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Course Outline and Syllabus  
**FIL 4528**  
**Hispanic Culture: Women and Film**

**Brief Course Description and Objectives**

In this course on Hispanic culture for undergraduate students, images and roles of Hispanic women will be discussed and analyzed in selected films from Spain, Latin America and the United States. In general, the course aims to enhance students' knowledge and appreciation of selected topics in Hispanic culture, such as human rights, and aims in particular to expand students' understanding of women's roles, experiences and challenges in the Hispanic world. We will accomplish these objectives via lectures, film viewing, class discussions, and background readings on Latin America, selected films viewed, including feminist perspectives, and a general guide to writing about film. The course seeks to help students with the development of critical thinking skills, oral discussion and presentational abilities as well as improvement of academic writing (Spanish or English, as the case may be). Readings and discussion include such topics as cinematic representations of Hispanic women and their social and historical precedents, female roles and societal expectations and available options for women, audience reception, status of female movie stars in the Hispanic world and abroad, and society and cultural stereotypes. When taught in Spanish, this upper division course should be of interest to Spanish majors, and bilingual (Spanish-speaking) majors in women's studies, and students interested in film and cultural topics related to the Hispanic world. When taught in English, it should also be of interest to undergraduates not majoring in Spanish who seek a 3-credit elective in the humanities at the upper division level. Film courses in Modern Languages can be taught in English or in the target audience, which in this case, is Spanish. Spanish majors are required to do all of their writing in Spanish in this course.

**Required Readings**

Corrigan, Timothy. *A Short Guide to Writing About Film*. New York: Longman, 2001.

King, John, Whitaker, Sheila, and Bosch, Rosa, eds. *An Argentine Passion: Maria Luisa Bemberg and her Films*. New York and London: Verso, 2000.

Winn, Peter. *Americas: The Changing Face of Latin America*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1995.

NOTE: You will have additional readings which will include articles from journals and chapters from selected books. Some of these will be made available at the Reserve Desk

of the library. Others will be made available to you for copying at your convenience, at the Graham Center Copy Center. More details to be given in class.

### **Working Bibliography: Selected Recommended Readings:**

[Available at the FIU Green Library]

Bergmann et al. *Women, Culture and Politics in Latin America*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990.

Cabello Castellet, George, Marti Olivella, Jaume, and Woods, Guy H., eds. *Cine-Lit: Essays on Hispanic Film and Fiction*. Portland, Oregon, 1995.

Carson, Diane, Dittmar, Linda, and Welsch, Janice R., eds., *Multiple Voices in Feminist Film Criticism*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1994.

D'Lugo, Marvin. *The Films of Carlos Saura: The Practice of Seeing*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993. Will be available at the Reserve Desk.

Downing, John D.H.. *Film & Politics in the Third World*. New York: Praeger, 1987.

García Riera, Emilio. *Breve historia del cine mexicano: Primer siglo, 1897-1997*. Zapopan: Ediciones Mapa, Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía, 1998.

Hershfield, Joanne. *Mexican Cinema/Mexican Woman, 1940-1950*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1996.

Keller, Gary D. Cine chicano. (translation of *Chicano Cinema: Research, Reviews, and Resources*. Arizona State Univ.: Bilingual Review/Press, 1995.

Kinder, Marsha, ed. *Refiguring Spain: Cinema/Media/Representation*. Durham, North Carolina: 1997.

King, John, Lopez, Ana M., and Alvarado, Manuel, eds. *Mediating Two Worlds: Cinematic Encounters in the Americas*. London, BFI, 1993.

King, John, and Nissa Torrents, eds. *The Garden of Forking Paths: Argentina Cinema*. London: National Film Theater, 1988.

Smith, Paul Julian. *Desire Unlimited: The Cinema of Pedro Almodovar*. Second Edition. London and New York: Verso, 2000.

Stock, Ann Marie, ed. *Framing Latin American Cinema: Contemporary Critical Perspectives*. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minn. Press, 1997.

Talens, Jenaro and Zunzunegui, Santos, eds. *Modes of Representation in Spanish Cinema*. Minneapolis, MN: 1998.

