

Proposal for Upper-Division Honors Course, Spanish and History H5XX
Interdisciplinary Protocols:
“Identity and National Formation in Latin America:
Perspectives from Literature, Culture and History”

In response to the University Honors and Scholars Center RFP of May 24, 2004

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From the modest beginning of 11 majors and 9 minors in Spanish Honors six years ago, as of Autumn 03, the official count for the Spanish and Portuguese Department program are 75 Honors Majors and 66 Honors minors, the significant majority of which are in the literature and culture track. This is about 25% of the total number of majors (297) and minors (237) in our program. Thus, Spanish is one of the most vigorous and fast growing Honors programs on campus.

The History Department also has an active Honors program. Growing from around 30 Honors majors ten years ago, the Department now has approximately 100 Honors Majors in History which is about 1/6th of the total number of history majors overall. The History Department also has many students who are pursuing minors in History as well.

Aims of Proposed Course and Addressing the unique needs of Students

This proposal offers a new course that brings together the disciplines of history, literature and culture. As such, it could serve as a model for future interdisciplinary courses as part of a developing Honors curriculum. Currently, this proposed course has no non-Honors counterpart in our regular university curriculum, and is not available in this format in any other unit in the university. While interdisciplinary in nature, this course will be offered under 2 separate honors course numbers, one for Spanish and one for History (thus allowing the Spanish course to be taught in Spanish). Although still capped with a total of 20 students, we will teach the course both separately and together, combining the students at key moments of the course.

Because of its interdisciplinary nature, this course offers exposure to a broad variety of source materials and interpretive methods not usually part of the curriculum for History H598.02 and Spanish H560, H565, and H680. It will be reflective of the new directions in history and culture over the past twenty years, and will further promote interdisciplinarity, another important feature of recent innovations in the two disciplines. The new Honors course also deals specifically with the questions of identity and nation formation, thus bringing the students directly in contact with two of the core issues in contemporary historical and cultural scholarship. By exposing students to diverse methodologies and theoretical frameworks and analyses, the course will help to prepare students to write their senior theses in their respective fields, or write an interdisciplinary thesis.

Honors majors in the Spanish and Portuguese Department must take at least four Honors courses of which two are required and two are open choices, preferably at the

upper-division level. However, at present only four Honors courses exist in SPPO on the 500 level: H560, "Latin American Culture;" H561, "Spanish Peninsular Culture;" H552, "Modern Spanish Literature;" and H565 "Indigenous Literatures and Cultures of Latin America: Past(s) and Present(s)". As their titles indicate they are either broad courses for a specific region, a specific literary corpus, or predominantly modern topics, and are offered only once a year.

The present SPA 500 level non-Honors literature courses for Spanish majors are divided into panoramic courses for specific periods, e.g. early modern, colonial and 19th century, modern, etc., or focus on specific genres and literary corpus. The culture courses tend to focus on larger social issues or movements, such as conquest, nation building, revolution, etc.

History Honors students can choose three tracks: "With Distinction in History," which requires the completion of a Senior Honors Thesis, "With Honors in the Liberal Arts," which requires students to fulfill an Honors Contract, and "Honors in the Liberal Arts with Distinction in History," where students fulfill the requirements of both a thesis and a contract. All History Honors students must complete 60 hours of course work that counts towards the History major, as well as H598.02, "Senior Colloquium," which is an honors seminar that focuses on research and analysis of a particular topic, most often utilizing primary source materials. Honors students may take H598.02 a total of three times, but must take it at least once. History Honors students are also encouraged to take H398, "Introduction to Historical Thought," and H399, "Introduction to Historical Research." As there is only one honors course currently required in History, our purposed History Honors H5XX would not only expand the honors offerings in History, it would also provide a substantially different course. For instance, while H598.02 studies a particular topic, H5XX will take a broader approach, moving across disciplines and methodologies. Furthermore, because H5XX will take an interdisciplinary approach, it will emphasize analyses and theoretical approaches, utilizing source material that is not usually used in H598.02.

