

San José State University
Department of World Languages and Literatures
SPAN 202-01, Seminar in Hispanic Civilization and Culture:
The Cinema of Pedro Almodóvar, Spring 2018

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Ruby Ramírez
Office Location:	Clark Hall 412R
Telephone:	(408) 924-4612
Email:	ruby.ramirez@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Tuesday 4:00pm-5:00pm and Thursday 1:30pm-2:30pm
Class Days/Time:	Tuesday 6:00pm-8:45pm
Classroom:	Clark Hall 205
Prerequisites:	Graduate standing or instructor consent.

Course Format

MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials, such as syllabus, homework assignments, additional readings, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU to learn of any updates.

Course Description

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: A comprehensive study of one or more Spanish-speaking countries. A: Andean countries (Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia). B: Caribbean (Cuba, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Caribbean coasts of Venezuela, Colombia and the nations of Central America). C: Mexico. D: River Plate Region (Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay). E: Spain. May be repeated for credit when course content changes.

THE CINEMA OF PEDRO ALMODÓVAR: This graduate seminar will consist of a critical and analytical study of Pedro Almodovar's cinema. Pedro Almodóvar is a Spanish film director whose films roughly span the years of Spain's post-dictatorship (1977-present) and must be situated within this highly charged context of dramatic political and cultural transformation. The course will address the ways Almodóvar work theorizes, in its own way, about more abstract issues such as gender, feminism, sexuality, identity, consumer culture, authenticity, authority, and film authorship itself. The films will be supported by scholarly articles and book chapters that will contextualize contemporary Spanish cinema. The language of the course is Spanish and all in-class discussions and oral presentations will be held in Spanish. All written assignments are expected to be submitted in Spanish as well.

Course Goals

- Analyze texts and films in terms of their subject matter, cinematic and technical style, historical and contemporary resonance, critical and popular reception, the filmmakers' background and vision, and secondary critical sources.

Course Learning Outcomes

- Develop reading skills of original works, theory and criticism.
- Obtain knowledge of contemporary Spanish cinema.
- Acquire the ability to synthesize ideas and present both summaries and original thoughts in a clear and organized fashion.

Required Textbook / Films / Readings:

TEXTBOOK: *Feminism & Film* / E. Ann Kaplan (ISBN: 9780198782346)

FILMS: All films are available online through different streaming sites such as Amazon, iTunes, YouTube, Vudu, and/or Google Play. You are responsible for obtaining and viewing all required films on your own or in a group screening with other members of the class. Regardless of your arrangement, all films are to be watched before the class period for which they are assigned on the syllabus.

- 1983 --*Entre Tinieblas*
- 1985 --*Matador*
- 1987 --*La Ley del Deseo*
- 1988 --*Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios*
- 1989 --*¡Átame!*
- 1997 --*Carne Trémula*
- 1999 --*Todo sobre mi madre*
- 2002 --*Hable con ella*
- 2004 --*La mala educación*
- 2006 --*Volver*
- 2009 --*Los abrazos rotos*
- 2011 --*La piel que habito*
- 2016 --*Julieta*

READINGS: All assigned readings are available as PDF files on the Canvas site.

- Ferguson, Russell. "Invisible Center."
- hooks, bell. "marginality as site of resistance."
- hooks, bell. "talking back."

Library Liaison

Toby Matoush

Tel: (408) 808-2096

Email: tmatoush@sjsu.edu

Course Requirements and Assignments

IN-CLASS PARTICIPATION: As this is a graduate-level seminar, student participation is essential for success. Students will be graded on their contributions to class discussions. Therefore, each student should prepare notes with comments and questions to bring up in class about the film and readings assigned each week.

DISCUSSION POSTINGS: Each student will be responsible for contributing a weekly (200 word) reflection, not a summary, about each assigned film through the online discussion board made available through Canvas. Please have in mind that all discussion postings will be due a day before class by noon.

PRESENTATIONS: Students will also be responsible for two (30-40 minute) in-class presentations. The presentations will be in groups of two and based on the required readings for the week. Additional details and criteria regarding the presentations and sign-up will occur and be discussed on the first day of class.

FINAL PAPER: The final paper (10-12 pages of text and images) will consist of an analytical and critical study of a film of choice approved in advance by the professor. In addition, you will be required to turn in and discuss a proposal for your final paper. Instructions for this assignment will be explained with detail throughout the semester.

Grading Information

EVALUATION:

In-Class Participation 20%

Discussion Postings 20%

Presentations 30%

Final Paper 30%

FINAL GRADE:

A = 100% - 94%

A- = 93% - 90%

B+ = 89% - 87%

B = 86% - 84%

B- = 83% - 80%

C+ = 79% - 77%

C = 76% - 74%

C- = 73% - 70%

D+ = 69% - 67%

D = 66% - 64%

D- = 63% - 60%

F = 59% - 0

Classroom Protocol

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY: Attendance and punctuality are essential for success. In the case of an unavoidable absence, the student is responsible for notifying the instructor ahead of time and obtaining class notes and any other assignments from a classmate. Students are responsible for all assignments whether they are present at the class session or not.

