled-in card. The first two movie analyses will receive extensive feedback from the professor to help students improve the last three exercises. Note that, if this feedback is not taken into consideration and the same mistakes keep repeating, grade penalties will apply. Review the 'Movie analysis rubric' that follows this worksheet for more detail.

Basic Information

Student Name

Date

Movie Title

Director

Year

Main Cast

Content Analysis

Summary (students' own words). Not too specifically descriptive and/detailed.

Main characters and their role within the movie (their ethical attitudes, their values or antivalues...). More interpretation/opinion than explanation of their 'story'.

Secondary characters and their role within the movie (their ethical attitudes, their values or antivalues...). More interpretation/opinion than explanation of their 'story'.

What are the topics/problems that appear in this movie and how are they approached during the film?

Main topics

Secondary topics

Technical Details and How They Affect the Movie

- Music
- Direction
- Structure
- Script

Personal Reflection

Students should use the materials from the lecture, readings, and debate from the course.

They should link the movie to others they have seen that can be related to this one in one way or another. How is this movie related to the Spanish reality? What was the most surprising part, and what caused a bigger impression? Why? Is it related to any personal experience?

Students should mention other reviews of this movie and their opinion on them.

Rubric for Movie Analysis

Criteria	Excellent (10-8)	Notable (7-6)	Minimal (5-4)	Unacceptable (3-0)
Depth of Reflection	Response demonstrates an in-depth reflection on, and personalization of, concepts, and/or viewpoints presented in the topic sessions (movie, lecture, class debate). Viewpoints and interpretations are insightful and well supported. Clear, detailed examples are provided, as applicable.	Response demonstrates a general reflection on, and personalization of, concepts, and/or viewpoints presented in the topic sessions to date. Viewpoints and interpretations are supported. Appropriate examples are provided, as applicable.	Response demonstrates a minimal reflection on, and personalization of, concepts, and/or viewpoints presented in the topic sessions to date. Viewpoints and interpretations are unsupported or supported with flawed arguments. Examples, when applicable, are not provided or are irrelevant to the assignment.	Response demonstrates a lack of reflection on, or personalization of, concepts, and/or viewpoints presented in the topic sessions to date. Viewpoints and interpretations are missing, inappropriate, and/or unsupported. Examples, when applicable, are not provided.
Connection with course goal: These movie analyses want to challenge students' capacity to	Response includes all components (stated in goal) and meets or exceeds all requirements indicated	Response includes all components (stated in goal) and meets all requirements indicated in the instructions. Each question	Response is missing some components (stated in goal) and/or does not fully meet the requirements indicated in the	Response excludes essential components (stated in goal) and/or does not address the requirements indicated in the instructions. Many

<p>create their own interpretation of each movie watched in class from a basic, technical and content perspective, but also their ability to extract information about Spain, both directly and indirectly, and to accept/include different interpretations to their own in their response.</p>	<p>in the instructions (Movie Analysis Worksheet). Each question or part of the assignment is addressed thoroughly.</p>	<p>or part of the assignment is addressed.</p>	<p>instructions. Some questions or parts of the assignment are not addressed.</p>	<p>parts of the assignment are addressed minimally, inadequately, and/or not at all.</p>
<p>Format and Structure</p>	<p>Writing is clear, concise, and well organized with excellent sentence/ paragraph construction. Thoughts are expressed in a coherent and logical manner. There are no more than three spelling, grammar, or syntax errors per page of writing.</p>	<p>Writing is mostly clear, concise, and well organized with good sentence/ paragraph construction. Thoughts are expressed in a coherent and logical manner. There are no more than five spelling, grammar, or syntax errors per page of writing.</p>	<p>Writing is unclear and/or disorganized. Thoughts are not expressed in a logical manner. There are more than five spelling, grammar, or syntax errors per page of writing.</p>	<p>Writing is unclear and disorganized. Thoughts ramble and make little sense. There are numerous spelling, grammar, or syntax errors throughout the response.</p>

Conclusion	Response shows strong evidence of synthesis of ideas presented and insights gained throughout the topic sessions.	Response shows evidence of synthesis of ideas presented and insights gained throughout the topic sessions.	Response shows little evidence of synthesis of ideas presented and insights gained throughout the topic sessions.	Response shows no evidence of synthesis of ideas presented and insights gained throughout topic sessions.
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General Guidelines for the Research & Presentation

General Instructions

Project and presentation represent, together, 20% of the grade. The specific weight of each part is: content 10% and presentation 10%. Both parts must be fulfilled in order to get this portion of the grade.

The general goal of the work is for students to research a significant Spanish director and watch at least three of his/her movies to grasp the tone and the overall intention of his/her movie career. The movies the students choose to watch should be as separate in time as possible from each other.