Overall, an honors course such as "Interdisciplinary Protocols" would be a valuable addition to the Spanish and Portuguese Department, as well as the History Department. It furnishes a greater depth of study on core questions in each discipline for students who, through their choice of concentration and major, have demonstrated a deep interest in the subject matter. Moreover, such a course fits in with the University's recent selective admissions policy by not only speaking to the needs of high-level students, but also by broadening the analytical skills and practical experience of all students who take it. In this manner the course would thus fulfill a core mission of the University and its constituent Departments to provide a hallmark of very good education overall.

Addressing the Unique Needs of Students

1. Students need to develop greater analytical skills. This course, through its emphasis on diverse methodologies and theoretical frameworks, is ideal to assist students in garnering the analytical skills they will need. There are no other course offerings in History or Spanish and Portuguese that currently present such a unique format to learn

analytical methods across disciplinary boundaries in a systematic and comprehensive manner.

2. Exposure to theoretical models. This course provides undergraduates the opportunity to come into contact with and practically apply theoretical models prevalent in the fields in which they have concentrated their studies. The strong emphasis on historical and cutting-edge theoretical currents will offer students a rigorous and forward-thinking experience as they near the end of their undergraduate careers and enter the next phase of their professional lives or training.

3. Learning the current thinking/methodologies in their fields. This course offers not only practical training in methodology or instruction in theoretical models, but also exposes the students to current trends in the disciplines by tracing their recent intellectual histories. Students will learn about the shifting conceptualizations within the fields, arguments that drive new developments and interpretive models, and general patterns that have defined the disciplines themselves. Consequently, students will have the opportunity to learn about the nature and developments of their fields of study while reading and discussing the predominant literature.

4. Enhancing group dynamics, interaction across disciplines, and understanding changes within and between fields of study. This course is designed to bring advanced students from different disciplines together in the same physical and intellectual space to interrogate each others' knowledge and systems for generating knowledge. Perhaps one of the greatest advantages to a course such as this is that it will take students trained in divergent areas and present them with the opportunity to interact, share what they have learned, acquire new models and ideas together, and debate the merits and demerits of specific methodologies for generating knowledge in a given discipline. As a result, the students will be more rounded, open to shifts in ideas outside their immediate fields of study, and intellectually more experienced.

5. Learning to "read" texts. Finally, this course will greatly deepen students' abilities to "read" texts of a variety of types. Students are traditionally taught to "read" a certain way according to the expectations and protocols of their disciplines. However, this often has the effect of creating a set of blinders in that texts, whatever their typology, i.e. films, paintings, prose and poetry, archival documents, etc., are often understood one dimensionally. Bridging the gap across disciplines will expose students to a multiplicity of possible readings of a given text. This will give them the chance to develop skills to become more sophisticated readers, to expand the students' interpretive skills, and to expose the students to the wide variety of possible texts that can be "read." This is especially important in an age and society where visual reading skills have come to outpace print reading skills.

What This Course Does Intellectually

1. This course examines the intersections between history and literature, especially as history moves away from the archive, and literature from the canonical texts. In the past, one of the fundamental protocols defining literature as a discipline was the centrality of rhetoric as the basis for analysis. This promoted an immanent reading of the texts and isolated literature from its contexts. Another protocol was the definition of literature as fiction, with the correlate assumption that other forms of narrative were not part of the discipline. However, the gaze that organizes the field of literature has been changing progressively in the last decades. Conceived as the highest form of spiritual expression and rhetorical excellence, literature served to establish the divide between written and oral cultures and, most importantly, as a vehicle for transmitting ideas, forming public opinion, and contributing to the establishment of ideology as common sense. The novel was the quintessential form of expression.

In the last twenty years the protocols of the field have changed dramatically and have moved from the straight study of strictly canonical texts of literature to several other forms of cultural manifestations. This entailed a change in the notion of the field that moved from literature primordially to cultural studies. By cultural studies it is understood the inclusion in the field of a diversity of genres, such as testimonial literature. This new genre crosses all types of disciplinary divides. It has come to constitute a method for gathering important data in the fields of history, anthropology, and sociology. In fact, in this new format, literature has served as an archive for all kinds of disciplines. Cultural Studies also embraces a diversity of forms such as oral, popular, mass, industrial, and electronic. The acceptance of these products as cultural artifacts deserving study brought the literary field to converse with the disciplines of anthropology, mass communication, visual arts, history, government, and psychology. This course will study how these changes have been reflected in research, such as in postcolonial and subaltern studies. For example, one of the clusters of this course will involve reading novels as archival and rhetorical construction.

