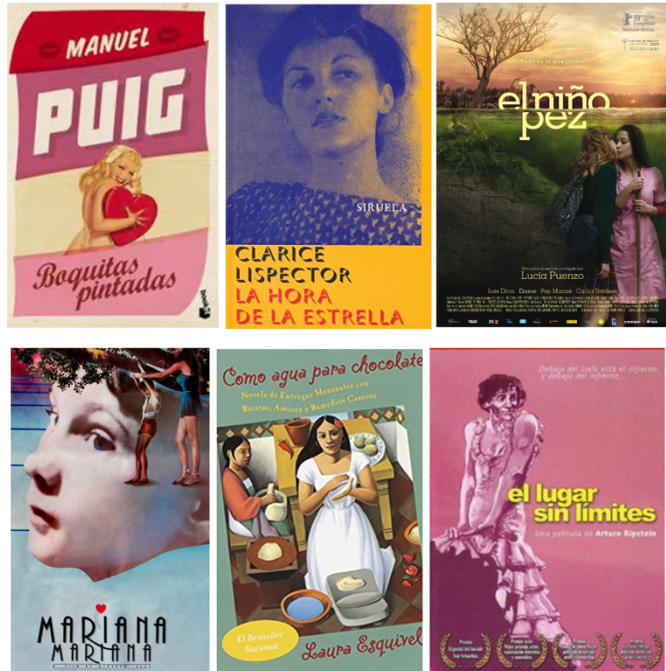


Courses in Spanish

Spanish and Latin American Texts into Films: Considering Adaptations as Adaptations

This course introduces students to film adaptations of Spanish and Latin American novels, short stories, diaries and theater plays in the context of the debate around literary and cinematic adaptations.

In *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006), Linda Hutcheon argues, “to treat adaptations as adaptations is to think of them as [...] ‘palimpsestuous’ works, haunted at all times by the adapted texts. If we know the source text, its presence is always felt in the one we are experiencing. When we call a work an ‘adaptation,’ we acknowledge its open relationship to another work or works.” Inspired by Hutcheon’s ideas, in this course we consider both film adaptations and “source” literary texts as “creative and interpretive acts of appropriation/recovery”, as “intertextual” media. In other words, we will consider film adaptations and their “source” texts in a similar way: as adaptations themselves, as translations or open texts that dialogue with different types of media and genres. Therefore, we try to dispel the general expectations around the “fidelity” or “originality” of the work, to develop a more complex consideration of concepts such as adaptation, translation and transposition. With this objective in mind, we study literary texts and film adaptations that address issues related to gender identity and sexuality and also to migration, and consider how these works explore these themes in relation to the larger theme of ‘adaptation.’



Latin American “Women Writers”: A Feminist Approach

This course introduces students to a representative sampling of Latin American women writers from the colonial period to the twentieth century. The course disseminates a body of literature, which is represented minimally in Hispanic literature courses. Feminism, machismo, motherhood, sexual and political activism, and the role of women as writers are some of the issues that will be explored and discussed during the semester.

In this course, we ask:
Who gets to write?
What does “woman” name?
What is a “woman writer”?

We study the work of feminists women writers from the colonial period up to the 2020s, from Sor Juana Inés to Cristina Rivera Garza. We read lesbian women writers, transwomen writers, bourgeois women writers, indigenous women writers.



“Literature” and “Civilization” of Latin America: A Decolonial Approach

Aymara intellectual, sociologist, historian, and Bolivian essayist Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui says: “Words function very peculiarly under colonialism: words do not designate, but cover up, and this is particularly manifest in the republican phase [i.e., the phase when settler nation-states were established], when it was necessary to adopt egalitarian ideologies while also denying those citizens’ rights to a majority of the population. In this way, words became a fictional record, riddled with euphemisms that veiled reality instead of designating it” (*Sociología de la imagen* 175). The quoted passage condenses the starting point of this course: colonialism does not refer to a historical period; it is not a problem that belongs to the past. This conceptualization of time, and of history, perpetuates the idea that humanity is continually “evolving” or “progressing.”

The peculiar function words assume under colonialism is certainly manifest in academia. In this course, we will take aim at this, starting with the course title and course description. What does Latin American civilization name? What remains obscured or is erased by that name? If we take a step back, what is civilization and how do we measure its “evolution”? Likewise, is it possible to speak of literature when studying oral or visual (non-alphabetical) practices?

This course adopts a decolonial approach to study and interrogate imagery produced by indigenous artists during the colonial period, as well as texts (chronicles, letters, testimonies, novels) from the colonial period up to the present day penned by conquistadores, maroons, and indigenous and mestizo intellectuals and writers. The decolonial approach is necessary to interrogate the concepts, linguistic forms, and even the periodization commonly used when studying topics such as those we will address in this course. The purpose of this course is to give you the tools and the knowledge that will allow you to formulate relevant questions about present-day Latin America, its culture(s) and its histories, and to relate these elements to your own experiences and the present.

