**SPAN 3300 SATIRE & MEDIA IN THE AMERICAS**

Professor: Dr. Paul Alonso

Classroom:

Schedule:

Office: Swann 217

Office hours:

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**DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE**

In times of global infotainment, the crisis of modern journalism, the omnipresence of celebrity culture and reality TV, and the colonization of public discourse by media spectacle and entertainment, this course explores how new types of satire challenge traditional media and how they impact political communication in today’s democratic societies. Focusing on cases in Latin America and the United States, this course analyzes the role of diverse satiric magazines, TV shows, and online digital satiric experiments to understand current social, cultural, and political tensions in diverse countries of the hemisphere.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

* Analyze contemporary satire in the Americas, including the cultural, political, social and historical context of the case studies.
* Understand theories about society of spectacle, infotainment and “carnival.” We will apply this theoretical framework in the analysis.
* Develop content and discourse analysis skills.
* Appraise and argue for the potential benefits and risks of satiric discourse in a democracy.
* Analyze, critique, and compare satire across cultures, formats, and modes to communicate complex issues in culture, media, and technology to a variety of constituents.
* Understand how the Internet and multimedia platforms offer new alternatives for the development of satire in the hemisphere.

**EVALUATION**

Participation: 10%

Writing assignments (2): 20%

Oral presentations in class (3): 30%

Mid-term exam: 10%

Final paper (outline + final version): 30%

**Participation (10%):**

Active participation in class is essential. The student is required to complete the readings before each class, watch any assigned videos or materials, do homework, and read his/her notes before the discussions. While this grade is the most subjective one of the class, students’ interventions are evaluated in terms of accuracy and depth of content (40%), clarity and correction of language (40%), and respectful attitude towards the class and the instructor (20%). This grade will be reported weekly on T-Square.

**\*Required readings will be available on T-Square or the professor will send them by email or hand them in class.**

\*Students will be updated on their grades on T-Square.

**Written assignments (20%):**

Students will submit two written assignments during the semester (the deadlines are in the syllabus). Grades for each will be based on:

0-4 ability to follow the instructions of the assignment and use the techniques and readings explained in class

0-4 clear writing and use of correct academic language

0-2 citations of all pertinent sources and including bibliography

Late assignments will not be accepted. Not submitting an assignment will result in a grade of zero.

**Mid-term Exam (10%):**

The mid-term includes all the topics discussed in class. If a student misses the exam without previous notification and official excuse, they will receive a grade of zero.

**Oral presentations in class (30%)**

Students will prepare three oral presentations during the semester; approximately ten minutes each. One of these presentations will be on assigned readings. The second presentation will be on content analysis of class materials. For both of these presentations deadlines will be coordinated in class. The final presentation will be based on your final paper (week 16 of the course). Specific instructions will be offered a week in advance. Each presentation is 10% of the total grade. A rubric for the oral presentations will be uploaded in T-Square, and considers the following aspects:

0-1 Introduction

0-4 Body of Content

0-1 Conclusions

0-1 Powerpoint

0-3 Delivery

Students should use PowerPoint or other similar visual aids in their presentations and generate interaction with the class.

**Final paper (30%):**

As a final paper, each student will research a specific aspect of satire in the Americas (i.e., social class in Peruvian satire, visual aspect of satiric magazines, use of social media in online satiric shows, etc.). The topic needs to be approved by the professor beforehand. The student will present an outline including the research question and main ideas (10%) and a final version of the paper (20%). In the final paper, the student should demonstrate knowledge of the social, political and cultural context of his/her case study. The paper should also exhibit familiarity with the theoretical readings. The final paper will be graded on depth of background research (30%), organization and clarity of arguments (35%), and the correct use of language (no errors of agreement) (35%). The final paper should cite at least three readings in Spanish, and should be approximately 1,300 words (5 pages, double- spaced), including one bibliography page.

**Important class guidelines:**

\* All papers in the course should be typed, double spaced, 12-point font.

\* Students should not use cell-phones or similar devices in class, except with the professor’s authorization.

**Attendance:**

Attendance to class is mandatory and essential. Three absences without a formal excuse will result in a 5-point deduction of the final grade. Any additional absence will result in an additional 3-point deduction of the final grade. Students should arrive on time; two tardy arrivals will be counted as an absence from the course. If a student misses class, it is his/her responsibility to stay updated on the contents and homework of the course. Official absences are allowed following the Institute guidelines: “Students who are absent because of participation in approved Institute activities (such as field trips, professional conferences, and athletic events) will be permitted to make up the work missed during their absences. Approval of such activities will be granted by the Student Academic and Financial Affairs Committee of the Academic Senate, and statements of the approved absence may be obtained from the Office of the Registrar.”