One of the fundamental protocols that defined history as a discipline has been the centrality of a juridical-political unit, or the nation-state, as the basis of analysis. Recently, though, historians have looked beyond official institutions, “high” politics and political progression (changes in state leadership) through time, and have instead taken a broader and more nuanced approach towards history. Theorists of the State, especially those who examine the subject through the prism of post-colonialism, have produced a rich body of scholarship complicating our understanding of the State’s nature, its generative capacity, and as a site of analysis central to understanding a society’s dynamics. They have called into question the “authenticity” and omnipotence of the State, introducing the subaltern, marginal communities and spaces, and parastatal actors as vital constitutive elements even in the history of the State itself. Thus, their records, often elided in the remnants of officialdom, have been increasingly integrated into the narrative of political history and must be sought out in “unofficial” sources – diaries, private letters, popular press, oral stories and songs, and patterns of cultural practice – as well as reading between the lines of official records. One of the clusters of this course will focus on the use of “unofficial” sources as a primary historical record of a society’s dynamics.

As different disciplines began partaking of the same theoretical frames, they could see their object of study as rhetorical constructions as well. As they entertained notions regarding ideas and points of view, the concept of fiction and fantasy came to bear on different disciplines and they began borrowing from each other. What started as an aesthetic appreciation of the cultural object ended up as an instrumental means of cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary discussion. This course, then, embodies those changes by bringing disciplines together and interrogating two of the fundamental themes at their core – nation and identity formation.

Possible Readings:

Antoinette Burton, *Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home, in Late Colonial India*
Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History*
Natalie Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and Their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France*
John Beverley, *Against Literature*
George Gugelberger, *The Real Thing*
Ileana Rodríguez. *House, Garden, Nation. Space, Gender, and Ethnicity in Postcolonial Latin American Literatures by Women; Women Guerrillas, and Love: Understanding War in Central America*
Nestor Garcia Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*
V.Y. Mudimbe, *Nations, Identities, Cultures*
Homi Bhabha, *Nation and Narration*
Gayatri Spivak, *In Other Worlds*
Dipesh Chakravorty, *Provincializing Europe*
Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*
Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*
Antoinette Burton, *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking With and Through the Nation*
Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*

2. Intersections and dialogues are defined through a borrowing and adaptation of methodologies central to different self-defined disciplines used to enhance the knowledge generated through internal disciplinary practices. For the historian these include using techniques of literary analysis to read through the official records as well as making use of literature itself to complement and complicate the archived legacies of a society. Similar examples can also be drawn from visual studies. The historian often benefits from adaptation of sociological methodology (including the study of group dynamics – psycho-social analysis) to offer a more nuanced rendering of the official records themselves – how did these records come to be lodged here? What does the selection process tell us about the selectors? Thus, the compiling of the documents themselves becomes a question central to the research in addition to the use of the documents in their own right. This is one of the cores of the proposed course – seeing through and between disciplinary protocols to arrive at more rounded, comprehensive, and complex understandings of societies and their artifacts.

Possible Readings:

Carolyn Steedman, "Culture, Cultural Studies, and the Historians"

Edward Soja, "History: Geography: Modernity"

Judith Butler, "Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire"

Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy"

Helen Tiffin, "Post-Colonial Literatures and Counter-Discourse"

Gayatri Spivak, "Three Womens' Texts and a Critique of Imperialism"

Ngugi wa Thiong'o, "The Language of African Literature"

3. In particular, the theme of identity benefits from intersections and dialogues across disciplinary boundaries. While we can glean much from the remainders of juridical-political institutions about particular understandings of collective and personal identities, other "extra-official" sources at the center of literary, film, and cultural studies, for example, offer additional and just as important insights into the process of identity formation and the ways in which identity is mobilized as a legitimating force in decision-making. This also opens the prospect for greater understanding of how identity impacts conceptions of change held by the subjects of analysis as well as notions of time itself. Joined with the linearity of classic history this can yield more productive insights into how people interact with one another within societies and between societies as well as how those interactions contribute to the definition of the boundaries of the societies themselves. Overall, then, the interdisciplinary approach offered by this course holds the prospect for unleashing more productive and diverse approaches to notions of transnationality and grasping the interconnectedness of forces factoring in the articulation of identities within and between societies.

