

Course Description

This is an introductory course for students interested in understanding Hispanic culture from general concepts of culture to different art expressions. How does a major geographical area come to be defined as Hispanic? What diverse elements merge together to form an identity? The course will focus on four fundamental elements: FAMILY (organization of the household, gender roles and personal interrelations); ETHNIC DIVERSITY (contributions to culture according to ethnicity); BELIEF SYSTEMS (religions, supernatural and superstitions –including holidays and practices); and ENTERTAINMENT (sports, telenovelas, secular celebrations). Literature, radio, film, music, painting and other art expressions will be used during classes.

Course Outcomes: Upon completing this course, in addition to the cultural perspective the student will develop awareness about certain cultural practices that shape social values, political affiliations and economic contributions to society. The student will have further honed the critical thinking skills that are needed to interpret various forms of culture and human interactions. The outcomes from this course will have both humanistic and practical applications. Specifically, the course objectives are:

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs): Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. identify highlights of Hispanic culture and geography that **have** shaped **Hispanic** identity.
2. analyze **-compare and contrast-** different regions and historical periods of Hispanic culture.
3. perform close readings of the various texts **by** analyzing concepts and articulating ideas about Hispanic cultural development.
4. examine and make connections between various art manifestations such as painting, literature, and films as expressions of cultural identity; and
5. compose texts that effectively address purpose, style, and content. (This includes: clear focus, structurally unified development of ideas, appropriate rhetorical style and visual style, correct use of Spanish language, and appropriate and ethical use of primary and secondary sources.)

Core-Curriculum Objectives (CCOs):

1. Critical Thinking Skills: includes creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information. (SLOs # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
2. Communication Skills: includes effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication. (SLOs # 2, 3, 4, 5)

3. Personal Responsibility: includes the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making. (SLOs # 2, 4, 5)
4. Social Responsibility: includes intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities. (SLOs # 1, 2, 4, 5)

Text: -*Salsa, A Taste for Hispanic Culture* by Rafael Falcón.

A packet of readings selected by the instructor including these ones below among others:

-*Latin American Regions and People (Texts in Regional Geography)* by Robert Kent.

-*The Latino Holiday Book: From Cinco de Mayo to Día de los Muertos – the Celebrations and Traditions of Hispanic-Americans* by Valerie Menard.

-*Leyendas del Mundo Hispano (3rd edition)* by Susan Bacon.

Important Dates:

Last Day to Drop a Course (without record): **TBA**

Last Day to Drop a Course or to Withdraw from the University with record: **TBA**

Mid-point of the Semester: **TBA**

Last Class Day: **TBA**

Final Exam: **TBA**

Writing Requirements and Grade Values: The work for this course is carefully sequenced and grows out of ongoing classwork as well as class participation/discussion. Staying on top of the assignments, doing them seriously, and being prepared for class is crucial for student success in this course. Students should come prepared with all relevant texts and on time every day. The following will allow students to have a basis for how grades will be calculated in this course.

1. 15 % – Essay #1
2. 15 % – Essay #2
3. 20 % – Essay #3
4. 15 % – Mid-term Exam (at least 50% of which is a written component)
5. 25 % – Final Exam (at least 50% of which is a written component)
6. 10 % -- **Miscellaneous (e.g., pop quizzes, in-class participation, ANGEL Discussion Forums)**

****If any component of the required coursework is missing, it will be impossible for students to pass this course.****

Required Coursework: In order to meet the course objectives, students will have the following opportunities:

- **Essays:** Students are required to compose **two (2) short, analysis essays (750 words)** and **one (1) Critical Essay (2100 words)** based upon the assigned reading materials. Analysis Essay #1 will focus on a text (or a set of texts) about an art or cultural representation of the “foundational period” (unification of Spain during the 15th century or

the creation of the Spanish-American Nations in the 19th); Analysis Essay #2 will focus on exploring art or cultural representations of one of the next two periods: Spanish Civil War or in one of the Spanish-American coup d'états of the 20th. The Critical Essay will bring together two regions (Spain and Spanish America) creating a dialogue comparing and contrasting art or cultural representations. Analysis Essay #1 and Analysis Essay #2 will be revised and integrated into a Critical Essay. The goal is to build a research-based essay in stages so that students will be able to analyze, thereby understand, an overarching aspect (e.g., theme, cultural value) that links the texts to one another and from which emerges some aspect of *the Ibero-American cultural tradition*.

