

**FIRST YEAR SEMINAR COURSE PROPOSAL**  
**UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON**

Use this form to submit **FSEM 100 topics** courses for review **or any other existing course** that you wish to have designated to meet the first year seminar requirement.

<b>COURSE NUMBER:</b>	<b>FSEM 100</b>		
<b>COURSE TITLE:</b>	Strange Sightings- Learning about Hispanic Culture through Latin American Science Fiction Texts.		
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	MARIA C. RIEGGER	<b>DATE:</b>	September 12, 2008
<i>This course proposal has the department's approval. (Put a check in the box to the right.)</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**NOTE:** Click on the link for “first year seminar” at [www.jtmorello.org/gened](http://www.jtmorello.org/gened) to see the criteria used to evaluate courses proposed to meet the first year seminar requirement. See the report entitled “General Education Curriculum as Approved by the Faculty Senate” for additional details.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION.** In the space below, provide a one to two sentence description of this class. The description will be entered in Banner, and will also be used in other publications about the first year seminar program (such as the “Eagle Essentials” booklet).

This course is designed to acquaint students with literary works written by contemporary Hispanic writers who expressed, through the genre of Science Fiction, a critical perspective of the cultural, social and political aspects of their world. The format is a seminar and students are expected to make insightful commentaries and organize oral presentations. It is sure to be a meaningful and stimulating learning experience.

**RATIONALE.** Using only the space provided in the box below, **briefly** state why this course should be approved as a first year seminar course.

This course is designed with two objectives: to introduce first year students to the pursuit of intellectual inquiry and to promote an appreciation of other cultures. This course is designed to be deep in terms of the critical approach employed, but on a topic which is still accessible to first-year students. Specifically, this course will acquaint students with the works of contemporary Latin American writers and the critical debate they inspired, as well as the use of the genre of Science Fiction to communicate unique perspectives of the human condition.

Because the topic of Science Fiction is familiar to most young students, it is readily accessible and likely to promote active, discussion-based participation. The course is designed as an exploration rather than just presenting established conclusions. The texts selected for reading will be primary sources in translation, and critical articles which will serve as models.

Because the topic of Science Fiction is familiar to most young students, it is readily accessible and likely to promote active, discussion-based participation. The course is designed as an exploration rather than just presenting established conclusions. The texts selected for reading will be primary sources in translation, and critical articles which will serve as models. Students will be required to participate in informal class discussions, small group discussions, and debates and to prepare a formal presentation. The objective of the course is to develop the skills to be confident and effective speakers, to learn to express ideas and arguments, to synthesize material from multiple sources, and to develop their own views on the topic.

**SYLLABUS.** Attach a course syllabus.

**SUBMIT this form and attached syllabus electronically as one document to Warren Rochelle ([wrochell@umw.edu](mailto:wrochell@umw.edu)) or Maya Mathur ([mmathur@umw.edu](mailto:mmathur@umw.edu)). All submissions must be in electronic form.**

**Seminar on Science Fiction Literature from Latin America**

**(FSEM 100 A2 01)**

**University of Mary Washington**

**Dr. Maria C. Riegger**

**Instructor**

**Office: Combs 204**

**Telephone: 654-1976**

**Necessary Materials for the Course**

**Text: Cosmos Latinos**, ed. by Bell and Molina-Gavilán

**Collected Fictions**, Jorge Luis Borges

**Strange Forces**, Leopoldo Lugones

**Youngest Doll**, Rosario Ferré

**The Eternal Feminine**, Rosario Castellanos

**Course Packet (Instructor will provide)**

**Blackboard Account**

In addition, we will be viewing the following films:

*Man Facing Southeast*, (1986) directed by Eliseo Subiela (Argentina)

*Don't Die without Telling Me Where You are Going*, (1995)

directed by Eliseo Subiela (Argentina)

*Trip to Mars*, (2005) directed by Juan Pablo Zaramella (Argentina)

### ***Aims and objectives***

What can Science Fiction Literature do for us? Specifically, what can we gain from studying Science Fiction Literature from Latin America? First, Science Fiction Literature contributes substantially to help us gain awareness of the challenges humans must face in an increasingly complex modern world. Second, Latin American Science Fiction literature, whose roots can be traced back to the 18th century, highlights our the excitement of our species, that sense of wonder mingled with apprehension, that characterizes modern man's psychological framework. What we gain from studying Science Fiction Literature from Latin America is an enhanced perspective of our own human condition.

