

Department of Modern Languages and Literatures

Graduate Bulletin

Fall 2026

Course offerings in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Haitian Kreyòl, Hebrew, Italian, Modern Languages and Literatures, Portuguese, and Spanish

For more information, please contact course instructors or Dr. Yolanda Martinez- San Miguel, Director of Graduate Studies (yymm34@miami.edu or yolandamartinezsanmiguel@gmail.com)

ARABIC

Language/culture courses (zero credits; consult Cane link for schedules)

ARB 641	Elementary Arabic I for Graduate
ARB 642	Elementary Arabic II for Graduate
ARB 651	Intermediate Arabic I for Graduate
ARB 652	Intermediate Arabic II for Graduate
ARB 654	Advanced Arabic II for Graduate
ARB 658	Advanced Arabic for Graduate Heritage

CHINESE

Language/culture courses (zero credits; consult Cane link for schedules)

CHI 641	Elementary Chinese I for Graduate Students
CHI 642	Elementary Chinese II for Graduate Students
CHI 651	Intermediate Chinese I for Graduate Research
CHI 652	Intermediate Chinese II for Graduate Research
CHI 654	Advanced Chinese for Graduate Research

FRENCH

Language/culture courses (zero credits; consult Cane link for schedules)

FRE 641	Elementary French I for Graduate
FRE 642	Elementary French II for Graduate
FRE 645	Accelerated Elementary French for Graduate
FRE 651	Intermediate French I for Graduate
FRE 652	Intermediate French II for Graduate
FRE 653	Advanced French I for Graduate

MLL 726 / FRE 775: “Creolizing Negritude: Decolonizing Aesthetics in African and Caribbean Literature” *

Dr. Patoimbasba Nikiema

Tuesdays, 10:00 am-12:45 pm

ROOM 210.02

(*This course counts for the Caribbean Studies Graduate concentration)

This doctoral seminar investigates the major intellectual and aesthetic movements that have shaped Francophone African and Caribbean literature from the late nineteenth century to the present. Organized around a historical and theoretical trajectory, from proto-Negritude and Negritude to post-independence realism, créolité, and contemporary Afrotopian thought, the course draws equally from African and Caribbean literary traditions to examine how writers have reimagined identity, culture, and literary form in response to colonialism and its aftermath. The seminar begins with the emergence of proto-Negritude and the awakening of Black diasporic consciousness through foundational figures such as Anténor Firmin and Jean Price-Mars, whose works laid the intellectual groundwork for later movements affirming Black cultural autonomy. It then traces the development of Negritude through the writings of Aimé Césaire, Léopold Sédar Senghor, and Léon-Gontran Damas, examining how this movement sought to reclaim Black identity, history, and cultural dignity within the colonial world. Subsequent units explore post-independence realism and the literature of disenchantment, as well as the emergence of créolité and creolization, which foreground the linguistic, cultural, and historical entanglements of the Black Atlantic. The seminar concludes with contemporary theoretical perspectives, including *le devenir* (Souleymane Bachir Diagne, Achille Mbembe) and *Afrotopia* (Felwine Sarr), which articulate new imaginaries of cultural and political renewal. The course situates literary texts within their broader historical and theoretical contexts while engaging the ongoing project of decolonizing literary aesthetics and cultural thought.

GERMAN

Language/culture courses (zero credits; consult Cane link for schedules)

GER 641 Elementary German I for Graduate Students
GER 642 Elementary German II for Graduate Students
GER 651 Intermediate German I for Graduate Research
GER 652 Intermediate German II for Graduate Research

KREYÒL

Language/culture courses (zero credits; consult Cane link for schedules)

HAI 642 Elementary Haitian Kreyòl II for Graduate Students
HAI 652 Intermediate Haitian Kreyòl for Graduate Research

HEBREW

Language/culture courses (zero credits; consult Cane link for schedules)

HEB 642 Elementary Hebrew II for Graduate Students
HEB 652 Intermediate Hebrew for Graduate Research

ITALIAN

Language/culture courses (zero credits; consult Cane link for schedules)

ITA 641 Elementary Italian I for Graduate Students
ITA 642 Elementary Italian II for Graduate Students
ITA 651 Intermediate Italian I for Graduate Research
ITA 652 Intermediate Italian II for Graduate Research

PORTUGUESE

POR 642 Elementary Portuguese II for Graduate Students
POR 645 Accelerated Elementary Portuguese for Graduate Students
POR 651 Intermediate Portuguese I for Graduate

SPA 721/ Port 736: “Bandits, Fanatics, and the Idea of Death in the Cultures of Mexico and Brazil”

Dr. Christine Arce

Thursdays, 11:00 am to 1:45 pm

ROOM 210.02

--“*Dime cómo mueres te diré quién eres*” – Octavio Paz, *El laberinto de la soledad*