- **Exams:** There will be a mid-term exam, covering all assigned readings up to mid-term; there will be a comprehensive final exam. Students must provide their own “blue-books” for the mid-term and final exams. The instructor reserves the right to examine the blue-books prior to administering the exams. There also may be pop quizzes in class or on-line on assigned readings.
- **Other Assignments:** In addition to the reading and writing assignments designated on the course schedule, students will be expected to complete any in-class assignments and participate in class or on-line discussions.

Evaluation: The most important consideration for all essays is content (argument, structure, secondary sources, primary source explication); however, grammar and usage are also important because 1) a person’s literacy is often judged according to the number of distracting sentence errors that appear in writing, and 2) if writers have too many grammatical, mechanical, or usage errors, they will fail to communicate effectively. Therefore, students will need to have achieved control of Standard Academic Spanish. If a student has too many major grammatical errors (more than 4 errors per page), it will be difficult to earn a grade higher than a C.

- **Final Grades:** Grades in this class are based upon the usual A, B, C, D, or F scale. Exams will be worth 100 points, but the mid-term is 15% of the course grade, and the final exam is 25% of the course grade. Essays will be evaluated using a rubric, which is available on ANGEL, under “Lessons.”
- **Late Papers:** Regardless of the assignment, deadlines are deadlines. NOTE: It is better for a student to turn-in an assignment late than not at all, for a missing assignment at the end of the semester will result in failure to complete the course requirements. Since most of the writing in this course will be submitted electronically, there really is no excuse for late or missing work due to absence unless there is an extreme circumstance—or a sudden, serious situation—that prevents a student from meeting a deadline. In such cases, the student should communicate with the instructor so that a solution to the problem can be found. A student may request an extension by communicating with the instructor, in person or via e-mail, a MINIMUM of 48 hours in advance, but the granting of an extension is dependent upon the circumstances. If an essay is turned in late without prior, approved negotiation, the essay will be lowered a letter grade for

each weekday's delay, and a student has up to three (3) days (including weekends) to present the late work.

*The instructor reserves the right to add additional assignments as needed and to modify all assignments and the reading schedule as needed.

Attendance and Tardiness: If there are extreme circumstances—or a sudden, serious situation—that prevents a student from arriving to class on time, the student should communicate with the instructor so that a solution to the problem can be found.

Tardiness: If students are more than 10 minutes late to class, this will count toward attendance. Three (3) “tardies” equal one (1) absence.

Absences: If students have excessive, unexcused absences from class, they will fail this course. “Excessive unexcused absences” are determined as follows: four (4) or more in a MW or TR course, five (5) or more in a MWF course, and three (3) or more in a MTWR summer course.

If students have missed the respective number of classes before the final date of withdrawing from courses, then they must initiate their own withdrawal from the course in the Registrar's Office to avoid earning an “F” in the course. Instructors do not drop students. NOTE: By Texas law, students may not withdraw from (or receive a “W” in) more than 6 total courses unless they qualify for certain exemptions to the law.

All absences are considered unexcused until and unless the student persuades the instructor that the absence merits being excused. Instructors may require documentation. Acceptable excuses include, but are not limited to:

1. Participation in University sponsored activity at the request of University Authorities;
2. Death or major illness in a student's immediate family;
3. Illness of a dependent family member;
4. Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student's presence;
5. Religious holy days;
6. Required participation in military duties;
7. Mandatory admission interviews for professional or graduate school which cannot be rescheduled; and
8. Doctor visits that can not be rescheduled or that require travel.

If a student misses class, it is the student's responsibility to meet with the instructor to discuss anything that was missed. If a student misses class when an assignment is due, the student must still submit the work (see “Late Papers” policy above).