Latin American Science Fiction has attracted a growing number of readers to sustain itself. The first true flourishing of Latin American sf occurred from the early 1960s to the mid-1970s, but it was not until the mid-1980s that things really took off. Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil are leading the way in science fiction, but there is no Latin American country that does not currently have writers active in the field of speculative fiction and some degree of fan organization. The content of this course is designed to acquaint students with the works of well known contemporary Latin American writers, in translation, and become familiar with the social, political and economic context of the works production.

The course is designed to be Speaking Intensive. Consequently, students will be led to practice and perfect their public speaking skills in informal setting as well as in more formal oral presentations.

### ***Rules and regulations to be observed in Spanish class:***

Attendance-this is an important part of being a successful student. There are no excused absences in FSEM 100 class. Tests, exams, homework assignments and all other assigned work

must be turned in by the student on the day it is due. No make-ups or alternate exams are to be given. In case of emergencies each student should contact the instructor directly.

### ***Class participation***

It is expected that a student in FSEM 100 will come to class prepared and is aware of the general content to be addressed in each class. To be prepared means that the syllabus has been consulted and appropriate material has been read, written and studied. If a student has received an assignment to be delivered orally, it is understood that the assignment is to be completed and practiced before coming to class. Each student is expected to follow instructions in class and use class time to complete assigned activities, whether in small or large groups. Conversations in class are directed by the instructor and have definite aims and objectives for learning specific cultural topics. It is important to remember that the format of this course is a Seminar, which by its very definition implies active participation and contribution to the discussions by all students in the class.

### ***Honor Code:***

A basic requirement of Spanish 202 is that each student handing in the required work must have completed it individually by his own effort and without help. Receiving help from outside sources such as translation software, peer editing, copying, etc. constitutes a violation of the Honor Code. *Outside sources* means sources other than designated textbooks or other material provided by the professor for specific assignments. From time to time, students may be assigned to work with classmates in groups and will be encouraged to collaborate as instructed. Specific assignments will also require students to complete research with outside sources; for example to gather information from a website in the Internet, or to conduct interviews with people with specific expertise. In such cases, outside sources will be permitted as mentioned explicitly in the description and instructions that accompany the assignments.

### ***Class management:***

It is expected that students will come to class appropriately dressed equipped with textbooks, dictionaries and other necessary supplies. Out of respect for other students and the instructor, students should not consume food or beverages in class, and should discard chewing gum when class begins. Students are asked to put away cell phones, beepers or other electronic equipment in class. Cell phones should not be placed on top of the desks but must be placed inside the book-bags or purses.

### ***Disability Services:***

The Office of Disability Services has been designated by the University as the primary office to guide, counsel, and assist students with disabilities. If you already receive services through the Office of Disability Services and require accommodations for this class, make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your approved accommodation needs. Please bring your accommodation letter with you to the appointment. I will hold any information you share with

me in the strictest confidence unless you give me permission to do otherwise. Questions and inquiries-

Do not hesitate to contact the instructor in case of any questions. Use the following email address [Mriegger@umw.edu](mailto:Mriegger@umw.edu), [RieggerM@aol.com](mailto:RieggerM@aol.com), or phone number 654-1976. No question is a silly question.

### ***Grade Distribution:***

<b>Homework</b>	20 %	95 – 100	A
(Reading Assignments Wsheets,		90 – 94	A-
Informal Class discussions		87 – 89	B+
Written Handout Assignments, etc )		84 – 86	B
		80 – 83	B -
<b>Formal Oral presentations</b> in class	20 %	77 – 79	C+
		74 – 76	C
<b>2 Unit Exams</b> MidTerm (10 % ea.)	20 %	70 – 73	C-
		66 – 69	D+
<b>Final Written Exam</b>	20 %	60 – 65	D
		59 - 0	F
<b>Daily Class Participation</b>	20 %		
(Active group work, <b>quizzes</b>			
Informal group presentations,			
peer evaluations of oral			
presentations)			