This course will comparatively explore the articulations of death as a trope and epistemological system that informs the cultural practices and production in rural regions of Brazil and Mexico. Although the cult of death can be found across the globe, in Mexico it has come to constitute a national totem. The idea of death has been unique in the Americas due to its multiple registers and articulations. Although Mexicans may lay claim to the unicity of the specific intimacy they nurture with death that has become almost a cliché of Mexican cultural production, there exist many striking parallels in Brazilian culture that although not identical, remain curiously unexamined. This course is an exploratory beginning that aims to tease out these uncanny correspondences, and rather than answer why death has become such a salient trope, will theorize the diverse valences of death as a national totem and examine what superficially appear as cultural idiosyncrasies to bring to the fore the seminal role indigeneity, mestizaje, Afro-Brazilian beliefs and the spiritual colonization have played in generating such unique assimilations of death. How do literature and film grapple with the notion of death? How does popular and high art culture create a poetics of death? Why does popular art turn time and again to the figure of the bandit: whether s/he be a criminal, run-away slave, religious figure or revolutionary? What is the role of sacrifice and how is violence imagined and practiced? How are children included as agents of sacrifice? The diverse cultural texts (film, novel, poetry, art) will be organized in the following themes: 1) Death and the Aesthetics of Hunger 2) Religious Fanaticism and Cults 3) Death as Honor 4) Banditry and Narco-trafficking and subaltern subjectivities 5) Death and Humor 6) Death and the Visual Figuring of the Abject Body.

Examples of cultural texts and practices we will examine are the “death songs” in two canonical novels by two of the most famous writers in both Mexico and Brazil (Juan Rulfo and Clarice Lispector). We will examine the cult of “good death” formed by female descendants of slaves in the Recôncavo, Bahia, which interprets this practice as operating within a world where the dead co-exist with the living. We will compare these “death” cults with that of the emergent cult of “la Santa Muerte” in Mexico and the United States. We will consider the figure of the bandit/revolutionary in Mexico and compare it with the Brazilian *cangaçeiro* and the way the *cordeles* as a musical/poetic genre interpret death in these mythic figures. By understanding “art” as both a material and performative practice,

we will juxtapose these genres and historical traditions in order to further illuminate the striking parallels between these two very different countries by examining the larger place that death holds as a unifying metaphor in Brazilian and Mexican culture. Reading knowledge of Portuguese is desirable but not required; all texts will be in Spanish/Portuguese or English translation

SPANISH

Language/culture courses (zero credits; consult Cane link for schedules)

SPA 641 Elementary Spanish I for Graduate Students
SPA 642 Elementary Spanish II for Graduate Students
SPA 645 Accelerated Elementary Spanish for Graduate Students
SPA 647 Basic Spanish for Graduate Heritage Learners
SPA 651 Intermediate Spanish I for Graduate Research
SPA 652 Intermediate Spanish II for Graduate Research
SPA 653 Advanced Spanish I for Graduate Research
SPA 657 Intermediate Spanish for Graduate Heritage Learners
SPA 658 Advanced Spanish for Graduate Heritage Learners

SPA 721/ Port 736: “Bandits, Fanatics, and the Idea of Death in the Cultures of Mexico and Brazil”

Dr. Christine Arce

Thursdays, 11:00 am to 1:45 pm

ROOM 210.02

--“*Dime cómo mueres te diré quién eres*” – Octavio Paz, *El laberinto de la soledad*

This course will comparatively explore the articulations of death as a trope and epistemological system that informs the cultural practices and production in rural regions of Brazil and Mexico. Although the cult of death can be found across the globe, in Mexico it has come to constitute a national totem. The idea of death has been unique in the Americas due to its multiple registers and articulations. Although Mexicans may lay claim to the unicity of the specific intimacy they nurture with death that has become almost a cliché of Mexican cultural production, there exist many striking parallels in Brazilian culture that although not identical, remain curiously unexamined. This course is an exploratory beginning that aims to tease out these uncanny correspondences, and rather than answer why death has become such a salient trope, will theorize the diverse valences of death as a national totem and examine what superficially appear as cultural idiosyncrasies to bring to the fore the seminal role indigeneity, mestizaje, Afro-Brazilian

beliefs and the spiritual colonization have played in generating such unique assimilations of death. How do literature and film grapple with the notion of death? How does popular and high art culture create a poetics of death? Why does popular art turn time and again to the figure of the bandit: whether s/he be a criminal, run-away slave, religious figure or revolutionary? What is the role of sacrifice and how is violence imagined and practiced? How are children included as agents of sacrifice? The diverse cultural texts (film, novel, poetry, art) will be organized in the following themes: 1) Death and the Aesthetics of Hunger 2) Religious Fanaticism and Cults 3) Death as Honor 4) Banditry and Narcotrafficking and subaltern subjectivities 5) Death and Humor 6) Death and the Visual Figuring of the Abject Body.

