

Cleveland State University
Department of Modern Languages
SPN 493/501 Research Methods
Dr. Antonio Medina-Rivera
Fall 2008

RT 1633

(216) 523-7168

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Office Hours: T-W-Th 1:30-3:30 (or after the class)

1. Objectives and Outcomes:

- This course aims to provide and refine the skills and knowledge base necessary to successful completion of an MA in Spanish. As such, it demands discipline and dedication on the part of the student, who must work independently to identify and remedy weaknesses in his/her own writing and carry through a research project of his/her own choice. Students will complete the class with a strong example of research writing on a topic appropriate to Hispanic Studies (literature, culture, linguistics).
- This course intends to be the capstone course for those students completing a BA in Spanish. As a capstone course the student will have the opportunity to work on a research project that can show the abilities and knowledge acquired during his/her years of studies in Spanish.

2. Goals:

- Familiarity with modes of writing required for advanced study in literature, culture and linguistics: the review, the report, the analysis, and the research paper.
- Improve analytical and expository writing in Spanish by practicing various modes of writing as well as honing editing and proofreading skills
- Improve Spanish skills by extending range of expression through development of vocabulary (both everyday and technical expression) and advanced grammar structures.
- Familiarization with academic standards of research writing as defined by the Modern Language Association (MLA), including bibliographic format and mechanics of writing.
- Improve reading skills and familiarity with literary criticism and theory
- Familiarity with debates in Hispanic Studies, feminism, gender studies, historical studies of literature and culture, cultural studies, textual analysis, performance, postcolonial studies, etc.
- Improve research skills by familiarity with bibliographies commonly used by other Hispanists.
- Awareness of the issue of plagiarism; ability to recognize it and avoid it in academic writing.

3. Books:

- Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 6th Edition. (MLAH)
- Vargas-Llosa, Mario. *La fiesta del Chivo*. (LFC)
- Copies: Articles on literary theory, literary analysis and other relevant topics will be posted on Electronic Course Reserves (TBA).

4. Schedule/Program:

27 AUG	Introduction	
3 SEP	Library Presentation #1 RT 502 MLAH-Chapter 1	HW #1
10 SEP	LFC 1-4 Writing a Critical Review for a book, article, film	
17 SEP	LFC 5-8 MLAH-Chapter 2 and 3	HW #2
24 SEP	LFC 9-12 MLAH-Chapters 4 and 5	
1 OCT	Chapter 6 Research Proposal	
8 OCT	LFC 13-16 Midterm Exam-Mechanisms on Research Writing	
15 OCT	LFC 13-16 LFC 17-20	HW #3
22 OCT	Library Presentation #2 RT 502 LFC 17-20	
29 OCT	LFC 21-24	
29 OCT	Readings on Literary Theory/Analysis	
5 NOV	Readings on Literary Theory/Analysis	HW #4
12 NOV	Readings on Literary Theory/Analysis	
19 NOV	Special Guest	
26 NOV	Oral Presentations	
3 DEC	Oral Presentations	
10 DEC	Final Paper	

5. Policies:

Attendance and participation in class are very important. The number of absences will affect the final grade.

Punctuality and responsibility: All work must be ready on time. Late homework or compositions will be penalized.

Incompletes: The grade of “Incomplete” will only be used for a student who (1) is regularly attending the class and has potential to pass; (2) has not complete all assignments and/or has stopped attending/participating for reasons deemed justified by the instructor; and (3) has notified the instructor prior to the end of the grading period.

Disability: In accordance with CSU policy, if you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain access in this course, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester. Students with disabilities must verify their eligibility through the Office of Disability Services in UC 304 (216-687-2015).

Plagiarism: The CSU Student Handbook describes plagiarism as stealing and/or using the ideas or writings of another in a paper or report and claiming them as your own. This includes but is not limited to the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. Minor infractions comprise those instances of cheating, plagiarism, and/or tampering which affect the grade of an individual class assignment or project of lesser (<25% of grade) importance. Multiple instances of minor infractions within a course or across courses constitute a major infraction. Major infractions comprise those instances of cheating, plagiarism, and/or tampering which affect the overall course grade, such as a major/ comprehensive exam, term paper or project, final grade evaluation, or academic standing and status. Major infractions automatically result in an entry on the student's permanent record that the student has engaged in academic misconduct.

Procedures of reporting plagiarism are described on pages 17-21 of the Student Handbook.

<http://www.csuohio.edu/studentlife/conduct/StudentCodeOfConduct2004.pdf>

6. Evaluation:

•Students taking the class for 3/4 credits

4 Homeworks	25 points each	100 points
Participation in Class/Journal		50 points
2 Critical reviews	2-3 pages (Only Grads) [Presentation during the extra hour of class]	100 points
Midterm Exam		100 points
Research Proposal	1-page abstract/1-page bibliography	25 points
Research paper		150 points
	Undergrads 10-12 pages	
	Grads 15-18 pages	
Oral Presentation (presentation of your paper) [15 minutes, 5 minutes for questions]		25 points

Undergrads 450 points Grads 500 points

•Grad Students taking the class for 2 credits

4 Homeworks	25 points each	100 points
Participation in Class/Journal		50 points
Critical review	2-3 pages	50 points
Midterm Exam		100 points
Research Proposal	1-page abstract/1-page bibliography	25 points
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		325 points

•Students with an additional credit hour registered as Independent Studies:

Annotated bibliography (10 pages) 150 points

[The topic for the bibliography should be selected in consultant with the instructor. For a definition and format see <http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill28.htm>]

You will receive a separate grade for the independent studies.

Notes:

1. The purpose of the homeworks for this class is to enhance the skills necessary to develop or acquire information literacy. Leslie Jorbin from the CSU library can provide some assistance for the homeworks and can be used as a consultant for your research projects as well.

Humanities & Music Librarian
Cleveland State University Library
Telephone: 216-687-6997
FAX: 216-687-9380
Email: l.e.jorbin@csuohio.edu

2. For the Journal, you will have to write a minimum of a page on a notebook for every chapter of the novel *La Fiesta del Chivo* and every reading assigned (Literary Theory/Literary Analysis). You can write a summary of the chapter, questions, historical references, possible topics for research that come to you mind, etc. Imagine this is a journal for somebody who is interested in writing a paper about the novel or someone who is incorporating literary theory to his/her paper.

3. The midterm exam will be a practical test, to examine your research and writing skills following the MLA format.

4. For the information about writing a critical review go to (only for grads):
<http://www.learn.maine.edu/ocls/criticalreview.php>

5. For writing an abstract go to:
http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/writing_center/grabstract.html

6. For an MLA Format and Style Guide online go to:
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu>

7. Research Paper

1. Select a field of studies:

- Peninsular Studies
- Latin American Studies

2. Select an area:

- Literature
- Cultural Studies
- Linguistics

3. Select a topic/author(s):

4. Brainstorming/Some ideas:

8. Course Grading

94-100 A	83-86 B	70-76 C
90-93 A-	80-82 B-	60-69 D
87-89 B+	77-79 C+	0-59 F

