English 8080: Caribbean Literatures and Languages in a Global Context: *Latino and Caribbean Fabulist Tales and SciFi in Literature and Film*

**Code:** INGL/ENGL 8080

**Credit hours:** 3

**Prerequisites:** None

**Professor:** Dra. Loretta Collins Klobah

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A specialized topics course reflecting formal trends and critical issues in the study of Caribbean and Latino science fiction, and fabulist, folkloric, fantasy or speculative fiction, as well as the viewing of science fiction films. Texts will be studied as aesthetic, artistic, meaning-making creations, complexly mediated, situated within socio-historical and cultural contexts, participating in the contestation and formation of modes of representation, and impacted by readership and spectatorship.

**REQUIRED BOOKS**


Also selected stories and novel excerpts by Pauline Melville, Geoffrey Philp, Erna Brodber, Opal Palmer-Adisa, Junot Díaz, Edwidge Danticat and Giannina Braschi.


**Course Objectives: Students will be able to**

1. Enhance reading knowledge of authors, genres, trends and innovations in contemporary sci-fi, fabulist tales, and speculative fiction in the context of the Caribbean and Latin America.
2. Demonstrate knowledge theory and criticism related to contemporary sci-fi films of the Caribbean and Latin America.

3. Recognize the various differing modes in which writers, as well as film makers have used the multiple genres and media to represent Caribbean and Latin@ societies and their cultural imperatives; retrieve, reinterpret and create cultural memories; critique society and advocate social change; explore questions of identity, race, ethnicity, class, gender, spirituality, and the historical experiences of the Caribbean, Latin America and their Diaspora(s); examine the need for historical redress; promote the languages, traditions, family ties, practices and popular cultures of the region; tell stories and entertain a local and/ or international public of spectators.

4. Demonstrate competency in the use of bibliographic and web sources and research methods appropriate to the advanced study of Caribbean and Latin@ literature in order to produce scholarship and a seminar paper.

5. Initiate the process of independent research and study of literary works, art, and theory, which will permit students to formulate, at some later point, original dissertation proposals and write, present, and publish analytical papers.

Content and Time Distribution (12 weeks/ 45 hours)

Introduction: contemporary sci-fi, fabulist, fantasy and speculative fiction and film in the Caribbean and Latin American context (1 hour)

- Plantation and resistance; indigenous cosmologies (4 hours)
- Spirituality and ancestral gateways; gods; timelines (4 hours)
- Ancestral worlds, haunted spaces, walking dead, spiritwork (4 hours)
- Plantation legacies; zombies; contagion, illness and plague (4 hours)
- Myths, folk lore, legends, fables, changelings, magical or spiritual powers, and shapeshifters (4 hours)
- The near future: technological imperialism; labor relations; economic colonization; environmental resources; governance (4 hours)
- Apocalypse and the post-apocalypse; environmental chaos; dystopia (4 hours)
- Space is the place; science fiction; intergalactic relations; Afro-futurism (4 hours)
- Futurism, computer technology, genetic engineering, robotics, A.I., and intergalactic travel (4 hours)
- Quantum and Astrophysics in fiction (4 hours)
- Caribbean and Latin@ super heroes in comics, television and film (4 hours)

Midterm Project: Author Interviews
Final Exam period: Research paper due.

TOTAL 45 hours

Teaching Strategies

Lecture, Readings, Group Discussion, Writing Assignments. When appropriate, up to 11.25 hours of the course may be taught by alternative methods, including but not limited to, online instruction through an educational platform and class projects.

Resources and Equipment Required

Screening Room for projection of films/ internet access for frequent use of internet video clips.

Methods of Evaluation

Attendance and Participation 10%

Short responses to reading assignments or films 15%

Midterm Interview Assignment 25%

Final Research paper 50%

Total 100%

Reasonable Accommodation: Law 51: Students with access to Vocational Rehabilitation Service should contact the professor at the beginning of the semester in order to plan any special arrangements and equipment necessary in accordance with the recommendation of the Office of Challenged Students’ Affairs (OAPI) in the Dean of Students. In addition, any student with special needs or who requires any type of assistance or special arrangements should contact the professor.
**Academic Integrity:** The University of Puerto Rico promotes the highest standards of academic and scientific integrity. Article 6.2 of the UPR Students General Bylaws (Board of Trustees Certification 13, 2009-2010) states that academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: fraudulent actions; obtaining grades or academic degrees by false or fraudulent simulations; copying the whole or part of the academic work of another person; plagiarizing totally or partially the work of another person; copying all or part of another person’s answers to the questions of an oral or written exam by taking or getting someone else to take the exam on his/her behalf; as well as enabling and facilitating another person to perform the aforementioned behavior. Any of these behaviors will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the disciplinary procedure laid down in the UPR Students General Bylaws.