---

100 %

## SYLLABUS

<p>Week 1</p> <p>What is Science Fiction?</p>	<p>Tuesday January 15</p> <p><b>In class</b></p> <p>Getting Acquainted.</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>1. “Definitions” by Freedman Critical Theory and Science Fiction</p> <p>2. “Introduction” by Gunn Speculations on Speculation</p>	<p>Thursday January 17</p> <p><b>In class: Discussion</b></p> <p>What is Science Fiction?</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>1. “Before We Begin” by Candelaria</p> <p>2. “Towards a Definition of S. F.” by Gunn in Speculations on Speculation</p>
<p>Week 2</p> <p>What is Latin American Science Fiction?</p>	<p>Tuesday January 22</p> <p><b>In class: Discussion</b></p> <p>What is Science Fiction?</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>1. “Introduction” by Lockhart Latin American Science Fiction</p>	<p>Thursday January 24</p> <p><b>In class: Discussion</b></p> <p>What can you tell us about S. F. in Latin America?</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>. “On the Planet Mars.” By Fabra p. 36 in Cosmos Latinos</p>

	2. "Introduction" by Bell  Cosmos Latinos	
Week 3  What is Latin American Science Fiction?  Themes in Science Fiction  Space and Time Travel	Tuesday January 29  <b>In class:</b> Discussion  Latin American Science Fiction- Space and Time Travel  <b>Reading</b>  "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" by Borges in Collected Fictions p.68.	Thursday January 31  <b>In class:</b> Discussion  Who is Borges? Latin American Science Fiction- Space / Time Travel  <b>Reading</b>  "The Cosmonaut" by Arango in Cosmos Latinos p. 63
Week 4  Themes in Science Fiction Space and Time Travel	Tuesday February 5  <b>In class:</b> Discussion  Imagined Worlds  <b>Reading</b>  "Acronia" by Capanna in Cosmos Latinos p. 92	Thursday February 7  <b>In class:</b> Discussion  Imagined Worlds  <b>Reading</b>  1. "The Perfect Married Woman" by Gorodischer in Secret Weavers p. 243  2. Viennese Waltz by Steimberg in Secret Weavers p. 221  <i>First Reflection Paper Due.</i>
Week 5	Tuesday February 12	Thursday February 14

<p>Themes in Science Fiction Space and Time Travel</p> <p>Themes in Science Fiction</p> <p>Man and Machines</p>	<p><b>In class: Discussion</b></p> <p>Who is Angélica Gorodischer? What is going on here?</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>“Mechanopolis” by Unamuno in Cosmos Latinos p. 47</p>	<p><b>In class: Discussion</b></p> <p>Man and Machines</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>“Foreword” p.11 and “Metamusic” by Lugones in Strange Forces p. 57</p>
<p>Week 6</p> <p>Themes in Science Fiction</p> <p>Man and Machines</p>	<p>Tuesday February 19</p> <p><b>In class: Discussion</b></p> <p>Man and Machines</p> <p>Who is Leopoldo Lugones?</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>The Omega Force” by Lugones in Strange Forces p. 69</p>	<p>Thursday February 21</p> <p><b>In class: Discussion</b></p> <p>Man and Machines</p> <p>Who is Leopoldo Lugones?</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>The Eternal Feminine” Rosario Castellanos.</p>
<p>Week 7</p> <p>Themes in Science Fiction</p> <p>Utopias or Dystopias?</p>	<p>Tuesday February 26</p> <p><b>In class: Discussion</b></p> <p>Who is Rosario Casellanos?</p> <p>Viewing “Man Facing Soutyheast” Argentina.</p> <p>Exam #1</p>	<p>Thursday February 28</p> <p><b>In class: Discussion and Viewing “Children of Men” (2006) Mexico.</b></p> <p>Exam #1</p>

