

SPC 4680: Rhetorical Criticism

I. General Information

Class Meetings

- Spring 2025
- Tuesday 3:00-4:55; Thursday 4:05-4:55, TUR 2350

Instructor

- Victor Del Hierro
- Turlington 4340
- Office Hours TBD
- vdelhierro@ufl.edu

Course Description

This course will examine the rhetorics and rhetorical practices of Mexican American and Chicana communities. To start the course, we will define what “rhetorics” and “rhetorical practices” are/mean. Then, the course will cover a brief history of Mexican American and Chicana people over the past 50 years. The course will then focus on the study and analysis of Mexican American and Chicana culture and cultural practices to work towards developing an understanding of these communities’ rhetorics. The course will draw on the fields of rhetoric and composition with a special emphasis on cultural rhetorics. The learning outcomes of the course will be to understand and define the meaning of cultural rhetorics along with an understanding of how this works within the context of communities. We will read and watch a wide variety of texts in the course including books, poems, art, films, and television shows. Some examples include tv shows like *Primo* and *This Fool*, books like *I am Not your Perfect Mexican Daughter* by Erika Sanchez, *We Are Owed* by Ariana Brown, and films like *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*, *The Curse of La Llorona*, and *Selena*. Students will have a midterm exam and final essay.

Course Goals

The primary goals of SPC 4680 are to:

- Develop a working theory of Rhetoric
- Develop skills for rhetorical criticism
- Understand Rhetoric as a practice situated within a community
- Understand the process of tracing a historical lineage
- Perform a historical rhetorical lineage

Ultimately this course is about understanding the relationship between rhetoric, communities, and culture. Our ability to understand how communities make meaning allows us to better

understand the world around us. Furthermore, understanding how communities use rhetoric or are rhetorical gives an opportunity to learn how read, write, and listen through a rhetorical lens.

Required Readings and Works

- Materials and Supplies Fees: n/a
- An African American and Latinx History of the United States by Paul Ortiz
- Inventos Mios by Rubi Orozco Santos
- I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter by Erika L. Sanchez
- One month of Hulu to watch This Fool!
- Additional items will be available through Canvas or course reserves.

II. Graded Work

Overview:

In Class Activities (15%)

Reading Quizzes (15%)

Midterm (35%)

Final Project (35%)

Description of Graded Work

I. In Class Activities

During the semester there will be at least two in class activities that you will need to be present for. I will announce them ahead of time by a few class periods. Attendance and participation is the only way to receive credit for these activities.

Due: Scheduled during the semester

Deliverable: Just attend class and participate

Point total: 150 points

II. Reading Quizzes

Throughout the semester we will have reading quizzes at the start of class. Each quiz will be worth between 10 and 15 points. Throughout the semester you are responsible for accumulating at least 150 points to receive full credit. I will update quiz grades regularly on canvas.

Due: Throughout the semester

Deliverable: In class quiz on Canvas

Point total: 150 Points

III. Midterm – Searching for Authenticity in Mexican Restaurants

In this assignment, you will need to visit between two and five Mexican restaurants to research how restaurants represent themselves as Mexican. Through a rhetorical analysis of the restaurants you should demonstrate in this paper your understanding of how culture is expressed through the presentation, advertisements, décor, food offered, and anything else that you can observe.

Due: After Spring Break

Deliverable: Research paper 12 pt. font, Times New Roman or Cambria, 5-10 pages double spaced, 1-inch margins, uploaded to Canvas.

Point total: 350 Points

IV. Final Project

The final project will be for you to write a research paper about community applying what we have learned about culture and rhetoric. Throughout the semester, we have studied various facets of Mexican and Mexican American rhetorics. Based on what you have learned, you will apply your rhetorical analysis skills to develop a project around a community of your choice and the rhetorics that help that community make meaning. What represents that communities' culture and how do they practice it. What has helped shape that community? What do their cultural artifacts look like?

Due: Week 16

Deliverable: Word document, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman or Cambria, 5-10 pages, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, uploaded to Assignments in Canvas

Final Paper: 350 Points

Grading Scale

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

A	94 – 100%		C	74 – 76%
A-	90 – 93%		C-	70 – 73%
B+	87 – 89%		D+	67 – 69%
B	84 – 86%		D	64 – 66%
B-	80 – 83%		D-	60 – 63%
C+	77 – 79%		E	<60

III. Weekly Schedule

Week 1 – Class Introduction

Week 2 – Defining and Understanding Rhetoric

Week 3 – Defining and Understanding Culture
Week 4 – Mexican American History
Week 5 – Mexican American History and Activism
Week 6 – Mexican Americans in Florida Pt. 1
Week 7 – Mexican Americans in Florida Pt. 2
Week 8 – Mexican American Families
Week 9 – Mexican Food and Culture Pt. 1
Week 10 – Spring Break
Week 11 – Mexican Food and Culture Pt. 2
Week 12 – Mexican Cooking
Week 13 – Mexican American Pop Culture Pt. 1
Week 14 – Mexican American Pop Culture Pt. 2
Week 15 – Reflection
Week 16 – Finals Week.

VI. Required Policies

Attendance Policy

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

The Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

In-Class Recordings

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the

publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.