**Grading System:** A, B, C, D, F

*** A differential grading system will be applied for students with special needs.

**Bibliography**


**Electronic Sources:**


**SYLLABUS**

**WEEK#1** Course Introduction: The Caribbean and Latin@ Context in Magical Realism, Speculative Fiction and Sci Fi/ Preview of AfroFuturism topic

**WEEK#2** Plantation and resistance; Indigenous, African-Caribbean, syncretic, Creole cosmologies

**Readings:** Alejo Carpentier, *The Kingdom of this World.*

**WEEK#3** Spirituality and ancestral gateways; gods/ goddesses; timelines


**WEEK#4** Ancestral worlds, haunted spaces, walking dead, spiritwork

**Readings:** Selected stories from Gabriel García Marquez’ *Leaf Storm and Other Stories*; Daína Chaviano, “Accursed Lineage” (LR); Daniel José Older, “Red Feather and Bone” (LR); Ana
Castillo, “Cowboy Medium” (LR); Richard B. Lynch, “Water Under the Bridge” (NWOW); Pauline Melville, “Erzulie”; Opal Palmer-Adisa, “Duppy Get Her”

WEEK#5 Plantation legacies; zombies; contagion, illness and plague


Nalo Hopkinson, “The Glass Bottle Trick” (Whispers); Carlos Hernández, “The Macrobe Conservation Project” (TACGQS)

Film screening in class: Juan of the Dead (Cuba, 2012), Dir. Alejandro Brugues

WEEK#6 Myths, folk lore, legends, fables, changelings, magical or spiritual powers, and shapeshifters

Readings: Karen Lord, Redemption in Indigo


Dionne Peart, “Rivah Mumma”


Film screening in class: short film La Diablesse (Trinidad, 2011), Dir. Jason Roger Phillips https://youtu.be/-e9GJ94-CwQ

WEEK#7 The near future: technological imperialism; labor relations; economic colonization; environmental resources; governance; Caribbean diaspora; spiritual integrity

Readings: Alex Hernández, “Caridad” (LR); Excerpts from the novel by Giannina Braschi, United States of Banana; Excerpts from the novel by Tobias Buckell, Hurricane Fever

Film screening in class: Sleep Dealer (México, 2009), Dir. Alex Rivera
Excerpts or film if available: *Brown Girl Begins* (Toronto, 2017), Dir. Sharon Lewis  (Based on Nalo Hopkinson’s novel *Brown Girl in the Ring* 

WEEK#8 Apocalypse and the post-apocalypse; environmental chaos; dystopia

Readings: H. K. Williams, “Cascadura” (NWOW) 

Film screenings in class: *En Agosto* (Brazil, 2008), animated short movie written and directed by Andrés Barrientos and Carlos Andrés Reyes. Produced by Daniel García. 

*Children of Men* (2006), Dir. Alfonso Cuarón

WEEK#9 Space is the place; science fiction; intergalactic relations and travel; Afro-futurism, computer technology, genetic engineering, robotics, A.I.


Film screening in class: *The Last Angel of History* (1997), Dir. John Akomfrah; scenes from Sun Ra’s *Space is the Place* (1974)

Film screening outside of class time: *The Brother from Another Planet* (1984), Dir. John Sayles

WEEK#10 Quantum and Astrophysics in fiction


WEEK#11 [Research paper topics]

WEEK#12 Caribbean and Latin@ super heroes in comics, television and sci fi films:


Film screening in class: Dir. Marcus Alqueres, short film *The Flying Man* (Brazil, 2013); Dir. Luiz Bolognesi, *Uma Historia de Amor e Furia* (Brazil, 2013).
If available: Scenes from Dir. Alain Bidard, *Battledream Chronicle* (Martinique, 2015)

Film screening outside of class: *Black Panther* (USA, 2018), Dir. Ryan Coogler