

Department: Spanish and Puerto Rican Latino Studies

Course No:1009

Credits: 3

Title:Latino Literature, Culture and Society

Contact: Guillermo Irizarry

Content Area:Content Area 1 Arts and Humanities

**PROPOSED TITLE AND COMPLETE CATALOG COPY:**

PRLS 1009/SPAN 1009. Latino Literature, Culture, and Society

Either semester. Three credits. Prerequisite: None. Open to everyone. Casamayor, Irizarry

Critical approaches to Latinos/as and cultural representation, production, and agency, as impacted by globalization and local dynamics. Will engage the value and function of race, gender, and sexuality, in popular culture, literature, film, music, digital culture, visual arts, urban culture.

**RATIONALE FOR ACTION REQUESTED**

1. Reasons for adding this course: (see Note L) PRLS/SPAN 1009 would be the only, humanities based, first year course, dealing with US Latinos. It would be one of two 1000-level course in the Puerto Rican

and Latinos Studies minor, co-sponsored with MCL and Spanish. It is also pressing, within the current multicultural, academic agenda, to offer more Latino content courses, at all levels.

2. Academic Merit (see Note L): This course will serve as an introduction to issues related to US Latinas/os from an interdisciplinary perspective for students from diverse fields of study and levels of expertise. It will help to understand better contemporary US society and culture, from a minority perspective.

3. Two instructors are set to offer the course as soon as it is approved.

4. Number of Students Expected: 100

5. Effects on Other Departments (see Note N): It should support various majors and minors, including Latin American Studies, African American Studies, English, History, Fine Arts, American Studies, Sociology, Human Development and Family Studies, Human Rights, and Puerto Rican and Latino Studies.

6. Effects on Regional Campuses: PRLS aims to offer additional sections in Greater Hartford and Waterbury

#### Course Information:

a. Briefly describe in 2-3 sentences the course, stating course goals and objectives:

This course will study US Latino/a experiences paying attention to the intersection with gender, race, sexuality, class, and generational issues. Studying US Latinas/os in a hemispheric context, students will discuss this group's cultural production in literature, film, visual arts, music, and internet. Students will engage readings and listen to lectures on Latina/o history and culture, while being introduced to the basics of cultural studies.

b. Describe the course requirements (Specify exam formats, nature and scope of weekly reading assignments, nature and scope of writing assignments, problem sets, etc.):

We endeavor to assess how students analyze and critically engage the different Latino cultural products that will be discussed through in lectures, films, readings, and group discussions, and how well they grasp the local and transnational processes at play.

Evaluations will include:

1. Class participation: 15%
2. Quizzes scheduled and administered by the instructor: 15%
3. Weekly reaction papers: 20%
4. Midterm: 25%
5. Final Exam: 25%

Instructor will pay special attention in grading to critical analysis of specific cultural products, while expecting historical specificity and attention to sociological facts. Work will be devoted to teasing out stereotypes or superficial understanding of social dynamics and cultural production. Quizzes and reaction papers will allow for frequent evaluations. Essay sections in the exams will support deeper reflection on various cultural issues, where students should evince familiarity with the methodological underpinnings of this course.

c. List the major themes, issues, topics, etc. to be covered:

1. Heterogeneity within US Latino/a cultural identities.
2. Intersections of Latina/o identity with class, region, national origin, language diversity, gender, and sexuality.
3. Historical presence and duration of Latina/o production in literature, film, music and visual arts.
4. Focus upon dominant theoretical and historical perspectives on Latino/a Studies (with special attention to border studies, transnationality, and postcoloniality).
5. Major transitions in the historical presence of US Latinas/os:
  - a. Early Modern (Spanish colonial presence, discovery, colonization)
  - b. 19th century (Mexican American War, Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty)
  - c. Major migrations (Mexican Revolution, Jones Act of 1917, WWII industrial boom)
  - d. Contemporary popular culture and cultural activism (Hip Hop, urban artistic interventions), and recent social struggles (ICE raids, community organizing, electoral political efforts).
6. Links between US Latino/a communities and contemporary Latin American societies.

Meets Goals of Gen Ed:

This course will help students acquire a broad understanding of Latino experiences and cultures in the United States, as well as the relationship between such communities and their Latin American traditions. Class will enhance student's intellectual breadth and versatility through the study of essential concepts and theories on cultural, post-colonial, and feminist studies. Since class will attend how students interpret different Latina/o experiences, their critical judgment and moral sensitivity will be developed, as well as their awareness of their era and society by underscoring the relationship between minority groups and mainstream society.

CA1 Criteria:

Providing a broad vision of artistic and humanist themes, this course will integrate literature, music, visual arts (including urban/public art, and graffiti), film, video, and performance. Engaging students with cultural materials relevant to many majors and programs, this course hopes to bridge the gap between humanities, arts, and qualitative social sciences.

With choice examples from early texts to contemporary cultural products, we will investigate the long-lasting cultural production of Latinas/os since the initial encounter between Spaniards and Amerindians, to our time. We will investigate the context of production and teach students how to critically engage primary sources and cultural products. In addition to socio-historical information, traditional models to analyze film, literature, music, and visual arts, we will emphasize the cultural and social dynamics at play between mainstream and margin, hegemony and subalternity.

CA4 Criteria:

Students will learn more about the long-lasting and hemispheric presence of Latinas/os and the contemporary debates related to their minority status in the US, their transnational dynamics, and the growing role they play within the state, the United States, and the American hemisphere. As such, they will discuss various human experiences, perceptions, thoughts, values, and/or modes of creativity; they will also underscore the constructed nature of social structure; develop an understanding of transnational dynamics, global cultural exchange, and migration; and keenly discuss dynamics of power in the US and America.

Also, the variety of authors and materials studied will propitiate student's awareness of the diversity of human culture and experience, including within the Latino community (Mexican-Americans, Cuban-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Dominican-Americans, etc.).