Students must have chosen their director and informed the professor by the end of the fourth week. During one of the first class sessions, the different recommended directors will be discussed to help students choose according to their interests. Students are responsible to find the chosen movies on their own.

The final product must be a PowerPoint (or similar) to be used the day of the presentation and to be shared with the classmates (in pdf format). It should include at least, but not only:

- An introduction to the director from the student's personal perspective (find a thesis to defend)
- A brief biography of the director the student chose focused in his/her work (personal life only when relevant) and his/her importance to the Spanish cinematography
- The analysis and interpretation of the three movies of this director students have watched, with a focus on what aspects of Spain can be better understood thanks to his/her work
- Conclusions (also from a personal/critical perspective)

All students must have provided the PDF format of their presentation.

On the day assigned for the presentations, students must:

- Be punctual
- Make sure the PowerPoint (or similar) can be located easily/quickly
- Not read from notes or PowerPoint, but instead present their topic
- Keep the audience engaged and make them part of the presentation

Review the 'Rubric for Research & Presentation' that follows these guidelines for more detail.

Criteria	Excellent (10-8)	Notable (7-6)	Minimal (5-4)	Unacceptable (3-0)
PowerPoint Format and Structure	<p>The PowerPoint (or similar) can be easily followed and helps the understanding of the oral speech. It shows a personalized, not rigid, academic structure and style. Coherent throughout the whole PPT.</p> <p>The speech used is formal and academic. There is just enough amount of text to understand the basics and support the oral speech. The PPT has been thoroughly reviewed and corrected, and shows 1 or no minor spelling/grammar mistakes. Sources are perfectly used and quoted.</p>	<p>The PowerPoint helps the understanding of the oral speech but has some internal problems. It shows an academic structure and style. There is a general coherence but with some minor problems. The speech used is casual/not formal. The PPT has been reviewed but shows 2-3 minor spelling/grammar. Sources are only used as reference.</p>	<p>The PowerPoint is either disconnected from the oral speech or contains too much information and damages/distracts from the oral speech. The style and structure of the PPT don't fit the definition of 'academic.' There are problems of internal coherence in the paper. The speech used is inappropriate for an academic presentation. The PPT shows little to no evidence of having been reviewed and contains several and/or important mistakes that affect the comprehension of the content. Sources are very poor and/or inadequate.</p>	<p>The PowerPoint is a transliteration of the speech reproduced by the student. The style and structure have not been taken into consideration at all. Major problems of internal coherence in the PPT. The speech used is inappropriate and careless. No evidence of reviewing. Major spelling/grammar/syntax mistakes that make the content incomprehensible. No sources have been used.</p>
Content	<p>All the mandatory parts that appear in the general guidelines are present, connected and referenced to each other in a natural way.</p>	<p>All the mandatory parts are present, but there are problems in the relation and connection of the different parts overall. The reflections are</p>	<p>One of the mandatory parts are missing, the other parts look isolated on themselves and show little relation to the rest of the presentation.</p>	<p>More than one of the mandatory parts are missing. The rest are treated poorly, independently and there is no actual 'content' but a series of slides put</p>

	<p>The reflections are deep and show a personalization of concepts, viewpoints and topics. Clear, detailed examples are provided when necessary. The personal opinion/perspective of the student(s) is clear and coherent throughout the whole presentation, but others are discussed.</p>	<p>good but show little evidence of personalization of concepts and viewpoints. Examples/enrichment is present but poor/inadequate. The personal opinion/perspective of the student is unclear or has no coherence problems in different parts of the presentation. Other opinions are rarely or never discussed.</p>	<p>The reflections are poor and there is no evidence of personalization/internalization of concepts/viewpoints/topics. Examples are never provided. The personal opinion/perspective is poor and includes very little work/thought. No use of other opinions.</p>	<p>one after the Other. Little to no reflections, basing the whole presentation on summarizing movies. The personal opinion/perspective is very poor or not present.</p>
<p>Oral Presentation</p>	<p>Student has prepared an oral speech and does not need notes at All. The oral speech is academic, natural, organized, entertaining and provides information clearly. Questions asked are answered without problems or hesitation.</p>	<p>Student has prepared an oral speech and uses notes/slides sporadically and only for reference/when lost. The oral speech is organized but is rigid and little 'personalized.' Questions asked are answered by guessing or with doubts.</p>	<p>Extreme dependence from slides/notes, and very little preparation of the oral speech. The only oral effort are little extra comments/examples outside of the read notes. Serious problems when answering questions.</p>	<p>Student reads everything from the slides (or notes). No oral effort at all. Student is unable to answer questions asked.</p>

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.