



Faculty of Arts
School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures

SPAN 407
Critical Thinking in Spanish, WINTER 2020, WEB BASED

COURSE OUTLINE

INSTRUCTOR'S NAME: Dr. Roberto Ayala Mejía

OFFICE HOURS: Available through Zoom-link on Monday and Wednesday from 1:00 pm- 2:00. Please send me an email to book an appointment. Also, include in the email the topic you want to discuss.

E-MAIL: roberto.ayalamejia@ucalgary.ca (I will respond to e-mails within 48 hours during weekdays. Will not respond to emails during weekends.)

TELEPHONE NUMBER: Not applicable, due to COVID-19, I don't have access to my office phone. If you have any enquiries, please send me an email to book a Zoom session.

DESCRIPTION:

Our modern times are characterized by the abundance of information that come to us in many forms: visual, auditive, electronic, etc. More than ever before in history, everyone faces a daily overload of data that must be either accepted as valid or rejected as fake. The same is true for students at the university level. Each student has the privilege and the responsibility to examine, analyze, and organize data, and to produce arguments, either orally or in the form of written documents, that reflect phenomena of daily life in an unbiased way. In order to achieve this goal, students need to learn *Critical Thinking*; defined as the cognitive ability of reflection, evaluation and criticism of objects presented to us by the arts, the humanities, and the sciences, e.g., images, literature, philosophical reflections, inventions, artifacts, etc. This course addresses the question of what Critical thinking is in the context of the Spanish language and what its role is in university education.

OBJECTIVES:

The main objective is to help students acquire analytical and critical skills that will enable them to comprehend the elements involved in the creation and production of works of literature and visual arts, primarily, in the context of the Hispanic culture and literature. The student will learn to discover the methods and strategies that authors use in the making of their works of arts, in order to interpret the message or messages that their creators wanted to convey. To achieve this goal, concepts of historical, cultural and discursive analysis issues will be introduced, in addition to the revision of the main elements of grammar and language to enlarge and enhance the lexical, and grammatical knowledge of students.

OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of the course, the students will have developed their critical, analytical, and intellectual skills, which in turn will help them express their opinion in oral and written form.

The students, when presented with textual and information overload challenges, will be able to think independently in a reasoning manner to arrive to well thought-out academic positions. They will be able



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to present logical arguments and solutions to be part of the ongoing academic and social discussions. Students will be able to write well developed essays and also to present convincing oral presentations. With the set of tools acquired in this 400-level course, the students will have a more secure base to continue their upper level studies.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

- Varona-Lacey, Gladys M. **Contemporary Latin American Literature**, McGraw-Hill education (2001). (You can buy a hard copy at www.chapters.indigo.ca).

The following booklets are EPUB (readily available for your smart tablets with the KINDLE app. All these publications are available at Amazon.);

- Romero, Marcos. **Guía para principiantes acerca del pensamiento crítico, y el cómo solucionar problemas.**
- Escalante, Eduardo. **Cómo escribir un ensayo.** (2017)
- Charles, Victoria. **Picasso.** Parkstone international. (2017)
- Borges, Jorge Luis. **Ficciones.** (These will be partial readings from the book *Ficciones*, you will be instructed where to download legal versions of these readings)

RECOMMENDED COURSE MATERIALS

There are many excellent resources on-line that can be used during your course studies.

- The official dictionary of the Real Academia Española is found at <https://dle.rae.es/>
- In case of doubts of proper use of Spanish terms, you can consult the "**Diccionario panhispánico de dudas**" ("Panhispanic Dictionary of doubts") at <https://www.rae.es/dpd/>

