HISP 505 (Fall 2020 Online): LATIN AMERICAN POETRY
Professor Amanda Holmes
Office Hours via Zoom: by appointment
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This course explores the evolution of Latin American poetry through the twentieth century through a detailed look at the works of five principal poets: Gabriela Mistral, Pablo Neruda, César Vallejo, Octavio Paz and Nicolás Guillén. Works by these authors will be complemented by secondary readings, and comparisons will be drawn with texts by other twentieth-century Latin American poets. Topics include both thematic and formal elements of poetry analysis; the representation of regional and personal identities; the political engagement of the poet and négritude; and the definition of poetic forms, among other topics.

REQUIRED TEXTS
1. Course pack (through the McGill Bookstore)
2. Secondary sources on My Courses

COURSE REQUIREMENTS (UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS)
Participation (discussion board and Zoom) 10%
Reading Journal 10%
Group Presentation 20%
Short essay 25%
Final essay (abstract 5%; final essay 30%) 35%

COURSE REQUIREMENTS (GRADUATE STUDENTS)
Participation (discussion board and Zoom) 10%
Reading Journal 15%
Presentation 25%
Final essay (abstract 10%; final essay 40%) 50%

Participation
Students are expected to prepare each week’s assignments carefully (poems, critical articles, posted lectures and student presentations, as applicable) and to participate actively in the discussion board on My Courses and during weekly Zoom meetings:
• Discussion board: a number of relevant topic threads will be initiated by the instructor each week. Lively discussion is encouraged, but must always maintain a respectful attitude and tone. All discussion must be in Spanish.
• Online Zoom meetings will occur on Thursday every week during the time assigned to this course: 8:30-10:00am, Montreal time. The meetings will be recorded and posted on My Courses. To better imitate a classroom environment, students are expected to keep the video function turned on throughout the sessions. If for some reason students cannot attend the meetings, or cannot use the video function, please contact the instructor and we will make other arrangements.

Reading Journal
Students will keep a reading journal (maximum 300 words per entry), to be handed in on My Courses on Wednesday each week before midnight. In the journal, students are expected to present their reactions to the reading assignments as specified in the course outline.

Presentation (**group for undergraduate/individual for graduate students)
For the presentation (~20 minutes), students will present a poem by an author not studied in the course in a presentation posted on My Courses. Students will provide the instructor with a copy of the poem and a

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brief outline of the presentation at least one week prior to the presentation. The outline will explain the role of each student in the presentation. Reactions to these poems will be recorded by all students in their reading journals.

**Essays (undergraduate students)**

- **Short essay**: students will prepare a short essay (4-6 pages) on a topic assigned by the instructor two weeks previously (Due September 30th, 2020). The objective of this assignment is to allow the student the opportunity to practice writing a literature essay on poetry before producing the final paper.
- **Final essay**: By the end of this course, students will produce a final paper based on one aspect of the material covered in the semester. The final essay will be 10-12 pages, double spaced, 12-point font, following the guidelines of the MLA Handbook, due on November 27th, 2020. Students will choose their own topics for this assignment in consultation with the professor. An abstract and bibliography for the final essay are due on October 16th, 2020.

**Essay (graduate students)**

By the end of this course, students will produce a final paper based on one aspect of the material covered in the semester. With the thought in mind that as a graduate student you are aiming towards writing publishable articles, the final essay will be 17-20 pages, double spaced, 12-point font, following the guidelines of the MLA Handbook, due on November 27th, 2020. Students will choose their own topics for this assignment in consultation with the professor. An abstract and bibliography for the final essay are due on October 16th, 2020.

All assignments will be handed in on My Courses by midnight of the due date. Late assignments will lose three points per day late.

**Academic Honesty**

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).

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**Health and Wellness Resources at McGill**

Student well-being is a priority for the University. All of our health and wellness resources have been integrated into a single Student Wellness Hub, your one-stop shop for everything related to your physical and mental health. If you need to access services or get more information, visit the Virtual Hub at mcgill.ca/wellness-hub or drop by the Brown Student Services Building (downtown) or Centennial Centre (Macdonald campus). Within your faculty, you can also connect with your Local Wellness Advisor (to make an appointment, visit mcgill.ca/lwa).