One of the distinguishing aspects of Latin American societies is their multiethnic, multicultural character. Therefore, one of the primary objectives of this course is to introduce the Honors students to the study of those cultural mixtures and to make them come to bear on cross-disciplinary dialogue as well as to introduce terms such as transculturation, acculturation, hybridity, heterogeneity, mestizaje (métissage), creolite, as the signs that organize the multicultural discussion in the field. The Spanish and Portuguese Department is unique in the country in that we count among us several professors interested in this topic, including Profs. Lucia Costigan, Ignacio Corona, Laura Podalsky, Abril Trigo, Juan Zevallos, Maureen Ahern, Fernando Unzueta, and Ileana Rodriguez. Latin American specialists from the History Department, including Kenneth Andrien, Donna Guy, and Stephanie Smith, are also interested in this topic. Many of these colleagues, such as Fernando Unzueta and Laura Podalsky, have also expressed an interest in collaborating on other courses and projects as well.

Possible Readings:

V.Y. Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa*

Michael Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity*

Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*

June Givanni, ed., *Symbolic Narratives/African Cinema*

Ann Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire*
Landau and Kaspin, *Images and Empires: Visuality in Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa*
Eleni Coundouriotis, *Claiming History: Colonialism, Ethnography, and the Novel*
Mildred Mortimer, *Journeys Through the French African Novel*
Robert Young, *Colonial Desire*

Overall, this course will offer a unique opportunity and special intellectual experiences from the specialists in the field in different departments and can serve as a model for other types of interdisciplinary combination. By bringing together different disciplines, the course can also serve as a laboratory for new and innovative teaching techniques. Eventually, a course involving the participation of more than two disciplines can be devised, keeping in mind the urgency of disciplinary debates and the inclusion of other cultural parameters of analysis in the public culture.

Sample Syllabus

Topics:

Week 1.- What is the gaze that organizes the disciplines of history and literature?

Week 2.- Changes in the notion of fields.

Week 3.- Cross disciplinary dialogues.

Week 4.- Reading novels as fiction and as archive.

Week 5.- Cultural Studies.

Week 6.- Post-Colonial Studies.

Week 7.- Subaltern Studies.

Week 8.- Gender Studies.

Week 9.- Presentations of Work; Writing Workshops.

Week 10.- Colloquia of participating students to present and discuss their completed projects.

Throughout the quarter students will complete small writing assignments, or reaction papers, to their readings. The culmination of the course will be a final, substantial paper that incorporates the themes and methodologies at the core of the class into a work of original scholarship. The requirement of reaction papers to stimulate analysis of primary texts and the strong research and creative component of the course project are intended to prepare students for a critical understanding of cross- or trans-

disciplinary dialogues as a rich source of potential topics for honors theses and future graduate and scholarly work.

The syllabus outlined above is a sample version that can be adapted in to a variety of texts and topics as long as they respond to the basic premise of cross-disciplinary discussions and their relevance to current academic work. For the moment, two disciplines have been chosen, but in the dialogue, the presence of other disciplines such as anthropology and governance will be evident.

Intended Student Audience:

Upper Division Honors Majors and Minors in Spanish and History will be the intended student participants. Maximum enrollment is 25. Non-honors students with 3.3 GPA and above may enroll if places are available. Spanish and History Honors majors will have priority. The pre-requisite for Spanish Majors is 450 or H450, and 398 or H398 for History Majors. The course fulfills the requirement for a Spanish honors course or for a Spanish 500 level literature or culture course. The course will be publicized through the Honors program and departmental announcements and advisors. Special posters and flyers will be needed for the first and second offerings and a special link on the SPPO and History webpages would be appropriate.

