

***Migrant Voices: Latino/a Literature
Through Community-Based Learning***

ROSP 40875-01

Tue. & Thurs. 2-3 DeBartolo 301

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Office Hours: Wed. 1:30-2:45 and Fri. 9-10 or by appointment

Course Description

Migrant Voices is a course designed to bridge together the study of U.S. Latino/a literature and the pedagogy of community-based learning or community-based learning. Our primary focus this semester will be an exploration of the intersection and roles that **memory, history, and art**, play in the emergence of cultural identities in the US. Students will read foundational and contemporary works by U.S. Latinos/a authors from various backgrounds and nationalities (Mexican/Chicano, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, Peruvian) that are representative of the local Michiana U.S. Latino population. Issues of memory, history, race, ethnicity, gender, class, and transnationalism will be central to our discussions and will be examined through both a literary lens and an experiential perspective. Class meetings will allow students to engage in in-depth discussion of literary works, which in turn will enhance their knowledge and appreciation of the various cultures with which they will interact outside the classroom.

For the **community-based learning (CBL)** aspect of the course, students will be expected to engage in a minimum of 2 hours of service per week throughout the semester at local Casa de Amistad. In order for this course to be successful, students will be encouraged to continuously bridge the knowledge obtained in the classroom to their particular experiences serving at Casa de Amistad, particularly through journaling and several in-class reflections. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in an “immersion weekend” in the local Hispanic community during the weekend of Sept. 23-25.

Given the diversity of the U.S. Latino/a population in South Bend, one class meeting will be dedicated to the study of the historical, political, social, and economic backgrounds of each studied group. Readings from Juan González’s *Harvest of Empire*, Allatson’s *Key Terms in Latino/a Cultural and Literary Studies*, films, and additional readings will be a central component in building an adequate knowledge basis that will equip students to achieve a more profound understanding of the literature and of the individuals/families whom they will serve.

While this class will be conducted in Spanish (including most readings, class discussions, and written work), students need to be aware that about half of the reading materials for this course are in English. The bilingual nature of the U.S. Latino/a experience has led many authors to publish their works in English or “Spanglish.” Since language—and the identity crisis that it sometimes provokes—is such a core issue addressed by Latino/a authors, we will be reading texts in the original language in which they were written.

Learning Goals

The student's goals for this course should include the following:

- To learn how to bridge together theory and practice by studying U.S. Latino/a literature through the pedagogy of community-based learning.
- To learn about, and become acquainted with the local U.S. Latino population in South Bend, and therefore, to strengthen ties between Notre Dame and the South Bend community.
- To obtain a better understanding of U.S. Latino/a literature and to become familiarized with both established and emerging U.S. Latino/a authors.
- To become familiarized with the recent histories of various Latin American countries and their migratory movements to the United States.
- To improve verbal communication skills in Spanish through active participation in class discussions and through the micro-immersion experience that service at Casa de Amistad will provide.
- To improve writing skills and fluency in Spanish through frequent written assignments/essays and journal.
- To exercise critical thinking skills and to learn to practice these in and outside the classroom.
- Enhance the student's intercultural competence, global citizenship, and independent learning.
- Please consult http://romancelanguages.nd.edu/undergraduate/goals/spanish_upper.shtml#400 to become familiar with the learning goals and outcomes for 400-level courses in Spanish

Required Texts

In order to keep costs of materials to a minimum, some materials have been placed in Concourse. Students are required to print primary (literary) materials and bring them to class meetings for discussion. Students need to purchase and bring to class all of the following texts:

Paul Allatson, *Key Terms in Latino/a Cultural and Literary Studies*
 Juan González, *Harvest of Empire*
 Tomás Rivera: *...y no se lo tragó la tierra*
 Sandra Cisneros: *House on Mango Street*
 Daniel Alarcón, *Ciudad de payasos*
 William Archila: *The Art of Exile*

Grading

20% Participation
 20% Journal
 20% Exams
 20% Essays
 20% Final project

Attendance and Participation

Regular attendance is crucial for your success in this class, and active participation is expected. Accordingly, 20% of the final grade will be based on in-class participation. Each student is allowed three excused and/or unexcused absences: more than three absences will negatively affect the final grade, and more than five (5) will result in failure of the course. Excused absences are defined by the university, and include university-documented illness, death in the family, and service to the university. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure that the professor receives proper documentation for excused absences. * Students are expected to arrive to class on time. Three late arrivals will be counted as 1 absence.

