Sci-Fi in Latin America

Course prefix: SPAN

Course number: 3500

Section: A

CRN (you may add up to five):
93734

Instructor First Name: Antonio

Instructor Last Name: Cardentey

Semester: Fall

Academic year: 2025

Course description:

This course examines how Latin American writers use science fiction to explore society and technology beyond magical realism and the supernatural. We will see how these writers reinterpret the past, grapple with the challenges of the present, and imagine alternative futures by reshaping the conventions of the genre through their own cultural perspectives. We will study stories about aliens, cyborgs, time travel, space exploration, zombies, and more. We'll also consider recent trends such as Prietopunk (Caribbean Afrofuturism) and the New Latin American Gothic, where elements of horror and the uncanny mix with science fiction to offer fresh ways of understanding the region's complex realities.

Course learning outcomes:

- Further develop interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational skills in Spanish through reading, discussion, and literary/film analysis.
- Understand how science fiction and other speculative genres offer a unique lens through which Latin American writers explore the human dimension of modernization, dictatorship, and politics from the late 19th to the 21st century.
- Identify and classify different types of science fiction based on genre paradigms, and apply these frameworks to the effective analysis of stories, while examining the distinctive features of the Latin American perspective.
- Critically analyze the relationship among technology, fiction, and society in a global context.
- Collaboratively design a creative project that integrates science fiction conventions with a social issue connected to students' professional and/or personal interests.

Required course materials:

All course materials will be available on our Canvas course site and online. If needed, film rentals may cost around $3.99.

Grading policy:

Preparation and Participation 25%

Oral Presentation 20%

TalkAbroad Conversations 25%

Final Project 30%

Attendance policy:

Class attendance is mandatory and will be tracked through Canvas. Students are allowed up to three (3) unexcused absences. After that, one point will be deducted from the final grade for each additional unexcused absence. Exceptions to this policy will be made only in cases of official Georgia Tech events, illness, or personal emergencies. Students must submit appropriate documentation to the Office of the Dean of Students within one week of the absence. Arriving late or leaving early will count as one-third of an absence (3 tardies or early departures = 1 unexcused absence).

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Humanities area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help students master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I interpret the human experience through creative, linguistic, and philosophical works?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze and interpret the meaning, cultural significance, and ethical implications of literary/philosophical texts or of works in the visual/performing arts.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Ethical Reasoning
- Information Literacy
- Intercultural Competence