

Topics in Caribbean History and Culture: **CUBAN FILM**

Black Studies 450U- (CRN #60450)

PSU Summer Term 2013

SYLLABUS

Instructor: Pedro Ferbel-Azcárate, Ph.D,

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Class Meeting Time & Place: Thursdays 5.30.PM - 9.10 PM, Lincoln Hall 249

Office/ Hours: Black Studies Department, 245 XSB (extended studies building),
Thursdays 4.00-5.00 PM and by appointment

Course Description

This class investigates topics in Cuban history, culture, gender, and politics, by focusing on the impact of the Cuban revolution on Cuban society, as presented through Cuban film. We will use film and documentary media as primary methods of inquiry, with special attention paid to popular films made in Cuba. We will also use readings from books and academic articles to further our inquiry. This class will be in English, though most of the Cuban films will be seen in Spanish with English subtitles.

Student Responsibilities

Please note that this syllabus is a close approximation of what we will be doing in class, and students are responsible for understanding its contents. The instructor reserves the right to make changes as appropriate. It is the student's responsibility to come to class to be aware of any changes in assignments, fieldtrips and deadlines.

It is the student's responsibility to contact instructor in case of emergencies or any questions related to class work, tardiness or absences.

Disability Resources

If you have a disability and are in need of academic accommodations, please notify the instructor immediately to arrange needed support. For more information about the Disability Resource Center, see <http://www.pdx.edu/iasc/drc.html>.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend class regularly and are strongly advised that they bear the sole responsibility for keeping current on readings, lectures, notes, and especially films. Note that some films and documentary resources are available as links at <http://cinecuba.blogspot.com/> and via interlibrary loan at the PSU library.

Attendance will be noted and students may get a lower grade with any more than one (1) unexcused absence. This is a once/week class!

Tardiness is defined as arriving to class after the scheduled start time. If students have a conflict, which prevents them from attending class or arriving on time, they are advised to speak directly with the instructor so they do not suffer grade reductions for tardiness.

Student Conduct and Participation in Class

We must all work together to make this class the best learning environment for you and your fellow students. Coming to class on time and being prepared will assist in making our class a dynamic place of learning. Being prepared includes such behaviors as completing assignments on time, taking notes on assigned readings and bringing in pertinent questions for class discussion. Participation also means listening and encouraging others to speak—especially if you are a student who has no fears of speaking, or taking risks to speak up if you consider yourself a shy student in class discussion. Participation involves active listening—supporting opinions or challenging them in thoughtful non-confrontational ways. Class participation is as much about sharing your voice and ideas as it is about learning to listen and cooperate with others—your grade will reflect both these skills.

All students should be familiar with PSU's Code of Student Conduct and Responsibility available at www.ess.pdx.edu/osa/osa or at the Office of Student Affairs Smith Center room 433. This code spells out the legal parameters, which all students must respect, in order to ensure that our classroom is a safe place for all.

Students are expected to be critically engaged and respectful of varying opinions in the classroom. We will follow seminar guidelines to keep our classroom a safe place, including no interrupting when someone is talking, no name-calling or insulting commentaries, and asking clarifying questions as opposed to arguing. Students will be mindful that our different backgrounds, experiences, understandings, and positions in regards to various class topics make it imperative that we listen to each other. In the interest of openness, and in accordance with the constitutional right to free speech, students are encouraged to write and speak freely. However the value of judgments and analysis in this class is based on merit and not on any prejudicial practice. Ultimately, the safety of our learning environment is more important than any student's perceived right

to free speech—we will caution on the side of no student ever feeling insulted in their place of learning. “*Strive to understand first, then to be understood.*”

All students are encouraged to speak with the instructor during office hours to ask questions, clarify or seek ways to more effectively communicate their point of view if they do not feel comfortable asking such questions in class.

