

Universidad de Puerto Rico
Recinto de Río Piedras
Facultad de Humanidades
Departamento de Inglés

Acquiring English Through Literature, I SII, 2004-2005
INGL 3081 (001) LW 1:00-2:20 LPM 305
Prof. Lowell Fiet
Oficina AFB-200, 11:30-12:50; 4:00-5:20 LW y por acuerdo

Description

The course focuses on the study, discussion, critical analysis, and oral representation of stories, poems, plays, essays, and novels as a means of accelerating acquisition, understanding, and production of written and oral English. Emphasis is placed on building vocabulary, the grammar and syntax of the readings, the aesthetic uses of language in literary expression, and the structural components of literary genres.

Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- 1) use a broader range of vocabulary extracted from the works read that will benefit the overall understanding and production in English
- 2) translate terms, concepts, and ideas as they acquire increased fluency and knowledge of English
- 3) demonstrate a keener awareness of the syntactical, stylistic, and aesthetic uses of English in different literary genres
- 4) analyze literary works in terms of structural components such as verses, stanzas, dramatic expression, rhyme scheme, narrative voice, setting, characters, plot, etc.
- 5) write more effectively in the format of short response pieces related to the interpretation and analysis of written works
- 6) show improved oral skills after working in group readings and representations

Course Outline

Weeks 1 and 2: Introduction 6 hours
Lecture/Discussion on elements of literature and the language of literature;
translation exercise; creative writing sample.

Poems: "How Many Times Do I Have To Tell You" - Nicanor Para
"Problems of Underdevelopment" - Nicolás Guillén

Vocabulary, reading comprehension, and pronunciation exercises.

Weeks 3 and 4: Fables, Parables, Legends, Storytelling

Discussion on the use of "stories" and storytelling; illustrations of storytelling throughout human history.

Readings: "The Rabbits who Caused all the Trouble" - James Thurber
"The Bear who could Take it or Leave it Alone" - James Thurber
[2] "Urban Legends" from *Psychology Today*

Writing exercise as the basis of discussion; translations from English to Spanish; oral comprehension exercises; transcription exercises.

Weeks 5, 6, and 7: Narrative Voice and Short Story Forms

Discussion of role of narration and the relation of the narrator to the tale being told; exploration of different styles and forms of narration.

Readings: "Girl" from *At the Bottom of the River* - Jamaica Kincaid
"B. Wordsworth" from *Miguel Street* - V.S. Naipaul
"The Story of an Hour" - Kate Chopin

Discussion of the cultural contexts of English language usage and literary expression; vocabulary building; response papers to longer stories; graded mid-term exercise.

Film Discussion: *Hotel Rwanda*

Weeks 8, 9, and 10: the Novel

Discussion of differences between shorter and longer fiction genres; plot, character, action, and setting; the development of the social, political, and cultural contexts of migration and the literature of the "Diaspora".

Reading: *Nilda* - Nicholasa Mohr

Development of personal narratives; written critical reflections; oral histories.

Weeks 11 and 12: the Dramatic Monologue

Distinguishing drama and narrative; exploring controversial themes; discussing the role of performance and ethnology in literary expression.

Reading: *Miss Margarida's Way* - Roberto Athyade

Exercises in vocabulary building; study of syntactical features of the dramatic monologue; discussion of authorial intentions.

Weeks 13, 14, and 15: Oral Representation

Discussing elements of voice, rhythm, movement, body, and setting in poetry as a performance form; collective interpretation of poetry.

Readings: "Puerto Rican Obituary" - Pedro Pietri

Pronunciation, vocabulary, and oral fluency in final presentation project; written reflection on the project.

Texts might vary slightly due to availability or special student needs.

Los estudiantes que reciban servicios de Rehabilitación Vocacional deben comunicarse con el profesor al inicio del semestre para planificar el acomodo razonable y equipo asistivo necesario conforme a las recomendaciones de la Oficina de Asuntos para las Personas con Impedimento (OAPI) del Decanato de Estudiantes. También, aquellos estudiantes con necesidades especiales que requieren de algún tipo de asistencia o acomodo deben comunicarse con el profesor.

Requirements

- 1) Attendance is required, and 5 absences will lower your grade!
- 2) Participation in class sessions is also required --25% of your final grade.
- 3) Mid-term assignment/project --20% of your final grade.
- 4) Short response paper and written assignments (30%).
- 5) Final assignment/project --25% of your final grade.

Evaluación diferenciada a estudiantes con necesidades especiales.

The texts for the class (indicated on the syllabus) are available as part of a course packet or in the University Bookstore. In one or two cases, the class may need to special order texts via the internet.