



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

ROST 399.03

Topics in Romance Languages (The New in New Cinemas: "Dystopia in Latin American Cinemas.")

Winter 2023

Block Week: January 3-7, 9:00-12:35 and 1:25-5:00 (CHD 420)

COURSE OUTLINE

INSTRUCTOR'S NAME: Dr. Nayibe Bermúdez-Barríos

OFFICE HOURS: Remotely, by appointment via email. See D2L for Zoom link.

E-MAIL: nbermude@ucalgary.ca I will respond to e-mails within 48 hrs during weekdays.

TELEPHONE NUMBER: I don't have regular access to my office phone. Phone calls and Zoom meetings can be arranged via email.

DESCRIPTION

"The New in New Cinemas" will focus on the distinctly recent exploration of Dystopia in Latin American Cinemas. Among the many questions raised by this focus, one guiding principle will look into what Dystopian Latin American cinemas do. This course approaches this question through an in-depth study of some contemporary representative films of the region featuring compelling issues such as food and water wars, socio-ecological crisis, labour relations, religion, reproduction, technology and the religion of data, and extreme forms of power. Beyond addressing XXI century public concerns, the course highlights drama, suspense, special effects, color, and sound, to show how dystopian narratives go beyond representation to engage affect and the affective as powerful tools to appeal to spectators.

OBJECTIVES

Students will acquire various skills including: 1) an understanding of film and narrative technique and their uses in the construction of meaning, 2) familiarity with science fiction and dystopia in Latin America and specifically of dystopia as one of its subgenres; 3) familiarity with the themes, trends, tropes, topoi, and forms of dystopian Latin American cinemas; and 4) awareness of the links between the cinema, the debates or our time, and the affective potential of filmmaking.

OUTCOMES

- Students will be able to explain key concepts as well as dominant questions, trends, and tropes present in the subgenre of dystopia
- While working with assigned readings, exercises, assigned material (in preparation for viewing films), lecture material, and while viewing films, students will get the conceptual toolset:
- to read, see, hear, and think critically.
- to identify primary concepts, ideas, themes - and reflect on them in preparation for examinations.
- to acquire, organize and interpret information for participation in classroom discussion.
- to gain effective writing skills for assignments.
- to acquire cultural literacy in the area of Film.
- to acquire particular social and communicative skills.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

All required readings are either available online through the library or will be made available on D2L. Students are strongly encouraged to read as much in advance of the course as possible, and to take summary notes for reference. The days in the course will be long and intense, with daily assignments relating to the day's topics that will require additional independent research. In general, there will be approximately 60 pages of reading per day (sometimes more, maybe sometimes less).



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Access to films is generally provided by the library. However, you may have to purchase or rent a couple of movies online. Make sure they are subtitled.

RECOMMENDED COURSE MATERIALS

Austin, Thomas. *From Antz to Titanic: Reinventing Film Analysis*. Pluto P., 2000.

Corrigan, Timothy. *A Short Guide to Writing about Film*. Longman. Any edition.

COURSE NOTES

- Please note that this course will run from Tue 3rd – Sat 7th Jan 2023
- This course will run for 5 days during block week from 9 am to approximately 5 pm daily. Students are expected to arrive to class on time and prepared to work. The class begins promptly at 9:00 AM every morning. Because it is winter and therefore road conditions can be very poor, students are expected to check weather and road condition reports in advance so they can make proper arrangements to arrive on campus on time.
- This is an intensive course with a demanding schedule. Students are strongly encouraged to clear their calendar for the week so that the course is their priority. This isn't a requirement, but it is a recommendation with your best interests at heart. It is also recommended that you complete as many readings as you can, take notes, preview the films, and complete all online activities prior to the start of class.
- Please see the detailed Class Schedule on D2L (under Content). Students are asked to follow all activities (lectures, screenings, group work, class discussions) in the sequence—and at the time—stated in the schedule. Please see detailed information on the assessment and all assignments below. For tests, no notes or any other material allowed. All tests are due by or at 11:59 pm.
- Electronic Device Policy:
Scientific studies have clearly shown that use of laptops and other electronic tools for notes and in-class work results in poorer learning outcomes and consequently worse grades. While respectful use of laptops or tablets for academic purposes is allowed in this course, you are strongly encouraged not to use them at all in class. If students use them for non-academic purposes in class, they will be asked to leave that class, possibly forfeiting some grades. Texting in class is to be limited to emergencies only. If students persist in texting, surfing the web or other activities not directly relevant to the course, they will be asked to leave that class and/or to leave their devices at the front of class until its conclusion. Please respect your fellow students and me by avoiding distracting use of these devices.
- Please note the following University regulations regarding Block Week courses (see the University Calendar, <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-10-1.html> for more information):
 - The last day to drop a Block Week course (without it appearing on the student's transcript) shall be the end of the first day of lectures.
 - The last day to withdraw from a Block Week course shall be the final day of lectures during the Block Week.
 - Final grades for Block Week courses will not be required until the end of the term in which the course is offered.

