HISPANIC WOMEN AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

FORL/WOST 191       Fall 2005

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Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 10:20-11:20 AM and by appointment.

Required books:
• Agosin, Marjorie. Women of Smoke.
• Cisneros, Sandra. The House on Mango Street.
• Diosdado, Ana. Yours for the Asking.
• García, Cristina. Dreaming in Cuban.
• Poniatowska, Elena. Dear Diego.

Mandatory readings on reserve (Reeves Library):
• Burgos, Elizabeth. I, Rigoberta Menchú, an Indian Woman in Guatemala (Introduction, Chapters I, VI, VII,XII, XVI, XVIII, XIX, XXIV, XXVI, XXIX, XXX, XXI).
• Castellanos, Rosario. Another Way to Be, Selected Works of Rosario Castellanos. Introduction (XXI- XLIV), Tlatelolco Memorial (35), From Balún Canán (59-69), Cooking Lesson (104-112) Man of Destiny (119-121), Women's Lib, Here (122-124). Essays: "Language as an instrument of domination" and "Woman and her Image".
• Garro, Elena. "It's the Fault of the Tlaxcaltecs" (Short Story)
• Selection of Poetry: Julia de Burgos (A Julia de Burgos, Poem to my Death), Gloria Fuertes (Prayer, Let's not waste time, Human Geography, The Day when Peace takes hold).

Description of the course: As the Hispanic community grows in the US (currently being the largest minority), it is important for us to understand the variety of backgrounds of the Hispanics we meet in our everyday life. Contrary to the stereotype that sees the "Latino community" in the US as a "uniform" group of people, the reality is that Spanish speakers here come from very different countries, ethnic groups and social classes. The introduction to this course will help students dispel the erroneous idea that "Latino" or "Hispanic" is a uniform ethnic group. Then, the course will focus on the main social, historical, and political issues that contemporary Hispanic women face in today’s world, both in the US and in many other countries.

Taking into account the social and cultural differences among countries, and the diverse backgrounds of Hispanic women, students will read and analyze several
works written by these women. The works will include 4 novels, a short story, a theater play, essays and poetry (all translated into English whenever English is not the original language).

Objectives of this course:
1) To develop students’ knowledge of the great diversity of ethnic groups and social classes in the Hispanic world, and the role of women within the different groups.
2) To increase the students’ ability to analyze and understand the global issues that affect Hispanic women in many countries, including the US. These issues will be studied in their appropriate context and under a critical perspective.
3) To make students more aware of their own cultural values and the common problems that we face in today's world.

The class is organized around discussion of assigned readings. All readings and lectures are in English. No previous knowledge of the Spanish language and/or culture is required for this course.

The readings, discussions and documentaries/films will be presented according to the following major themes: History and ethnic identity, indigenous people and human rights, the feminist movement in Latin America, civil war in the 20th century, political regimes and dictatorships, modern media, art, and political and cultural exile.

FINAL GRADE:
- **Preparation and attendance:** It is essential that students come to class well prepared, having read the assigned material. Attendance and active class participation are necessary to succeed in this class. The professor will assign a daily grade for the level of preparation and participation of each student.

  The daily class grades will be as follows:
  - **A=95 Excellent participation** (the student answers questions and offers interesting comments without the need of the professor or the debate leader calling on him/her. The comments and answers show that the student has thoroughly prepared the reading and has done the necessary background research to understand the reading).
  - **B=85 Good participation** (the student answers questions and offers interesting comments whenever the professor or debate leader calls on him/her. Sometimes, the student participates without being asked. The comments and answers show that the student has prepared the readings and has done the necessary background research to understand the reading quite well).
  - **C=75 Fair participation** (the student answers questions and offers comments only when the professor or debate leader calls on him/her. The comments and
answers show that the student has prepared the reading, but has not done much necessary background research to understand the reading).

D=65 Poor participation (the student answers questions and offers very brief comments only when the professor or debate leader calls on him/her. The comments and answers show that the student has a poor preparation of the reading and has not done the necessary background research to understand it).