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**COURSE OUTLINE**

**UNIT I. GABRIELA MISTRAL**

*Week 1: Early poetry*

- Lecture posted online: Introduction to course + introduction to Mistral
My Courses discussion board: Desolación: “Los sonetos de la muerte”; Poemas de las madres
Class/Zoom discussion: Thursday, September 3th at 11:30.

Week 2: Women in Mistral’s poetry
Lecture posted online: Mistral’s poetry
Class/Zoom discussion: Thursday, September 10th at 11:30.

Week 3: Mistral’s representation of Chile/Introduction to Pablo Neruda
Lecture: conclusion to Mistral
Discussion board: Poema de Chile: “Hallazgo,” “Valle de Elqui,” “Monte Aconcagua,” “Regreso”
UNIT 2: PABLO NERUDA
Lecture: introduction to Neruda and his love poetry
Journal 2 due Wednesday, September 16th: Neruda’s Poemas de amor
Class/Zoom discussion: Thursday, September 17th at 11:30. Topic: Poemas de amor

Week 4: Neruda’s hermetic period and his epic poetry
Lecture: analysis of Neruda’s hermetic poetry and his monumental poem on the Incan past
Journal 3 due Wednesday, September 23rd: “Galope muerto” and “Alturas de Macchu Picchu”; Cecilia Enjuto Rangel (My Courses)
Class/Zoom discussion: Thursday, September 24th at 11:30.

Week 5: Neruda’s evolution towards the common man
Lecture: the politics of privileging the ordinary in Neruda’s poetry
Discussion board: Odas elementales
**Short Essay due: Wednesday, September 30th.

UNIT 3: CÉSAR VALLEJO
Week 6: Vallejo’s revision of modernismo and innovations in Trilce
Lecture: introduction to the poet and to the two volumes of poetry
Class/Zoom discussion: Thursday, October 8th at 11:30. Topic: Trilce

Week 7: The human condition in Vallejo
Lecture: later poetry and the Spanish Civil War in Vallejo
Discussion Board: Poemas humanos: “Hoy me gusta la vida mucho menos…,” “Me viene, hay días, una gana ubérrima…,” “Considerando en frío, imparcialmente…,” “Piedra negra sobre una piedra blanca,” “Traspie entre dos estrellas,” “Un hombre pasa con un pan al hombro…,” “Ello es que el lugar donde me pongo…”

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**UNIT 4: OCTAVIO PAZ**

**Week 8: Introduction to Octavio Paz**
- **Lecture**: introduction to the poet and to the poetry
- **Journal 6** due Wednesday, October 21st: Analysis/response of Viento entero: “Viento entero”
- **Class/Zoom discussion** Thursday, October 22nd at 11:30. Topic: “Viento entero”

**Week 9: History and ruins in Paz**
- **Lecture**: context for La estación violenta: “Himno entre ruinas,” “Piedra de sol”
- **Discussion Board**: La estación violenta: “Himno entre ruinas”
- **Class/Zoom discussion** Thursday, October 29th at 11:30. Topic: “Piedra de sol”

**Week 10: The city and experimentation in Paz’s poetry**
- **Lecture**: context for Vuelta: “Ciudad de Mexico”
- **Discussion Board**: Vuelta: “Ciudad de Mexico”
- **Journal 8** due Wednesday, November 4th: Vuelta: “Ciudad de Mexico”
- **Class/Zoom discussion** Thursday, November 5th at 11:30. Topic: Poesía concreta: “Topoemas”; “Anotaciones/Rotaciones” (My Courses)

**Unit 5: NICOLÁS GUILLÉN**

**Week 11: The son in Nicolás Guillén’s poetry**
- **Lecture**: introduction to Nicolás Guillén and Motivos de son
- **Class/Zoom discussion** Thursday, November 12th at 11:30. Topic: West Indies Ltd.

**Week 12: Colonialism and capitalism in Guillén**
- **Lecture**: the poet’s response to US political influence
- **Discussion Board**: West Indies Ltd.
- **Journal 10** due Wednesday, November 18th: Analysis of El gran zoo
- **Class/Zoom discussion** Thursday, November 19th at 11:30. Topic: El gran zoo

**Week 13: Conclusion to course**
- **Class/Zoom**: Thursday, November 25th at 11:30. Topic: Conclusion to course
- **Final Essay** due Friday, November 27th.

**In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.**

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