COURSE NOTES

- **Important dates:** First day of class: Jan 12, 2021. Last day of class: April 15, 2021. Term break, no class: Sunday-Saturday, February 14-20.
- The delivery language of classes will be Spanish. Students are encouraged to make an effort to use Spanish in all course activities. However, students can ask for clarifications in English when concepts are not clearly understood.
- The classes will be delivered online via Zoom app.
- There will be UNOFFICIAL zoom sessions on Tuesdays and Thursday (some weeks) from 2:00 pm to 3:15 pm (75 minutes total each). You are welcome to attend at your own discretion.
- Since there is no class participation in this course, you can watch the class sessions either synchronously or asynchronously. However, because of the sequential nature of the knowledge and information considered in each session; and because of time sensitive details (deadlines of assignments, discussions, homework, etc.), you are advised to watch and study the video sessions within 24-36 hours of being published.
- All assignments and texts will be submitted to the appropriate D2L tab. The use of online translators is not permitted, and any assignments which utilize a translator will result in a grade of zero for that assignment. Instead, use what you have learned in the textbook and use an online dictionary.
- Concerning the deadlines of activities and exams, please let your instructor know immediately if you cannot meet the assignment deadlines specified or if you cannot take an assessment at the specified class time, so that the Instructor can work with you to consider alternative dates/assessments. A



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deduction of 10% of the mark will be applied for late assignment submissions when a strong reason for the absence is not given. An assignment will not be accepted after three days from the due day.

- If you will be present at the synchronous sessions, please give your full attention to the class and follow the instructions set out by your instructor. Participate actively, appropriately and respectfully in all class discussions, including in the Zoom breakout rooms and when completing group projects. Please show up on time to class and leave when class ends. Turn your camera on at the beginning of class and wear appropriate clothing. Turn your camera off and mute when asked. Use the raise hand function in Zoom if you have a question.
- If you watch the Zoom sessions asynchronously, please follow all instruction provided in the video and meet all deadlines.
- Media policy in case of recording: The class sessions may be recorded and posted to D2L. You are not permitted to share these recordings with anyone not enrolled in the course.
- Course evaluation procedure: Assessments will all be online via D2L
- Students are expected to be respectful in any communication with classmates and with the instructor.

• Technology requirements:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security, and malware updates;
- A current and updated web browser;
- Webcam/Camera (built-in or external);
- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone;
- Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled;
- Stable internet connection

ASSESSMENT	Weight
6 homework activities (5% each).	30%
2 Discussion forum activities (in D2L) (5% each)	10%
Oral presentation	15%
2 tests (10 % each)	20%
Final work (essay)	25%
Total final mark	100%

ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Homework activities. The material for homework will be based on information considered in-class. Each activity will be presented in written form with a maximum of 500 words. Your written answers will be evaluated considering the factual information provided, your argumentation and your good use of Spanish grammar and vocabulary. An appropriate rubric will be published on D2L.

Discussion Forum Activities: You'll be assigned to a discussion group of 4 students. You will be given a theme (subject) and will collaboratively work out a proper analysis so that you can provide acceptable comments, arguments or solutions. You will contact the members of your group (email, or text) to discuss the assigned material, then each member will publish their conclusions asynchronously to the Discussion forum. Marks will



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be assigned individually depending on your participation (qualitative and quantitative). An appropriate rubric will be posted on D2L.

Oral presentation: Each student will prepare an oral presentation based on material studied in the course. It could be a theoretical issue concerning *Critical Thinking*, or a consideration of a literary text analyzed in a critical way. Each student will have 7 minutes to present their argument + 4 minutes to answer students questions. An appropriate rubric will be published on D2L.

Test. Two tests have been programmed during the course semester to test your comprehension of the material studied in the class. The tests will be completed vis a D2L link and may include a variety of question formats: written response, multi-select, multiple choice. You will be giving a 24-hour window of opportunity to start your test. Once you start your test you will have 112 minutes (1.875 hours) to finish your test (this is according to University of Calgary regulations which stipulates that your test time should be calculated according to the following formula: class time + 50% = exam time). You may use your textbook when taking these quizzes. Do not use an online translator. Do not consult with any other individuals.

Final work: Each student will prepare a final written work which will be presented in the form of an essay. Each student will choose a Spanish literary text contained in the textbook used in class. The student will design the essay using the tools taught in class: brainstorming, organization of ideas, proposal of a thesis, argumentation, writing, editing, inclusion of a bibliography. Each submission will be evaluated on the merits of each of the aforementioned elements. An appropriate rubric will be published on D2L.