F=55 Lack of participation (the student does not answer questions and does not offer any comments in the class or group discussion. The lack of comments and answers, as well as incorrect answers, show that the student has not done the reading or, if he/she has done it, it has been in a careless or incomplete way).

No attendance, no participation at all: When a student is not in class, he/she gets a 0 for that day regardless of the reason for that absence.

More than three absences will affect the final participation grade. Every absence beyond three will result in a deduction of one point taken off the final participation grade. It is the responsibility of the student to reserve his/her 3 absences for those circumstances when missing class is unavoidable (i.e. illnesses, field trips, participation in sporting events, etc.). In case of extended absences the student should talk to Students Services or the Academic Dean who will contact the professor.

Remember: Requests to excuse absences at the end of the semester will not be considered. Students have the responsibility of keeping track of their own absences. No reminders will be given.

Three (3) late arrivals to class (10 minutes or more) will be the equivalent of one absence and students will lose 1 point off their final participation grade. Please, be respectful to other students and the professor, late arrivals are disrupting.

• Exams: There will be an in class mid-term exam and a final take-home exam (5-6 pages plus bibliography).

• 15-20 minute class presentation (power-point): Each student will do a power point class presentation. Depending on the day, some presentations will be on the authors and others on the works or themes covered in class. At the end of each presentation, the student will bring questions to the class to initiate the discussion on the author or topic discussed.

The following specific points will be graded:

1. Explanations about the author or the reading/theme (background information when necessary).

2. Use of visual aids and other multimedia material when appropriate, such as audio, video etc.

   The student can consult with the professor for advise on the preparation and organization of the presentation any time he/she wants before the due date.
• **Material prepared for the presentation:** Each student will hand in all the written material used to prepare the presentation, including reference to sources. The material must be handed in **on the same day of the presentation.**

**Important note:** For every late day that any written material in the course is handed in, one letter grade will be deducted from the grade; for example, material (essay, take-home etc.) due on a Monday that would receive a B if handed in on time, will automatically receive a D if handed in on Wednesday. Saturday and Sunday count as two days. **PLEASE, do not ask for extensions or exceptions to this rule.**

**Academic integrity:** academic dishonesty, that is, **cheating** on exams, and **plagiarism** (using another person’s words and passing them off as your own) is a serious offense and will be handled according to the Moravian policy on Academic Honesty (please, see the Student Handbook). Make sure you cite ALL the sources you use for your work. It is your responsibility to avoid dishonest behavior.

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<th>Final Grade</th>
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<td>Preparation and class participation</td>
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<td>Mid-term exam</td>
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<td>Class presentation (power point)</td>
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<td>Material prepared for presentation</td>
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COURSE SCHEDULE
M=Monday    W=Wednesday    F=Friday

August
M 29  Presentation of the course. For next class each student will select a Spanish speaking country and will do an internet search on the history, the population and the main characteristics of that country.
W 31  Historical and political introduction: each student does a brief 3-4 minute presentation on the country he/she has selected.

