

# Spanish/Women's Studies 335

## Contemporary Latin American Women: Texts and Voices

**Prerequisites:** SPA 311 (third year Conversation and Composition) or the equivalent, or instructor's permission.

\* This course meets the culture requirement for Spanish majors/minors at Augsburg

### Course Description

The purpose of this course is to learn about the social construction of gender within Mexico and other Latin American countries and to address key issues faced by Latin American women today. You will accomplish these goals by reading and discussing poems, excerpts of important literature, essays, testimonies, interviews, and newspaper articles by and about Latin American women. By studying this wide range of texts while living in Mexico and hearing directly from a wide variety of Latin American women, you will develop an appreciation for the complexity of diversity of Latin American women's experiences.

The writers studied in this course include Rosario Castellanos (Mexico), Gioconda Belli (Nicaragua), Bokhara de Angelica Gorodischer (Argentina), Angela Hernandez (Republica Dominicana), Cristina Peri Rossi (Uruguay), and Libertad Demitrópolis (Argentina). However, rather than studying their works just from a literary perspective, you will explore their writings to develop a more profound understanding of key issues facing women of diverse racial, ethnic, and class backgrounds throughout Latin America.

The course will be divided into the following eight units:

- I. Identity and gender construction
- II. Public and private spheres: social roles and work
- III. Interpersonal relations: love and friendship
- IV. Maternity and family relations
- V. Power relations: individual and society
- VI. Silenced voices
- VII. A world of emigrants
- VIII. Ecology and poverty

Throughout the course you will expand your Spanish vocabulary, focusing particularly on vocabulary used in the fields of women's studies and gender studies. You will be encouraged to make connections between the required readings for this course and the guest speakers and excursions that are an integral part of your other courses in the semester program.

### Primary Text

Criado, Miryam and Jose Manuel Reyes. *Mujeres de hoy: textos, voces e imágenes*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2005.

### Course Requirements (100%)

1. **Active class participation (10%).** This includes punctuality, presence in class, active engagement in class sessions, and completion of all required readings & assignments on time. (See grading criteria listed below.)
2. **Vocabulary quizzes related to key concepts in each chapter (10%)**
3. **Homework assignments from the text (20%)**

4. **Four compositions on key topics in the text (20%)**
5. **Four oral presentations on key topics in the text (20%)**
6. **Final Essay Exam (20%)**

#### **Grading Criteria for Class Participation**

- Full participation involves coming to class prepared and on time, speaking only Spanish in class, completing assignments on time, participating in all class activities with enthusiasm and interest, collaborating with the instructor and other students, and demonstrating effort at improving Spanish abilities. Class participation is extremely important.
- If you are sick and have to miss class, you are responsible for calling the instructor BEFORE class to let her know. You are also responsible for talking with her about what you missed in class, getting notes or handouts from other students, and for making up any assignments that were completed in class.

#### **Grading Criteria for Compositions**

- Structure: Introduction; organization, sequence, and development of ideas; and conclusion
- Content: Clarity and complexity of ideas
- Grammar: Correct use of complex forms studied in class
- Style: Effective use of appropriate style for given assignment

#### **Grading Criteria for Oral Presentations**

- Structure: Introduction; organization, sequence, and development of ideas; and conclusion
- Content: Clarity and complexity of ideas
- Grammar: Correct use of grammar
- Oral Expression: Pronunciation; articulation; volume; and tone
- Written Outline: Organization of ideas and main points

Oral presentations are not considered complete (and will be graded down significantly) if they are not accompanied by an outline.