Sexual harassment at PSU is prohibited. Please see the student code for details on the policy. Know that sexual harassment is defined as “*Any unwelcome and unwanted advance or request for sexual favor or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when... such conduct has the effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work, receipt of services, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.*” This means that every student has the right to be in a classroom that is completely safe from harassment. If you feel your classroom is not a safe place for you to be, speak to the instructor immediately.

No cell phones in disruptive ring mode allowed in class.

Assignments

Students will keep a film journal as part of this class and are expected to complete entries for each of the films viewed. There will also be a midterm and a final.

Note that late assignments, except in the case of legitimate emergencies, will be penalized by a grade reduction of 25% per day.

Further note that the State Board of Higher Education and PSU prohibits all forms of academic cheating, fraud, and dishonesty, including but not limited to plagiarism, buying and stealing of course assignments and research papers, performing academic assignments (including tests and examinations) by other person, unauthorized disclosure and receipt of academic information, and such other practices commonly understood to be academically dishonest. The instructor reserves the right to assign a grade of F to any student who is academically dishonest. The Writing Center at PSU has a prepared document, which describes plagiarism in greater detail, available at www.writingcenter.pdx.edu/resources/resources.html.

Approximate Assignment of Grades

25 % Attendance and active participation in class; 5 minute post midterm check-in
25 % Film journal
25 % Midterm
25 % Final exam

Required Readings and Texts

Readings will be made available on reserve in the Black Studies department on a class CD and sent to class list as pdf files.

Schedule

| Date | Topic | Film | Assignments Due |
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| June 27 | Term overview: syllabus, expectations, intros; Overview of Cuban history and Caribbean region; the Cuban revolution; understanding film media; The Cuban revolution in film: from the USSR; How to watch a film about Cuba. | Images and (Selections from) <i>Yo Soy Cuba</i> (1964) Directed by M. Kalatozov | On www.multcolib.org electronic book: "Culture Shock! Cuba" On line: "Cuba On the Edge of Change" National Geographic November 2012 |
| July 4 | Holiday | PSU closed | No class! |
| July 11 | Continued introductions to Cuban society, socialism and social sustainability, public expression, propaganda and the Cuban revolution. | <i>De Cierta Manera</i> (1974) Directed by Sara Gomez; | Read syllabus; Begin "Culture Shock! Cuba" Coursepack CD: <u>Cuba for Beginners</u> <u>Cuba Late Colony</u> ; <u>Castro's Last Battle</u> <u>Venceremos? Ch.4 De Cierta Manera Hasta Cierta Punto</u> |
| July 18 | Cuban film: sex and gender | <i>Fresa y Chocolate</i> (1993) Directed by Tomas Alea Gutierrez (Titon) and Juan Carlos Tabio | Read: Coursepack CD: <u>Castro's Last Battle</u> ; <u>End of the Revolution</u> ; and http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/mln/v113/113.2santi.html (on PSU computer) |
| July 25 | Cuban film: freedom and bureaucracy | <i>Lista de Espera</i> (2000) Directed by Tabio Extra credit: <i>Guantanamo</i> by Alea and Tabio | Read: "Contemporary Cuba Recasting ideology, recreating hegemony" at: http://eth.sagepub.com/content/7/3/303.full.pdf+html |

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| Aug 1 | Hollywood portrayal of Cuban revolutionary society | <i>Azucar Amarga (1996)</i> Directed by Ochasi | MIDTERM due; Film journal check in |
| Aug 8 | Cuba film and Cuban identity | <i>Barrio Cuba (2005)</i> Directed by Humberto Solas Extra credit: <i>Miel Para Ochun</i> by Solas | |
| Aug 15 | “New wave” Cuban film Final exam | <i>Viva Cuba (2005)</i> Directed by Juan Carlos Cremata Alberti Extra credit: <i>Nada Mas (2001)</i> Directed by Juan Carlos Cremata Alberti | Film Journal due FINAL DUE |

I have read, understood and am responsible for the contents of this syllabus.

Your name

Signature and date