Attendance Policy for Students Involved in University Events: Often students who participate in sporting events, musical programs, or other university sanctioned activities

miss class more than the required number of absences allowed for other students. These students must produce written documentation prior to leaving class for such events. All assignments are still due on the dates assigned in the syllabus. Students with documented “excused” absences due to university sanctioned events must notify and negotiate due dates for any other writing assignments done in-class. This policy is in effect to maintain equity among students.

Classroom Etiquette: The College of Arts and Sciences encourages classroom discussion and academic debate as an essential intellectual activity. It is essential that students learn to express and defend their beliefs, but it is also essential that they learn to listen and respond respectfully to others whose beliefs they may not share. The College will always tolerate diverse, unorthodox, and unpopular points of view, but it will not tolerate condescending or insulting remarks. When students verbally abuse or ridicule and intimidate others whose views they do not agree with, they subvert the free exchange of ideas that should characterize a university classroom. If their actions are deemed by the professor to be disruptive, they will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include being involuntarily withdrawn from the class. Also,

1. Turn off ALL cell phones, i-Pods, and other MP3 players.
2. Do not access the web for entertainment or private use during class.
3. Arrive to class on time.
4. Do not speak while others are speaking.
5. No children allowed.
6. Food and drink are not permitted in the computer labs – bottled water only.

Mid-term and Final Exam Etiquette:

1. Arrive to class on time.
2. Turn off and store ALL electronic equipment, including but not limited to iPods and cell-phones.
3. No food or drink will be permitted during the exam period. The exception is that students are allowed to have water. *The instructor, however, reserves the right to examine water bottles prior to, during, or after the exam period.
4. No children or visitors are allowed.
5. Students should not converse with each other once the exam period starts.
6. No hats, berets, or other head coverings are allowed (except for religious purposes).
7. Backpacks, purses, and other bags MUST be stored at the front of the classroom.
8. Only the exam itself and blank “bluebooks,” pencils, pens, and erasers will be allowed on the desk area once the exam has begun.

Early Alert: The “Early Alert” system allows faculty members to notify the Advising and Mentoring Center when students miss an excessive number of classes or assignments, exhibit unusual or disruptive behavior, or are failing to meet the course requirements. Students should know that this system is in place to help them through difficulties and is a confidential means of communication between the faculty member, the student, and the advisors.

Copyright Restrictions: The Copyright Act of 1976 grants to copyright owners the exclusive right to reproduce their works and distribute copies of their work. Works that receive copyright protection include published works such as a textbook. Copying a textbook without permission from the owner of the copyright may constitute copyright infringement, and civil and criminal penalties may be assessed, including civil penalties for damages up to \$100,000; criminal penalties include a fine up to \$250,000 and imprisonment.

Copyright laws do allow students and professors to make photocopies of copyrighted materials under strict conditions. You may not copy most, much less all, of a work, but you may copy a limited portion of a work, such as an article from a journal or a chapter from a book. These copies must be for your own personal academic use or, in the case of a professor, for personal, limited classroom use. In general, the extent of your copying should not suggest that the purpose or the effect of your copying is to avoid paying for the materials. And, of course, you may not sell these copies for a profit. Thus, students who copy textbooks to avoid buying them or professors who provide photocopies of textbooks to enable students to save money are both violating the law.

Students with Disabilities: Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. The University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is a student's responsibility to register with the Director of Student Counseling and to contact the instructor in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodations. For more information, contact:

Student Counseling and Disability Services for Students

Location: University Success Center 138

Office Hours: 8:00 am-5:00 pm M-F

Phone #: (956) 326-2230

<http://www.tamui.edu/wellness/disability.shtml>

Plagiarism and Cheating Policy: Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as your own. **1)** When you borrow someone else's facts, ideas, or opinions and put them entirely in your own words, you must acknowledge that these thoughts are not your own by immediately citing the source in your paper. Failure to do this is plagiarism. **2)** When you also borrow someone else's words (short phrases, clauses, or sentences), you must enclose the copied words in quotation marks as well as citing the source. Failure to do this is plagiarism. **3)** When you present someone else's paper or exam (stolen, borrowed, or bought) as your own, you have committed a clearly intentional form of intellectual theft and have put your academic future in jeopardy. This is the worst form of plagiarism.