It is the student's responsibility to contact his/her classmates in order to get class notes for each missed class and to complete the work due on the following meeting. Class participation includes the following: 1) Carefully reading the assigned texts before the respective class period. 2) Forming opinions or coming up with questions about the readings and being prepared to voice them in class. 3) Having texts and journal on hand in the classroom. Emphasis on student participation achieved through the seminar structure of the course is designed to aid students improve their Spanish-language and critical thinking skills.

*Each student is expected to schedule at least one 15 min. meeting with the professor during office hours as part of his/her participation grade (best to schedule after receiving first corrected essay)

*****Special Event:**

Peruvian-American author **Daniel Alarcón** will give a reading, followed by Q & A, at DPAC on October 4, 7:00 pm. This will be a free but ticketed event. Attendance required for students enrolled in the course. Tell your friends!

Classroom Etiquette:

In order to foster a better learning environment, I ask that students observe classroom etiquette: please turn off cell phones and other electronic devices before class begins, and refrain from eating, drinking, and chewing gum during class time. The use of laptop computers in the classroom is highly discouraged.

Please be advised that while the professor will make an effort to reply promptly to e-mail messages, this may not apply to messages sent after 9:30 p.m. or the weekend.

Academic Integrity

In all of your academic pursuits, you should live by the University's Honor Code Pledge:

"As a member of the Notre Dame community, I will not tolerate academic dishonesty."

Before turning in written work, students should thoroughly review the Honor Code policies and procedures, which will be strictly enforced (<http://www.nd.edu/~hnr/code>). Written assignments must be the student's original work, and all statements expressed in short essays, answers to questions, and the final essay must be the student's own unless explicitly marked with a citation. Rules for citation can be found in *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* at the library. Students can also find help regarding citation rules and avoiding plagiarism at <http://www.nd.edu/~writing/resources/AvoidingPlagiarism.html>. You should also keep in mind that it is unacceptable to have another student, a native speaker, a family member, a tutor, etc. correct your written work. More helpful tips on how to write essays can be found in the course packet's appendix.

Journal

Journaling is a core element of this course. Students will keep a class journal in Spanish throughout the semester. Please purchase a small separate notebook solely for this purpose. Although journal entries are not "formal essays," and thus will not be rigorously corrected, they should follow an essay format and will be graded according to the depth of its contents/insights and the quality of its form (grammar). An "average" entry consists of approximately 1 or 1.5 handwritten pages of an 11x 8 notebook. Entries in the journal should appear chronologically, that is, alternating reflections about class readings and the service-learning (or CBL) component of the

course. Students are expected to record a personal, yet critical reflection about the readings *after* having read, but *before* that particular class discussion (choose one day per week). The journal should not be used to summarize readings, but rather to demonstrate that you have carefully reflected on the material. Entries on the service experience should be done following your service day (once a week), and should try to actively draw connections between readings/class discussions and your on-site experiences.

Please bring your journal to every class meeting. Your comments will be used as basis for discussion, and the professor will often ask you to write in the journal during. Journals will be turned in several times during the semester to be graded according to the quality of the entries. Since journaling is such an integral part of each class preparation, it is assumed that journals will be ready for collection at any time without previous notification from the professor. Please make sure to date each entry, and provide titles of readings if applicable. There should be a journal entry for service and one for class (total: 2 per week), unless specified by the professor.

Essays and written work

Throughout the semester, students will be required to write several 2 to 3-page essays and occasional 1-page “reaction papers” about films and topics suggested by the professor (12 pt. Times new Roman font, double-spaced, 1-inch margins). The purpose of these assignments is both to provide an opportunity for students to practice and receive highly detailed feedback on their written Spanish communicative skills, as well as to assess the progress of the student’s critical thinking skills throughout the semester. Essays will be graded according to form and content. Only hard copies of essays and assignments will be accepted: please do not send assignments or essays by e-mail. If you need to send an essay via e-mail because you will not be in class, please do so before the class period is over (to guarantee it is not late) and also bring a hard copy to the following class meeting. Late assignments will be penalized as follows without exceptions: minus 2 pts. if work is not turned in during class, and minus 2 pts. per consecutive day the work is late. Late essays will not be accepted after 48 hours of the time in which it is to be turned in and the student will receive a zero for that assignment.