FOOD AND DRINK: As a general rule at San José State University, food is not allowed in classrooms.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES: For the most part, personal electronic devices, including cellular telephones, laptop computers, personal music players, etc., are to be turned off and stored during class. The instructor will inform you when you are allowed to browse the Internet for any class-related research or consultation. **Do not text or use a cell phone during class lectures.**

RECORDING THE CLASS: No audio/video recording of the class is permitted unless it is approved by the instructor.

CAUTIONARY NOTE: Please be aware that the majority of the films under scrutiny in this course contain sensitive material, including scenes of violence and sexuality. Any student concerned with the content of the films would be advised to speak with the professor directly on the first day of class.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>

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(This schedule may be modified at the discretion of the professor)

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	January 30	Course introduction and presentation assignments.
2	February 6	<p>Film:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1983 --<i>Entre Tinieblas</i> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invisible Center, <i>Russell Ferguson (Canvas)</i> • talking back, <i>bell hooks. (Canvas)</i> • marginality as site of resistance, <i>bell hooks. (Canvas)</i> • Introduction, <i>E. Ann Kaplan (Textbook)</i>
3	February 13	<p>Film:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1985 --<i>Matador</i> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woman's Cinema as Counter-Cinema, <i>Claire Johnston (Textbook)</i> • Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema, <i>Laura Mulvey (Textbook)</i>
4	February 20	<p>Film:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1987 --<i>La Ley del Deseo</i> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Woman as Sign', <i>Elizabeth Cowie (Textbook)</i> • Woman's Stake: Filming the Female Body, <i>Mary Ann Doane (Textbook)</i>
5	February 27	<p>Film:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1988 --<i>Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios</i> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the Gaze Male?, <i>E. Ann Kaplan (Textbook)</i> • Dorothy Arzner: Critical Strategies, <i>Claire Johnston (Textbook)</i>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
6	March 6	Film: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1989 --<i>¡Átame!</i> Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesbian Looks: Dorothy Arzner and Female Authorship, <i>Judith Mayne (Textbook)</i> • The Difficulty of Difference, <i>David N. Rodowick (Textbook)</i>
7	March 13	Film: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1997 --<i>Carne Trémula</i> Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masochism and the Perverse Pleasures of the Cinema, <i>Gaylyn Studlar (Textbook)</i> • Pleasure, Ambivalence, Identification: Valentino and Female Spectatorship, <i>Miriam Hansen (Textbook)</i>
8	March 20	Film: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1999 --<i>Todo sobre mi madre</i> Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masculinity as Spectacle: Reflections on Men and Mainstream Cinema, <i>Steve Neale (Textbook)</i> • Strategies of Coherence: Narrative, Cinema, Feminist Poetics and Yvonne Rainer, <i>Teresa de Lauretis (Textbook)</i>
9	March 27	☺ ***SPRING RECESS (NO CLASS MEETING)*** ☺
10	April 3	Film: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2002 --<i>Hable con ella</i> Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Orthopsychic Subject: Film Theory and the Reception of Lacan, <i>Joan Copjec (Textbook)</i> • Speaking Nearby, <i>Trinh T. Minh-ha and Nancy N. Chen (Textbook)</i>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
11	April 10	Film: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2004 --<i>La mala educación</i> Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White Privilege and Looking Relations: Race and Gender in Feminist Film Theory, <i>Jane Gaines (Textbook)</i> • Racism, Representation, Psychoanalysis, <i>Claire Pajaczkowska and Lola Young (Textbook)</i>
12	April 17	Film: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 --<i>Volver</i> Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That Moment of Emergence, <i>Pratibha Parmar (Textbook)</i> • Sexual Indifference and Lesbian Representation, <i>Teresa de Lauretis (Textbook)</i>
13	April 24	Film: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009 --<i>Los abrazos rotos</i> Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film and the Masquerade: Theorizing the Female Spectator, <i>Mary Ann Doane (Textbook)</i> • Women's Genres, <i>Annette Kuhn (Textbook)</i>
14	May 1	Film: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2011 --<i>La piel que habito</i> Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desperately Seeking Difference, <i>Jackie Stacey (Textbook)</i> • The Case of the Missing Mother: Maternal Issues Vidor's <i>Stella Dallas</i>, <i>E. Ann Kaplan (Textbook)</i>
15	May 8	Film: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2016 --<i>Julieta</i> <p>*** Course conclusion ***</p>
Final Paper		<p>The final paper is due on Tuesday, May 22 between 5:15pm-7:30pm. You can turn it in as a hard copy to the professor at her office in Clark Hall 412R or email it as a PDF document to ruby.ramirez@sjsu.edu</p>