Here is another explanation from the 2010, sixth edition of the *Manual of The American Psychological Association* (APA):

Plagiarism: Researchers do not claim the words and ideas of another as their

own; they give credit where credit is due. Quotations marks should be used to indicate the exact words of another. *Each* time you paraphrase another author (i.e., summarize a passage or rearrange the order of a sentence and change some of the words), you need to credit the source in the text.

The key element of this principle is that authors do not present the work of another as if it were their own words. This can extend to ideas as well as written words. If authors model a study after one done by someone else, the originating author should be given credit. If the rationale for a study was suggested in the Discussion section of someone else's article, the person should be given credit. Given the free exchange of ideas, which is very important for the health of intellectual discourse, authors may not know where an idea for a study originated. If authors do know, however, they should acknowledge the source; this includes personal communications. (pp. 15-16)

Students should consult the Writing Center or a recommended guide to documentation and research such as the *Manual of the APA* or the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* for guidance on proper documentation. If students still have doubts concerning proper documentation, they should seek advice from their instructor prior to submitting any draft or final product.

Use of Work in Two or More Courses: Students may not submit work completed in one course for a grade in a second course unless they receive explicit permission to do so by the instructor of the second course.

Penalties for Plagiarism: Should a faculty member discover that a student has committed plagiarism, the student will receive a grade of “F” in that course, and the matter will be referred to the Honor Council for possible disciplinary action. The faculty member, however, has the right to give freshmen and sophomore students a “zero” for the assignment and to allow them to revise the assignment up to a grade of “F” (50%) if they believe that the student plagiarized out of ignorance or carelessness and not out of an attempt to deceive in order to earn an unmerited grade. This option is not available to juniors, seniors, or graduate students, who can not reasonably claim ignorance of documentation rules as an excuse.

Caution: Students must be very careful what they upload to TurnItIn or send to their professor for evaluation. Whatever students upload for evaluation will be evaluated based upon the protocols of academic honesty. In other words, students must practice citing correctly and accurately on all writings in all stages in the writing process. If a submission is plagiarized, the student will be held responsible. The excuse that “it was only a draft” will not be accepted.

Caution: Also, students should not share their electronic files with others. If a student does so, the student is responsible for the possible consequences. If Student A voluntarily (or involuntarily) provides Student B access to his or her files, and Student B accepts (or takes) a file, submits the file with a change of name while Student A also submits (or previously submitted) the file for evaluation, both students are responsible for plagiarism. It is impossible for instructors to know with certainty who wrote the paper and who stole it or if there was collusion between Student A and Student B.

Penalties for Cheating: Should a faculty member discover a student cheating on an exam or quiz or other class project, the student will receive a “zero” for the assignment and not be allowed to make the assignment up. The incident must be reported to the chair of the department and to the Honor Council. If the cheating is extensive, however, or if the assignment constitutes a major grade for the course (e.g., a final exam), or if the student has cheated in the past, the student should receive an “F” in the course, and the matter should be referred to the Honor Council. Under no circumstances should a student who deserves an “F” in the course be allowed to withdraw from the course with a “W.”

Student Right of Appeal: Faculty will notify students immediately via the student’s TAMIU e-mail account that they have submitted plagiarized work. Students have the right to appeal a faculty member’s charge of academic dishonesty by notifying the TAMIU Honor Council of their intent to appeal as long as the notification of appeal comes within 10 business days of the faculty member’s e-mail message to the student. The *Student Handbook* provides details.

UConnect, TAMIU E-Mail, and Dusty Alert: Personal Announcements sent to students through TAMIU’s UConnect Portal and TAMIU E-mail are the official means of communicating course and university business with students and faculty – not the U.S. Mail and not other e-mail addresses. Students and faculty must check UConnect and their TAMIU e-mail accounts regularly, if not daily. Not having seen an important TAMIU e-mail or UConnect message from a faculty member, chair, or dean is not accepted as an excuse for failure to take important action. Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to sign-up for Dusty Alert (see www.tamtu.edu). Dusty Alert is an instant cell phone text-messaging system allowing the university to communicate immediately with the university community if there is an on-campus emergency, something of immediate danger, or a campus closing.