September
F  2  Historical and political introduction: each student does a brief 3-4 minute presentation on the country he/she has selected.
M  5  Labor Day (no class)
W  7  History and ethnicity: Introduction
F  9  Power point presentation on the Mexican native groups at the time of the conquest: (1)__________ History and ethnicity: Elena Garro "It's the fault of the Tlaxcaltecs"
M 12  Power point presentation on Elena Garro and her work (2) ____________
      History and ethnicity: Elena Garro "It's the fault of the Tlaxcaltecs"
W 14  Power point presentation on Rosario Castellanos: (3)_____________ and her work: (4)_____________
The new Mexican Woman: R. Castellanos "Introduction"  Poem: "Indian Mother"
F 16  Power point presentation on political demontrations (R. Castellanos):
      (5) ______________  R. Castellanos "Tlatelolco memorial".
M 19  Social classes and women roles: R. Castellanos "Balún Canán" (59-69) "Cooking lesson" (104-112), "Man of Destiny" (119-121).
W 21  Power point presentation on women's liberation (Rosario Castellanos):
      (6)_____________ R. Castellanos "Language as an instrument of domination", "Woman an her image".
F 23  Power point presentation on indigenous people of Central America:
      (7) ______________.  Indigenous people and Human rights: R. Menchú.  
      Introduction, Chapters I, VI, VII.
M 26  Power point presentation on the 20th century history of Central America: (8). 
      ______________.  Indigenous people and Human rights: R. Menchú, Chapters X, 
      XII, XVI.
W 28  Power point presentation on native American women: (9)_____________
      Indigenous people and Human rights: R. Menchú.  Chapters XVIII, XIX, XXIV.
F 30  Power point presentation on the Guatemalan Quiché indians and R. Menchú: 
      (10)_____________ Indigenous people and Human rights: R. Menchú.  Chapters XXVI, XXIX, XXX, XXI.

October
M  3  Review for Mid-Term
W  5  MID-TERM EXAM
F  7  Power point presentation on Elena Poniatowska: (11)_____________
      Women and art: E. Poniatowska.  "Dear Diego".
M 10  Fall Recess
W 12  Power point presentation on Frida Kahlo: (12) ______________
       Women and art: E. Poniatowska. "Dear Diego".
F 14  Film (Frida)
M 17  Film (Frida)
W 19  Power point presentation on South Cone military regimes: (13)__________
       Music by Mercedes Sosa and other female singers.
F 21  Power point presentation on Marjorie Agosin: (14)_____________
       History and Political regimes: M. Agosin "Women of Smoke" (7-49)
M 24  Power point presentation on Jewish women in Latin America: (15)_____________
       History and Political regimes: M. Agosin "Women of Smoke" (50-72)
W 26  Power point presentation on the reading by Marjorie Agosin (16)________
       History and Political regimes: M. Agosin "Women of Smoke" (73-109)
F 28  Film (The House of the Spirits)
M 31  Film (The House of the Spirits)

November
W 2  Power point presentation on women of African descent in the Caribbean:
       (17)________________. Women and identity. Poetry by Julia de Burgos.
F 4  Power point presentation on women in Spain before and after the Spanish Civil
       War: (18) _______________ Film: "La plaza del diamante" by Merce Rodoreda.
M 7  Power point presentation on Gloria Fuertes: (19)_________________
       Poetry by Gloria Fuertes.
W 9  Power point presentation on women and the theater: (20)_______________
       Ana Diosdado "Yours for the asking" Act I
F 11  Power point presentation on women and the media: (21)______________
       Women and the media: Ana Diosdado "Yours for the asking" Act II
M 14  Power point presentation on the Cuban revolution: (22)______________
       Women in exile: C. Garcia "Dreaming in Cuban"(3-74)
W 16  Power point presentation on Hispanic women in exile: (23)______________
       Women in exile: C. Garcia "Dreaming in Cuban"(75-144)
F 18  Power point presentation on Cristina Garcia: (24)_________________
       Women in exile: C. Garcia "Dreaming in Cuban"(145-209)
M 21  Women in exile: C. Garcia "Dreaming in Cuban"(210-245)
W 23  Thanksgiving recess
F 25  Thanksgiving recess
M 28  Power point presentation on Hispanic groups in the US (25)___________
       Hispanic women in the US. S: Cisneros "House on Mango Street" (3-38)

December
W 30  Power point presentation on Sandra Cisneros: (26)_________________
       Hispanic women in the US. S: Cisneros "House on Mango Street" (39-78)
F  2  Hispanic women in the US. S: Cisneros "House on Mango Street" (79-110)
M  5  Documentary on Hispanic women in the US
W  7  Class debate on the topics discussed (will be recorded for participation grade)
F  9  Class debate on the topics discussed (will be recorded for participation grade)
M 12  Review for final essay