<p>Week 8</p>	<p>Tuesday March 4</p> <p>Spring break</p>	<p>Thursday March 6</p> <p>Spring break</p>
<p>Week 9</p> <p>Themes in Science Fiction</p> <p>Utopias or Dystopias?</p>	<p>Tuesday March 11</p> <p><b>In class:</b> Discussion</p> <p>What can you tell us about S. F. in Latin America?</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>1. “The Firestorm” by LUgones p.23 and</p> <p>2. The Horses of Abdera” p. 87</p> <p><i>Second Reflection Paper Due.</i></p>	<p>Thursday March 13</p> <p><b>In class:</b> Discussion</p> <p>Is this progress?</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>“Viola Acherontia” p. 95 and</p> <p>“Psychon” p. 117 by Lugones in Strange Forces</p>
<p>Week 10</p> <p>Themes in Science Fiction</p> <p>Utopias or Dystopias?</p> <p>Themes in Science Fiction</p> <p>The Uncanny: Defying Explanation.</p>	<p>Tuesday March 18</p> <p><b>In class:</b> Discussion</p> <p>Is this progress?</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>“The Death Star” by Silva Román p. 52 and “First Time” by Barceló in Cosmos Laitnos p. 235</p>	<p>Thursday March 20</p> <p><b>In class:</b> Discussion</p> <p>Is this progress?</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>“The Miracle of Saint Wilfred” p. 44.and “Yzur” p. 102 by Lugones in Strange Forces.</p>

<p>Week 11</p> <p>Themes in Science Fiction</p> <p>The Uncanny: Defying Explanation.</p>	<p>Tuesday March 25</p> <p><b>In class:</b> Discussion</p> <p>Defying Explanation.</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>“The Velvet dress” by Ocampo p. 40 in Secret Weavers.</p> <p>“The South” by Borges in Collected Fictions p. 174/</p>	<p>Thursday March 27</p> <p><b>In class:</b> Discussion</p> <p>Defying Explanation</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>“The Younger Doll” by Rosario Ferre.</p> <p>Exan #2</p>
<p>Week 12</p> <p>The Uncanny: Defying Explanation.</p>	<p>Tuesday April 1</p> <p><b>In class:</b> Discussion</p> <p>Defying Explanation</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>“The Annunciation” by Chaviano in Cosmos Laitnos p. 202 and</p> <p>“The Pilar of Salt” by Lugones in Strange Forces p. 111.</p>	<p>Thursday April 3</p> <p><b>In class:</b> Discussion</p> <p>Defying Explanation</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>Collection of stories “The Aleph” by borges in Collected Fictions p. 131-288.</p> <p>Hand in Exam #2</p>
<p>Week 13</p> <p>Themes in Science</p>	<p>Tuesday April 8</p>	<p>Thursday April 10</p>

<p>Fiction</p> <p>The Uncanny: Defying Explanation.</p>	<p><b>In class:</b> Discussion</p> <p>Defying Explanation</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>Collection of stories “The Aleph” by Borges in <i>Collected Fictions</i> p. 131-288.</p>	<p><b>In class:</b> Discussion</p> <p>Defying Explanation</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>Collection of stories “The Aleph” by Borges in <i>Collected Fictions</i> p. 131-288.</p>
<p>Week 14</p> <p>Themes in Science Fiction</p> <p>The Uncanny: Defying Explanation.</p>	<p>Tuesday April 15</p> <p><b>In class:</b> Discussion</p> <p>Defying Explanation</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>“The invention of Dr. Morel” by Casares.</p>	<p>Thursday April 17</p> <p><b>In class:</b> Discussion</p> <p>In the discomfort zone.</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>“The invention of Dr. Morel” by Casares.</p>
<p>Week 15</p> <p>Themes in Science Fiction</p> <p>What have we learned?</p>	<p>Tuesday April 22</p> <p><b>In class:</b> Discussion</p> <p>In the discomfort zone.</p> <p><b>Reading</b></p> <p>“The invention of Dr. Morel” by Casares.</p>	<p>Thursday April 24</p> <p><b>In class:</b> Discussion</p> <p>In the discomfort zone.</p> <p>Final Exam</p>

For further reading:

“The Aleph” by Borges in *Collected Fictions*.

“The Inexplicable Phenomenon ” by Lugones in *Strange Forces*.

“The Violets Embryos” by Gorodischer in *Cosmos Latinos*.

“Baby H.P.” by Arreola in *Cosmos Latinos*.

“Invisible Embroidery” by Sola in *Sevret Weavers*