

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**

<https://uofa.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

2017-2018 SPAN 425 B1: Hispanic Filmmakers: All About Almodóvar
(Winter Term)

Instructor: Dr. Victoria Ruétalo
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Time: T, R 9:30-11:00
Place: HC 2-14
Office Hours: By appointment

Course Prerequisite: SPAN 320 and an additional 3 credits in Span at the 300-level, excluding 300 or 306, or consent of department.

Course-based Ethics Approval in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

Yes No, not needed, no such projects approved.

Community Service Learning component

Required Optional None

Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available

- Exam registry – Students' Union
<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/infolink/exam/>
- See explanations below
- Document distributed in class
- Other (please specify)
- NA

Additional mandatory Instructional fees (approved by Board of Governors)

Yes No

Course Description and Objectives:

Pedro Almodóvar is considered one of the most important cultural symbols of the restoration of democracy in Spain after nearly 40 years of the right-wing military dictatorship of Francisco Franco. Starting off as an underground filmmaker in the 1970s and 1980s, Almodóvar has become the most internationally known Spanish filmmaker of his generation. This course will study his films to establish his 'trademarks' and how these have evolved throughout his oeuvre: a quirky and campy style full of kitschy elements, outrageous humour, a vexed relationship to the nation, the use of intertextuality and references to popular culture and melodrama, and his play with gender. Furthermore we will study what defines a filmmaker as an auteur' and explore issues of creative control.

At the end of the course successful students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a general knowledge about the history of Spain and its role in the work of Almodóvar.
- Evaluate ethical and social issues relating to the production, distribution, and exhibition of Pedro Almodóvar's films.
- Debate and deconstruct underlying theories of sexuality and gender
- Debate and deconstruct film theories relating to the auteur
- Demonstrate advanced critical research and writing skills.
- Conduct research of print, electronic, and visual texts using both primary and secondary sources.
- Analyze, argue, and communicate ideas in both written and oral formats.
- Formulate research questions and evaluate the appropriateness of using relevant theoretical and methodological approaches.
- Accept constructive feedback and revise work accordingly.
- Work collaboratively in a shared environment to achieve a common goal.

Texts:

Secondary readings will be available on reserve in the library or on Moodle, list distributed on the first day of class. It is the student's responsibility to bring to class a copy of the relevant essays.

Films will be screened at home. They will be shared on google drive. Many of the films are readily available. Students are responsible for seeing the films.

Grade Distribution (see "Explanatory Notes"):

10% attendance and participation

10% weekly response dialogues (approx. 200 words) on online forum: ongoing

10% short midterm paper (may be inspired by one film): **February 15, 2018**

30% presentations (10% group mark, 10% individual, 10% brief write-up): ongoing

10% Bibliography and abstract, outlines for term paper: (5% abstract/thesis/outline, 5% bibliography including correct MLA style): **March 20, 2018**

30% term paper (may be inspired by one response journal or short paper): **April 12, 2018**

Explanatory Notes on Assignments:

Response dialogue: Students will be expected to respond to the texts and discussions held during the week in the form of an informal response journal. Graduate students will begin the discussions by posing the week's questions each Friday; the discussions will be organized around groups. You are expected to contribute approximately 200 words per week. Every Friday the previous week's discussion will close which means that you cannot be late on your answer.

Short midterm paper: Students will write a short midterm reaction paper (2-3 pages) discussing in detail from a film, a theoretical text, or from class or online discussions. The paper must have a clear thesis and have an argument. You do not need outside sources but you need to refer to one source used in the class.

Presentations will be scheduled throughout the course. In partners students will present a topic and help to open the discussion for the day. Presentations should be clear and short (15 minutes is the maximum length). You will receive a group mark (for organization, powerpoint), an individual mark (for your brief presentation), and a mark for the write-up (2 pages). The write-up may be based on group discussions but should be done individually. A Signup sheet will be available online in the second week of class, and further directions to be discussed in class. Once a student signs up for a presentation the student is responsible for presenting on the assigned date.

Abstract (including thesis), bibliography, outline: In advance of writing the paper, you will be asked to submit an abstract (examples in class) that includes a clear thesis, a bibliography of the sources you expect to use (five, MLA style), and a clear but brief outline.

Term paper: Students will write a research paper (roughly 9 pages excluding title page and bibliography), including **five secondary sources**, on one of the films discussed throughout the semester or on a further text or topic of your choosing. While the thesis should be the student's own, possible topics will be discussed in class.

Required Notes:

“Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) of the University Calendar.”

Academic Integrity:

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.governance.ualberta.ca) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

Learning and Working Environment:

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students; faculty and staff are able to study and work in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the [Office of the Student Ombuds](#). Information about the [University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures](#) is described in [UAPPOL](#).

Academic Honesty:

All students should consult the information provided by the [Student Conduct & Accountability Office](#) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the [Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook](#) and [Information for Students](#)). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

Students involved in language courses and translation courses should be aware that on-line “translation engines” produce very dubious and unreliable “translations.” **Students in languages courses** should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, **excessive editorial and creative help** in assignments is considered a form of “cheating” that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

Recording of Lectures:

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections [Attendance](#) and [Examinations](#) of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

In this course, attendance, preparation, and regular participation go hand in hand; students will not only be expected to attend each session, but they are expected to come prepared for the day’s lesson and participate in that day’s lesson. As the course will be run in seminar-style, the success of the course is dependent on informed and lively discussions driven by student engagement. It is therefore vital that each student complete the required readings, film screenings, or written exercises assigned for the scheduled class. Attendance, preparation, and regular participation will count for 10% of the overall grade for the course.

Policy for Late Assignments:

Students who consult in advance with the instructor regarding contingencies preventing the

timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the instructor, be granted an extension. Otherwise, late assignments with no prior arrangement will receive a 5% -per-class-day penalty for each subsequent class- day of lateness.

Student Accessibility Services:

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with [Student Accessibility Services](#), contact their office immediately (1-80 SUB; Email sasrec@ualberta.ca; Email; phone 780-492-3381).

Grading:

Assessment of the individual course components may be in the form of numerical marks or letter grades. The final letter grade will be based on "a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class" (University Calendar, [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#)). The University Grading Procedure mandates that "a student's level of achievement of the goals/outcomes of a course, their grade, and the descriptor of that grade must be aligned" (<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/>). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

“MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale”

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	%
Excellent. A+, A or A- is earned by work which is superior in content and form and demonstrates an exceptional grasp of the subject matter. The grade of A+ designates work that far exceeds course expectations. Grades in the A range are normally achieved by a small number of students.	A+	4.0	97-100
	A	4.0	93-96
	A-	3.7	90-92
Good. B+, B or B- is earned by work that demonstrates a thorough comprehension of the course material and a good command of relevant skills. Grades in the B range are normally achieved by the largest number of students.	B+	3.3	87-89
	B	3.0	83-86
	B-	2.7	80-82
Satisfactory. C+, C or C- is earned by work that demonstrates an adequate grasp of the course material and relevant skills. Grades in the C range designate work that has met the basic requirements of the course.	C+	2.3	77-79
	C	2.0	73-76
	C-	1.7	70-72
Poor/Minimal Pass. D+ or D is earned by work that demonstrates minimal familiarity with the course material. Grades in the D range generally indicate insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.	D+	1.3	65-69
	D	1.0	60-64
Failure.	F	0.0	0-59