All written work must comply with the MLA format, found in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, a great general reference on how to write academic papers.

Final Paper/Project

A final project, to be designed by the entire class, will be due on **November 22** and presented to the Casa de Amistad staff on **December 9**. This project represents the culmination of the semester, and should be seen as a concrete way to enhance the mission of this organization. Students will be graded on creativity, design, narrative, and performance (this aspect will also be assessed by classmates) upon the completion of the project.

Exams

There will be a midterm take-home (due **Oct. 11**) and a take-home final exam.

Films and documentaries

Throughout the semester, students will watch several films/documentaries outside of class (most of these can be accessed through Concourse). A reaction essay in your journal should be completed after watching each film.

Calendar

August

- 23 Introduction
Visit from Casa de Amistad Staff
- 25 Service-Learning and Latino/a Studies
Mari Castañeda: "Transformative Learning Through Community Engagement"
Suzanne Oboler: "Hispanics: That's What *They* Call Us"; *Key Terms in Latino/a Cultural...*
- 30 Chicano/Mexican-American Literature
Harvest of Empire: Chapter 5; *Key Terms in Latino/a Cultural and Literary Studies*

September

- 1 Tomás Rivera: *...y no se lo tragó la tierra*
- 5 Adelante America Retreat at ND. Let me know if you wish to participate/help!
- 6 Tomás Rivera: *...y no se lo tragó la tierra*
- 8 Research Workshop at Institute for Latino Studies Julian Samora Library (204 McKenna)
- 13 Sandra Cisneros: *House on Mango Street*
- 15 Sandra Cisneros: *House on Mango Street*. **Final project group/topic selection**
- 20 Discussion of film: *Dying to Live*; Selected works by John Phillip Santos; Reflecting on SL
- 22 Peruvian-American Literature
The Other Latinos, Chapter 5: Mapping the Andean Cultural Archipelago in the US"
Daniel Alarcón: "Flood" (www.kobobooks.com)
- 23-25 **Immersion Weekend!!**
- 27 Daniel Alarcón: *Ciudad de payasos*
- 29 Daniel Alarcón: *Ciudad de payasos*; and "Lima, Peru, July 28, 1979"

October

- 4 **Daniel Alarcón – class visit**
Alarcón: "Los miles"
Daniel Alarcón: Worldview Event, DPAC at 7:00 pm (Attention: required attendance)
- 6 Salvadoran-American Literature
Harvest of Empire: Chapter 8
- 11 **Midterm Take-Home Exam due in class**
Research Workshop at Institute for Latino Studies Julian Samora Library (204 McKenna)
Event of interest: John Phillip Santos Reading at ILS Library at 4 pm

- 13 Discussion of film: *De nadie* and Reflecting on SL// Chicanitas Exhibit at Snite
- 18-20 Fall Break
- 25 Discussion of film: *María's Story* and Claribel Alegría: selected poems
- 27 Daisy Cubías: *Children of War*: selected poems. **Final Project Proposal and Outline due.**

November

- 1 William Archila: *The Art of Exile*
- 3 William Archila: *The Art of Exile*
- 8 Research Project
- 10 Research Project
- 15 Colombian-American Literature – Discussion of film *Entre Nos*
Harvest of Empire: Chapter 9
- 17 José Faus: “El regreso” and selected poems
Event of interest: Conference “Latina Theater Today: New Voices,” 1pm - 4:30pm,
McKenna 210, followed by performance of *Provenance*, a play by Anne García-Romero in
the DPAC that evening.
- 22 **Final Project Due in class today; Project Presentations**
- 24 Thanksgiving
- 29 Dominican-American Literature
Harvest of Empire: Chapter 7; Film *My American Girls*

December

- 1 Miriam Mejía: “Abuela”
- 6 Junot Díaz: “Fiesta, 1980”
- 8 Conclusion
- 9 End of semester celebration with Casa de Amistad community (5-7 pm)!

Final Project Themes:

- The History of La Casa de Amistad
 - Its beginnings (1970s)
 - The present
- The Importance of Memory in Community-Building
- Writing and Cultural Memory
- Art and Memory
- The History of Latinos in South Bend