**Suggested Books/Readings:**

* Baym, Geoffrey (2010). From Cronkite to Colbert: The evolution of Broadcast News. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.
* Day, Amber (2011). Satire and Dissent: Interventions in Contemporary Political Debate. Indiana University Press. <http://muse.jhu.edu/books/9780253005144>
* Alonso, Paul (2018). Satiric TV in the Americas. Oxford University Press.
* Diccionario de la Lengua Española

**CALENDAR OF THE COURSE**

**WEEK 1**

8/18 (Monday) / Introduction to the course/ Discussion of the syllabus/ Introductions

8/20 (Wednesday) / Journalism vs. Entertainment. Satire.

**WEEK 2**

8/25 (Monday) / Society of Spectacle and Infotainment

8/27 (Wednesday) / *Jon Stewart and The Daily Show*: Discursive Integration or the Reinvention of Political Journalism

**WEEK 3**

9/1 (Monday)/ LABOR DAY

9/3 (Wednesday)/ *Jon Stewart and The Daily Show*: Discursive Integration or the Reinvention of Political Journalism

**WEEK 4**

9/8 (Monday)/ The Colbert Report: “Truthiness” and Humor

9/10 (Wednesday)/ The Colbert Report: “Truthiness” and Humor/ **Writing assignment 1**

**WEEK 5**

9/15 (Monday)/ **Presentation 1**

9/17 (Wednesday)/ Satire and Carnival

**WEEK 6:**

9/22 (Monday)/ The Impact of Media Spectacle on Peruvian Politics: The Case of Jaime Bayly’s *El Francotirador* (Peru)

9/24 (Wednesday)/ The Impact of Media Spectacle on Peruvian Politics: The Case of Jaime Bayly’s *El Francotirador* (Peru)

**WEEK 7**

9/29 (Monday)/ Brozo: the grotesque clown as political subversion (Mexico)

10/1 (Wednesday)/ Brozo: the grotesque clown as political subversion (Mexico)

**WEEK 8**

10/6 (Monday)/ **EXAM 1**

10/8 (Wednesday)/ Sacha Baron Cohen and *Da Ali G Show*: A Critique on Identity in Times of Satiric Infotainment

**WEEK 9**

10/13 (Monday)/ Sacha Baron Cohen and *Da Ali G Show*: A Critique on Identity in Times of Satiric Infotainment

10/15 (Wednesday)/ *Capusotto y sus videos*: A Critique on Argentine Entertainment and Rock Music Industry (Argentina)

**WEEK 10**

10/20 (Monday)/ *Capusotto y sus videos*: A Critique on Argentine Entertainment and Rock Music Industry (Argentina)

10/22 (Wednesday)/ **Presentation 2**

**WEEK 11**

10/27 (Monday)/ Brozo: the grotesque clown as political subversion (Mexico)/ **Writing assignment 2**

10/29 (Wednesday)/ Satiric Magazines (The Onion)

**WEEK 12**

11/3 (Monday)/ Satiric Magazines in Latin America (The Clinic, Chile) / **Outline Final Paper**

11/5 (Wednesday)/ Satiric Magazines in Latin America (Barcelona, Argentina)

**WEEK 13**

11/10 (Monday)/ Satiric Magazines in Latin America (Dedo Medio, Perú)

11/12 (Wednesday)**/** Online Satire: Enchufe TV (Ecuador)

**WEEK 14**

11/17 (Monday) / Online Satire: Cualca (Argentina)

11/19 (Wednesday) / Online Satire: In between Two Ferns (USA)

**WEEK 15**

11/24 (Monday) / New experiments in digital satire

11/26 (Wednesday) / Session

**WEEK 16**

12/1 FINAL PAPERS / FINAL PRESENTATIONS

12/3 FINAL PAPERS / FINAL PRESENTATIONS

*NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to accommodate instructional and/or student needs.*

**Academic Honesty:**

As a student at Georgia Tech, you are expected to fully understand and to carefully follow the policies and standards of academic honesty set forth in *The* *Student Handbook*, which is available from the office of the Dean of Students and online. Lack of familiarity with the university’s policy on academic honesty will not be accepted as an excuse or justification for violations. The policy set forth in the Handbook offers examples of plagiarism, cheating, and unauthorized collaborations. If you have any questions, or concerns about this policy, you should consult with your academic advisor, instructor, or department chair. Confirmed violations will result in appropriate disciplinary actions.

While several forms of academic dishonesty are possible, the most common form is plagiarism, the essence of which is representing the work of others as your own by not attributing sources of ideas and facts, failing to indicate and cite direct quotations, or falsifying citations. Any widely used style guide, such as the APA, will offer guidelines regarding attribution, quotation, and citation, and these rules should be followed completely and consistently. These rules apply equally to books, journals, newspapers, other hard copy publications, and materials obtained over the Internet.