ASSESSMENT

- **Film technique and other online activities: 10%**
- **Research and report: 10%**
- **Two Online Tests: (2 x 15%) 30 %**
- **Analysis paper (1,000 words): 30%**
- **Participation during class discussions: 20%**



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- **Film technique and other online activities: 10%**

These activities (on D2L) cover film terms and how to analyze films. You are to watch the videos, learn the terms, and complete the exercises, if any, by or on the dates indicated at 11:59 pm at the latest.
- **Research and report: 10%**

Each day, 6-7 students will each present a 5-minute (maximum) short oral report answering a specific question or aspect of a specific question, including research done about assigned films. All research material must vary from students to student, as well as the oral and the written report. Communicate and work in groups to avoid repetition. Students will be timed and stopped after 5 minutes. Therefore, it is vital that the presentations be fully prepared beforehand unless you are extremely confident at speaking. The question will assume familiarity with the course readings posted on D2L, research done on the films, lecture material, and film technique. A mark will be assigned based on the oral presentation, 'Behind the Scenes' research submitted to D2L, and active participation in the following discussion. 'Behind the Scenes' must include 180 to 200-word summaries, a page with links to video material on the film (s) such as [imdb](https://www.imdb.com/) information, interviews by crew, lectures by the director(s), making of, and a bibliography including newspaper reports, reviews, and journal articles. One of each. All research material must vary from students to student, as well as the oral and the written report. Communicate and work in groups to avoid repetition. The 180 to 200-word summary uses the research and all other material to give a comprehensive answer to the questions assigned.
- **Online Tests: 30 % (2 x 15%)**

These tests cover readings discussed in class (from D2L), lectures, film technique, and film analysis. Dates:

Test 1: Sunday, January 8th; Test 2 Monday, January 9th. No notes or any other material allowed. All tests will be posted in advance before the start of class, and are due by or at 11:59 pm of the test date. Each test is timed; once you start a test on D2L, you have 90 minutes to complete it. To allow for technical problems, completed tests can be submitted up to 135 minutes from the start time.
- **Analysis paper (1,000 words [+/- 10 %]): 30%**

Students write a paper in which they analyze dystopian films by answering one question from a number of provided essay questions (see D2L for details). The paper will be assessed based on the following criteria:

 - *Completion of the task (25)*: Does the entire paper remain focused on one of the provided questions and does the paper provide a clear answer to all aspects of the chosen question?
 - *Construction of argument (32.5)*: Is the paper original and does it have a clear introduction with a specific thesis statement (12.5)? Does the paper productively discuss counterarguments (7.5)? Are the transitions between sentences and paragraphs clear (7.5)? Does the paper have a clear and productive conclusion (5)?
 - *Productive and nuanced work with primary and secondary sources (17.5)*: Does the paper provide evidence for its claims by clear references to primary and/or secondary sources (12.5)? Does the paper include a nuanced discussion of the cited texts and films (5)?
 - *Clarity of writing and form (25)*: Is there a consistent and transparent citation system (5)? Does the essay comply with standard English grammar and spelling (5)? Is the paper stylistically appropriate (5)? Does the paper have a descriptive and well-suited title (5)? Is the paper correctly formatted (a Word document, using 12-point Times New Roman and double-spacing) (5)?

Date: Essays are due on January 13, 2023 (11:59 pm).

 - **Please note**: The grade will be lowered by 2 points for every 100 words that the paper deviates from the required word count.
- **Participation during class discussions: 20%**

Success in this block week course requires full attendance, thorough preparation and engagement with the material, class participation, and, of course, prompt submission of all assessed



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requirements. Failure to complete and submit all assessed course requirements will result in a grade of F for the course.

- This course will require students to be present for all classes and participate fully. Your performance and input into class discussions, your comments, presentations, and activities will inform the grade for your assessments. You will be expected to have read/prepared the material for the course and be ready to ask informed and relevant questions. I do not make my notes/Powerpoint available on-line or in other forms. Lectures will assume knowledge of the assigned texts and will be analytic in nature.

GRADING SCALE

A+=100; A=93-99; A- =86-92; B+=81-85; B=76-80; B- =71-75; C+=67-70; C=62-66 C- =58-61; D+=54-57; D=50-53; F<53%

The official grading system (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1) will be applied for the calculation of the final mark.

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

Academic Misconduct refers to student behaviour which compromises proper assessment of a student's academic activities and includes: cheating; fabrication; falsification; plagiarism; unauthorized assistance; failure to comply with an instructor's expectations regarding conduct required of students completing academic assessments in their courses; and failure to comply with exam regulations applied by the Registrar.

For information on the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure please visit:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-academic-misconduct-policy>

Additional information is available on the Academic Integrity Website at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/learning/academic-integrity>

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/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy>) 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/legal-services/access-information-privacy> for complete information on the disclosure of personal records.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies



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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/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-accommodation-policy>

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: <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/current-students/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 Tower.

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 and tablets 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>.