

Fall 2011 LACS Courses

Courses in Other Departments

ENGLISH 365: Studies in Postcolonial Literature: Haunted Cultures- Carib/Afr

Instructor: Evan Mwangi

The course will read the representation of ghosts in texts from the Africa and the Caribbean, linking the ghostly figures to the texts' use of cyclic plots and the simulation of chaotic structures. What aesthetic advantages does the ghost offer the artist who uses its motif? How do these fictions relate to the European gothic novel and African folklore? Why are these fictions pervaded by specters? As we seek answers to these questions, we will read and write about the thematic preoccupations and stylistic choices in works about colonialism and its aftermath in the global south. At the center of the discussions will be the strategies writers use to reclaim agency for characters confronted with overwhelming circumstances under neo-colonialism and patriarchy.

HISTORY 367: History of Modern Brazil

Instructor: Brodwyn Fischer

This course examines the modern history of Latin America's largest, most populous, and most economically powerful nation. In particular, we will seek to understand several striking aspects of modern Brazilian society; its remarkable, but uneven and environmentally destructive, rush towards economic modernization; its radical social and economic inequalities; its racially and culturally hybrid national identities; and its constant -- and frequently troubled -- quest for effective democracy and universal citizenship. Though the course is not explicitly comparative, we will make frequent reference in discussion to the ways in which Brazilian society has sought to meet -- sometimes more effectively, sometimes less -- the same economic, social, legal, and political challenges that have shaped the history of United States. Topics examined will include: populism and military rule; industrialization and economic development; the construction and evolution of racial and ethnic identities and the myth of "racial democracy"; nature, economy, and society; gender, sexuality, and national identity; and the importance of popular culture in Brazilian national life.

HISTORY 392-20: Latin America Memoirs and Testimonials

Instructor: Sarah Osten

This course focuses on the history of several Latin American nations in the 20th century, through the lens of firsthand accounts, as told in memoirs, autobiographies and testimonials. Throughout the course, we will explore the recent histories of these countries through the eyes and the words of people who lived them. Combined with secondary sources that cover these national histories, we will examine the larger historical contexts in which these firsthand texts were produced, and the political and historical events each author addresses. We will also consider the particular perspectives of each of the authors, in terms of their political ideologies, gender and/or cultural and/or class identities, and above all, their motivations for writing (both stated and unstated). This course will also explore the methodological issues and debates raised by this particular type of historical source/literary genre.

SPANISH 211: Icons, Legends and Myths in Latin America

Instructor: Maria Uslenghi

Diverse representations of historical, literary, and popular figures in Latin America, such as the conquistador, the dictator, the gaucho, Simón Bolívar, Che Guevara, Evita, La Malinche, and Carlos Gardel. Focus on forms of representation such as films, documentaries, musical theater, biography, narrative fiction, poetry, and commercial art. Prerequisites: 204.

SPANISH 260: Lit in Latin America before 1888

Instructor: Camilo Castellanos

Survey of pre-Hispanic, colonial, and Romantic traditions in Latin America. Focus on authors and texts such as Popul Vuh, Cristóbal Colón, Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, and Martín Fierro. Prerequisite: 220.