Calendar. Assignments, tests, and final written essay submission dates.

January 12, 2021	First UNOFFICIAL Zoom meeting
January 19	Deadline for Homework 1
February 2	Deadline for Homework 2
February 9	Deadline to submit work of DISCUSSION FORUM 1
February 23	Take Test 1
March 2	Deadline for Homework 3
March 23	Deadline for Homework 4
March 25	Deadline to submit work of DISCUSSION FORUM 2
April 1	Deadline for Homework 5
April 15	Take test 2
April 22	Submit final written work. (Essay)

GRADING SCALE

A+ = 100-96	A = 95-91	A- = 90-86	B+ = 85-81	B = 80-76	B- = 75-71
C+ = 70-67	C = 66-62	C- = 61-58	D+ = 57-54	D = 53-50	F= 49%

The official grade calculation (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1) will be applied to calculate the final grade.



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INTEGRITY AND CONDUCT

All members of the University community have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with the Statement on Principles of Conduct, and to comply with the University of Calgary Code of Conduct and Non-Academic Misconduct policy and procedures (available at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>).

Academic misconduct

1. **Plagiarism** is a serious offence, the penalty for which is an F on the assignment and possibly also an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw. Plagiarism exists when:

- a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test);
- b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author;
- c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or
- d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted."

Plagiarism occurs not only when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement but also when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. A bibliography is insufficient to establish which portions of the student's work are taken from external sources; footnotes or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose.

2. **Cheating** at tests or examinations includes but is not limited to dishonest or attempted dishonest conduct such as speaking to other candidates or communicating with them under any circumstances whatsoever; bringing into the examination room any textbook, notebook, memorandum, other written material or mechanical or electronic device not authorized by the examiner; writing an examination or part of it, or consulting any person or materials outside the confines of the examination room without permission to do so, or leaving answer papers exposed to view, or persistent attempts to read other students' examination papers.

3. **Other academic misconduct** includes, but is not limited to, tampering or attempts to tamper with examination scripts, class work, grades and/or class records; failure to abide by directions by an instructor regarding the individuality of work handed in; the acquisition, attempted acquisition, possession, and/or distribution of examination materials or information not authorized by the instructor; the impersonation of another student in an examination or other class assignment; the falsification or fabrication of clinical or laboratory reports; the non-authorized tape recording of lectures.

4. Any student who voluntarily and consciously aids another student in the commission of one of these offences is also guilty of academic misconduct.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may not be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf>) and requirements of the Copyright Act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PRIVACY (FOIP) ACT

Graded assignments will be retained by the Department for three months and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Final examinations will be kept for one calendar year and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Said material is exclusively available to the student and to the department staff requiring to examine it. Please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip> for complete information on the disclosure of personal records.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS



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It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures listed below. The student accommodation policy can be found at: <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/access/prospective-students/academic-accommodations>.

Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf>.)

Students needing an Accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their Instructor or the Department Head/Dean or to the designated contact person in their Faculty.

FACULTY OF ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING AND STUDENT INFORMATION RESOURCES

Have a question, but not sure where to start?

The Arts Students' Centre is the overall headquarters for undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Arts. The key objective of this office is to connect students with whatever academic assistance they may require.

In addition to housing the Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs and Student Affairs) and the Associate Dean (Teaching, Learning & Student Engagement), the Arts Students' Centre is the specific home to:

- Program advising
- Co-op Education Program
- Arts and Science Honours Academy
- Student Help Desk

Location: Social Sciences Room 102

Phone: 403-220-3580

Email: ascarts@ucalgary.ca

Website: arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at 403-210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Block.

Contacts for the Students' Union Representative for the Faculty of Arts: arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca.

INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Devices such as laptops, palmtops and smartbooks are allowed provided that they are used exclusively for instructional purposes and do not cause disruption to the instructor and to fellow students. Cellular telephones, blackberries and other mobile communication tools are not permitted and must be switched off.

SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Links to information that is not course-specific related to student wellness and safety resources can be found on the Office of the Registrar's website: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines>.