Incompletes: The College policy for “Incompletes” discourages them. They are appropriate, however, when the following requirements are met:

- ▶ The student cannot complete the class because of a severe illness to self or immediate family member at the very end of the semester (after the date for withdrawal from class) or because of a traumatic event in the student’s life (e.g., death of or serious injury or illness to an immediate family member) at the end of the semester, AND
- ▶ The student is passing the class at the time he or she can not complete the semester, AND
- ▶ The student has completed either 85-90% of the course requirements or is missing only major assignments due after the final date for withdrawal from class and after the onset of the illness or traumatic event (e.g., assignments such as the final exam for the course or a research paper), AND
- ▶ The faculty member must have the approval of the department chair before giving an Incomplete.

Student Responsibility for Dropping a Course: It is the responsibility of the STUDENT to drop the course before the final date for withdrawal from a course. Faculty members, in fact, may not drop a student from a course.

Independent Study Course: Independent Study (IS) courses are offered only under exceptional circumstances. Required courses intended to build academic skills may not be taken as IS (e.g., clinical supervision and internships). No student will take more than one IS course per semester. Moreover, IS courses are limited to seniors and graduate students. Summer IS course must continue through both summer sessions.

Grade Changes & Appeals: Faculty are authorized to change final grades only when they have committed a computational error, and they must receive the approval of their department chairs and the dean to change the grade. As part of that approval, they must attach a detailed explanation of the reason for the mistake. Only in rare cases would another reason be entertained as legitimate for a grade change. A student who is unhappy with his or her grade on an assignment must discuss the situation with the faculty member teaching the course. If students believe that they have been graded unfairly, they have the right to appeal the grade using a grade appeal process. Details are available in the *Student Handbook* and the *Faculty Handbook*.

Final Note: As students enter the university, they are also entering a research community where faculty and students are studying not only the world outside of the university, but also the teaching and learning that occurs inside of the university. This community's goal is to improve individual teaching and the design of this course so that they work as effectively as possible in preparing all students for academic and professional success. Therefore, any writing that a student passes in this semester may be read by other faculty members here at TAMU but without names so that the student, as the writer, remains anonymous. Also, on occasion, other faculty members may observe classes in order to provide feedback to the faculty member about the course activities.

Tentative Reading Schedule

Note: The following is our schedule of activities and due dates for this course; however, we will consider it “tentative,” which means that we may have to make some adjustments to it depending upon our progress throughout the semester. Any changes that are made will be given well in advance in class. *The assigned readings for each class period should be done before coming to class.*

Week 1

General Concepts of Culture

FAMILY

Week 2

Patriarchal/Matriarchal Structures and Gender Roles in the Hispanic Family.

Week 3

Representations of families in popular culture (e.g. La familia Burrón, Mafalda, etc.)

Ethnic Diversity in the Hispanic World

Week 4

Ethnic Diversity: Human Geography from Al-Andalus to Unified Spain (Maps and Paintings)

Week 5

Construction of Identity from Caste System to after Independence in Spanish America: Foundational texts: *Civilización o Barbarie*, *La raza cósmica*, *Ariel*, etc.

BELIEVE SYSTEMS

Religion

Week 6

Main Religions and Beliefs in Hispanic Cultures: Historical Catholicism and its cultural adaptation to Hispanic diverse regions (Syncretic expressions). (Paintings and Video)

Week 7

Religious Holidays and Festivals. (Documentaries)

Week 8

Pilgrimage to religious sites of the Hispanic World. (Documentaries)

Supernatural and Superstitions

Week 9

Believes in the Supernatural: Hispanic superstitions and stories of 'aparecidos' (ghost).
Storytelling in the radio. (Radio Stations)

Week 10

Concepts of Health, alternative medicine and uses of religious drugs in indigenous cultures (Documentaries)

ENTERTAINMENT

Week 11

Secular festivities: historical and cultural celebrations. (Documentaries)

Week 12

Telenovelas (Video)

Week 13

Toros and Futbol (Literature, Paintings, Video and documentaries)