Schedule for Submission

Ideally we would like to offer the course in WI/SP 2006 Quarters. The course will be submitted with all required documentation to the normal curricular channels of the Undergraduate Studies Committee in the departments during the Fall quarter of 2004. Although it will not be taught until Winter/Spring 2006, we hope it will be approved in time to appear in the next course bulletin. The intent is to begin to publicize it from the end of the present coming academic year so that Honors students can make plans to consider it for their contracts for AY 05-06.

Budget

The Latin American section of the Spanish and Portuguese Department is presently stretched very "thin" in terms of faculty members, having this year lost 2 tenure-track colleagues. Replacement for only one of them is slated for AY 2005-2006. Thus, an Honors course will need to divert faculty teaching assignments at the 500 level away from a regular course. The same condition holds for faculty in the History Department where there are currently three Latin American specialists, one of whom has duties as Departmental Chair. Supplemental funding will provide a way to recognize the time invested in preparing not only the initial proposal but first time preparation, and then second time prep as the course is refined.

Itemized Budget

Faculty Replacement Costs for (WI 2006) 2 sections at \$4,600 (rate for senior lecturer)	\$9,200
Course Materials (videos, dvds, cds, books)	\$1,500
Supplemental Compensation for Course Development (1 st year only) for 2 faculty members	\$2,000
Honoraria and Expenses for two invited guest lecturers Barbara Weinstein (History) Alberto Moreles (Literature)	\$3,000
Expenses related to end of course colloquium (food, drinks, posters, etc.) to come from outside sources, like Latin American Studies, History and Spanish Departments	\$3,000
Totals:	\$18,700

Requested from Honors: \$ 9,350 first year and second year= \$18,700

Faculty Committed to Teaching the course and CV's:

Prof. Ileana Rodriguez and Prof. Stephanie Smith
CV's attached

Letters of Support from:

Prof. Fernando Unzueta, Chair, SPPO
Prof. Kenneth Andrien, Chair, History Department
Prof. Scott Schwenter, Director, SPPO Honors Program
Rachel Sanabria, Academic Advisor, SPPO
Dr. Richard Ugland, History Department

Budget Explanation

Faculty Replacement Costs – Profs. Rodriguez and Smith would have to be released from one of their normal courses in order to teach the one in this proposal. Therefore, replacement instructors would have to be paid to replace the regular faculty involved in this course. This is especially important both teach General Education Credit courses that count large enrollments and would have to be taught in their absence.

Course Materials – Many visual and textual materials such as books, videos, cds, dvd's, etc. on the topics to be taught are not currently available at OSU. In particular, performance events of oral cultural communities recorded by scholars, but not distributed commercially, would serve as a vital part of the course's discussion of forms of "evidence" and in the "reading" of "texts." These articles are often quite expensive to obtain as they are not produced commercially in large numbers.

Supplemental Compensation for Course Development (allowed for 1st yr. only) – Funds set aside for time invested in developing new course and new materials in a new format, not only for the initial proposal but also for first time prep and refinement. Profs. Rodriguez and Smith would each receive \$1000 for development of the initial proposal and for teaching it the first time and refining it.

Honoraria for Invited Lecturers – Since one of the most important benefits of this course to the students is the exposure to current issues, trends, and developments in their respective fields, having two outstanding scholars who have centrally participated in those changes talk to the class would greatly enhance the effectiveness of the course and further add to the intellectual development of the participating students. We have requested funds for two speakers – one from History and one from Literature – that include housing, travel, and small honoraria for their contribution to The Ohio State University's curriculum.

End of Course Colloquium – The culminating event of the course is a general colloquium of the participating students where they each have the opportunity to present their two-quarter long research and work and engage in open dialogue with their colleagues. This provides an important experience for the students in that it will give them what is likely their first opportunity to participate in a conference-like setting – which is something that will become part of their regular professional work should they proceed through graduate school and into academia. Funds for the colloquium include advertising (the colloquium would be open to the general public), refreshments (food and drink), equipment for presentations, and rental of appropriate space for its convocation.