## Grading

**1. Class Attendance, Oral Participation and Quizzes.** We meet once a week only. Attendance and participation are required and an important aspect of the course. In the summer intensive version of the course, even one unexcused absence will reduce the course grade by one step, (a B+ will become a B-, for example). Students are expected to engage in class discussions and at times give oral presentations both on assigned readings and films viewed. A student or a team of students will often lead a discussion on one of the films screened in class. If time permits, there will be a possibility of preparing an additional individual and/or group oral report based on the formal summaries and reactions to readings and films. There will be at least two tests based on documentary materials, featured film and/or homework readings assigned There will be no make-up tests given for quizzes.(30%)

## 2. Class Written Assignments and Tests

**1) Interpretive Critical Essays.** Students will select and write short individual film critiques (critical essays). These should be well thought out, analytical and interpretive responses to the required films. They should be 2 to 4 pages typed, double-spaced, not shorter, not longer. Timothy Corrigan's book (required reading), *A Short Guide to Writing About Film* (see chapter one in particular) will be essential for you to better understand what kind of writing is expected in the course. Originality, quality, incisiveness, and good form and style are important and help determine your grade. All work is due when indicated. If you turn it in late, I will deduct an entire grade (for example, if you had an A-, the grade would be recorded as a B- for being late). This becomes necessary in the intensive shorter version of the course taught in a mini summer term.

Note: Written work can be submitted in English or in Spanish. However, Spanish majors enrolled in the FIL course should do all of their written work in Spanish. (40%)

**2) Final Test.** There will be a final test that will consist of true/false questions, short answer questions (30%) and an essay section (70%), based on the readings, films and class. Please use blue or black ink and bring two blue books to class for these tests. (30%)

Note on Incomplete Grades: Unless emergency circumstances arise, no incomplete grades will be given in the course. If you think you will not be able to keep up with the required attendance, assignments and readings, consider dropping the course before the deadline. Feel free to contact me should you need to discuss any class matters.

## Required Films and Important Dates for Tests, Essay Assignments, and Final Exam

May 15	Introduction to the course and Background Reserve Desk: Documentary film called "In Women's Hands" (Americas) "Death and the Maiden"
May 22	<b>Test #1</b> (assigned readings and films)

	“La historia oficial” (The Official Story”) and “Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo” (“The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo”)
May 29	<b>Test #2</b> (assigned readings and films) “Garden of the Forking Paths” (documentary) “Señora de nadie” (“Nobody’s Wife”)
June 5	<b>Essay #1 due today</b> “Miss Mary” and/or “Camila”
June 12	<b>Essay #2 due today</b> “De eso no se habla” “Todo sobre mi madre” (or another contemporary film from Spain)
June 19	“Bread and Roses” <b>Final Exam</b>

### **Other Recommended Films**

There is no time to include these films below or others for class viewing but they are highly recommended. You can view these on your own, in pairs or in small groups. Many of them are available for free at the FIU library, local libraries and at local video stores. You can also rent films by mail from a variety of distributors and video rental companies, such as FACETS Video (in Chicago), one of the best known and largest distributors: Toll free at 1-800-331-6107 (9am to 8pm) and on the Internet at <http://www.facets.org>. Additionally the Latin American and Video Archives (LAVA) provides an online searchable database and ordering service for thousands of Latin American titles. They can be reached at: 212-463-0108 and on the web at: <http://www.lavavideo.org/lava/>

*María Candelaria*

*Salón México*

*Lucía*

*Una mujer sin amor*

*Susana*

*Como agua para chocolate*

*Cría*

*Carmen*

*El nido*

*La ley del deseo*

*The Flower of my Secret/La flor de mi secreto*

*Tacones*

*Carne Trémula*

*Central Station*

### **Web Resources**

There are many web resources available. From time to time, you will have some assigned readings that are available through electronic resources. These are just a few of the sites with which you should familiarize yourself as a student interested in Hispanic cultures and film.

Latin American Video Archives

<http://www.lavavideo.org/lava/>

The Mexican Film Resource Page

<http://www.wam.umd.edu/~dwilt/mfb.htm>

Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía

<http://www.imcine.gob.mx/esp/index.html>

Cinematoteca argentina

<http://www.cinematoteca.org.ar/>

Cubacine

<http://www.cubacine.cu/indice.html>

Spanish Directors

<http://worldfilm.miningco.com/cs/spanishdirectors/>

El language cinematográfico

<http://www.xtec.es/~xripoll/lengua.htm>

Again, do not hesitate to get in touch with me if you have any questions or need to consult with me about your work or progress in class. You are welcome to stop by or make an appointment by e-mail to see me at a time convenient to your schedule. Otherwise, I can usually also meet with you before and after class if necessary.

Good luck and enjoy the films and the course!

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