LT 360 ARGENTINE LITERATURE AND THE FORMATION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY
IES Abroad Buenos Aires

DESCRIPTION: This course focuses on four main topics related to different types of writing experiences that took place in modern Argentina. These topics reflect specific historical contexts and different cultural practices: “Tensions in Argentine culture: from a library of English books to the worship of courage”, “Ways of excluding and including the Other through literature: tango, immigration, and politics”, “Eva Perón: the talking corpse”, and “Language, sexuality, and politics”. This organization does not only allow to get acquainted with a certain group of texts belonging to different genres (short story, novel, and poetry of the most important Argentine writers from the 20th century, plus 19th century author Domingo Faustino Sarmiento), but also to discuss issues like the construction of a national identity from literature’s point of view and through the quarrel over what is “authentic” and what is not. Our journey also makes a connection between literary discourse and other social discourses, namely: the political, the historical, and the cultural ones.

CREDITS: 3 credits

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: Spanish

PREREQUISITES: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:
- Lectures, and group and class discussions of textual analysis and its context using fiction and other elements (photographies, illustrations, recordings, information about the author and his time, and the impact his work had on his time).
- Each class will feature terminological clarifications, the use of specific vocabulary, and some basics on syntax. Reading guides will be provided regularly by the teacher.
- There will be at least two course-related trips.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:
During the course, students will be expected to:
- Endure intensive reading activity
- Actively participate in discussions about narrative texts
- Develop reading hypothesis
- Write accurate reports and assignments in Spanish

The teacher will provide theoretical elements and contextualization.
- Midterm exam (30%)
- Final (30%): A paper 8/10 pages long (single-spaced pages) or 15/20 (double space) based on the readings of the second half of the semester.
- Written works (20%): reading guides, reports, etc.
- Class participation, reports and oral presentations (20%).

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
- This course seeks to promote students’ awareness of the relation between texts and social and cultural processes in Argentina, in order to achieve a panoramic perception of Argentine culture.
- Texts selection includes short stories which express some of the features of Argentine storytelling studied. Also, the novel El beso de la mujer araña by Manuel Puig will be read and analyzed.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:
Attendance and punctuality are mandatory. Each instructor will record each student’s attendance through Moodle. Any legitimate reason for not attending class or a field work activity (medical emergency, etc.) must be referred directly to the Academic Office (not to the instructor) with proper documentation. Students who miss class due to medical reasons need to receive a certified doctor’s
note from a medical professional and turn this in to the Academic Affairs office. Without that note, the absence cannot be excused. Instructors have authority to mark students as absent if they arrive 15 minutes or more after the course starting time.

- Courses taught one day per week allow a maximum of 1 absence.
- Courses taught two days per week allow a maximum of 2 absences.
- Courses taught three and four days per week allow a maximum of 3 absences.

Every unexcused absence after the maximum allowance will lower half a point of the student’s final grade (for instance, from “A” to “A-”, from “A-” to “B+” and so on). It is the students’ responsibility to keep up to date on their absence total.

**CONTENT:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Unit 1** | **Week 1** | Tensions in Argentine culture: from a library of English books to the worship of courage  
| **Week 2** | The Pampa, the gauchos, and the construction of a national identity. Part I. | • Sarmiento, Domingo Faustino. Facundo o civilización y barbarie. Buenos Aires, 1845 (selection).  
• Reading report on the bibliography about Facundo. |
| **Unit 2** | **Week 4** | Ways of excluding and including the Other through literature: tango, immigration, and politics | • Fontanarrosa, Roberto. “Una historia de tango”. In: Nada del otro mundo y otros cuentos. Buenos Aires: Ediciones de la Flor, 1987.  
• Comparative analysis of Borges’ and Fontanarrosa’s tales. |
• Buenos Aires Tour. Take the bus tour offered (for free) by the city’s municipality. Your goal is observe and report on what the tour shows to tourists, and the reaction of these tourists to the show. You have to come up with an oral presentation through a photo record and an essay (either an “aguafuerte” or just the description of each photo). |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Week 6</strong></th>
<th>Mid Term Exam</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
• Movie: Eva, una tumba sin paz (Tristán Bauer, 1997). |
• Individual presentation with photographic record and an essay.  
• Topics for take-home final exam will be delivered during week 13. |
| Week 11 | | |
• Interview with Argentine poets.  
• Submission of the final paper. |

**RECOMMENDED READINGS:**