Examples of cultural texts and practices we will examine are the “death songs” in two canonical novels by two of the most famous writers in both Mexico and Brazil (Juan Rulfo and Clarice Lispector). We will examine the cult of “good death” formed by female descendants of slaves in the Recôncavo, Bahia, which interprets this practice as operating within a world where the dead co-exist with the living. We will compare these “death” cults with that of the emergent cult of “la Santa Muerte” in Mexico and the United States. We will consider the figure of the bandit/revolutionary in Mexico and compare it with the Brazilian *cangaçeiro* and the way the *cordeles* as a musical/poetic genre interpret death in these mythic figures. By understanding “art” as both a material and performative practice, we will juxtapose these genres and historical traditions in order to further illuminate the striking parallels between these two very different countries by examining the larger place that death holds as a unifying metaphor in Brazilian and Mexican culture. Reading knowledge of Portuguese is desirable but not required; all texts will be in Spanish/Portuguese or English translation.

MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

MLL 711: Introduction to Critical Theory

Dr. Suja Sawafta

Mondays, 5:05 pm to 7:50 pm

ROOM 210.01

This graduate seminar will survey critical theory across global traditions of Literary and Cultural Studies. It proposes an engagement with literature and cultural objects across a number of frameworks and methodologies including world literature, debates on literary canonization and minor literatures, close-reading, exegesis and ekphrasis, translation, and comparativism. We will engage in debates and analyses on and with literature and culture that contends with various dynamics and concepts including postcolonialism and decoloniality, race and ethnic studies, gender and sexuality, exile and migration, ecocriticism, capitalism, the literary prize economy, questions of audience, visual culture, spatial and sonic studies, as well as media studies.

Throughout the course, each student will use their areas of research interest or their actual dissertation topics to lead their colleagues in class discussion. Students will develop a formal conference paper from abstract to presentation. They will write a 15 to 20-page final paper in which they critically contend with course material to propose and defend an original argument. Course open to students from all departments, and at all levels of training.

MLL 799: Dissertation and Professional Writing Seminar

Dr. Yolanda Martinez-San Miguel

Wednesday 2:00-4:45 pm

ROOM 210.02

This seventh-semester graduate seminar is designed to provide structure and support during the critical transition to full dissertation writing. Taken in conjunction with the final preparation and defense of the dissertation prospectus, the course focuses on solidifying the methodological and critical theoretical frameworks of each student's research. Through structured workshops and peer feedback, students will develop and present their thesis work-in-progress, culminating in the completion of the first dissertation chapter. This process ensures that students enter their eighth semester with significant momentum and a well-defined project.

Beyond dissertation development, this course prioritizes professionalization. Students will receive comprehensive guidance on effective dissertation completion strategies, explore diverse avenues for scholarly publication, and develop skills for tailoring arguments to various audiences. The curriculum also includes training in grant proposal writing and the initial preparation of materials for the academic job market. Active participation in weekly discussions, constructive engagement with peer work, and the demonstration of significant progress in dissertation writing will form the basis of the course grade. This course is required for fourth-year graduate students and may be repeated by advanced students seeking further support in dissertation writing.

MLL 703: The Multilingual Mind: Structures of Interiority and Power

Dr. Ager Gondra

Tuesdays 2:00 pm to 4:45 pm

ROOM 210.02

This seminar examines the intersection of mental structure and sociopolitical forces within the dynamics of multilingualism and language contact. The course provides an analysis of how linguistic ideologies and attitudes influence language transmission and identity, alongside the formal structural constraints governing code-switching, transfer, and creolization. Using data from diverse contexts—including French, Portuguese, Spanish, Basque, Arabic, and Sign Language—the seminar evaluates theoretical debates regarding

linguistic competence and the processing of simultaneous, sequential, heritage, and non-native grammars. Furthermore, the empirical multilingual framework of this course shows how linguistic power dynamics and cross-linguistic structural influences shape (oral or written) production, enabling a more nuanced critique of identity and resistance in transborder and post-colonial contexts. Through critical evaluation of these dimensions, research is conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the interiority and social situatedness of diverse linguistic realities.

MLL 772/ ENG 612: Case Studies in Cultural History and Data Analysis

Dr. Chloe Edmondson

Thursdays 3:00PM - 5:45PM

Merrick 205

This course introduces students to cultural history and data analysis through case studies in European history. From the networks of correspondence that structured intellectual life to in-person networks created through travel and salons, to the European book trade and revolutionary pamphlets, students will gain a solid understanding of cultural history through the study of primary sources, historiography, and digital tools. The course will also highlight specific high-profile figures and their ego-networks. In particular, this course foregrounds the confluence of Digital Humanities projects and scholarship on European political and cultural history. Students will develop skills in both qualitative and quantitative research through the study of these projects and the opportunity to experiment with digital and data-driven methods, including social network analysis, data-mining techniques, and prosopographical analysis.

MLL 726 / FRE 775: “Creolizing Negritude: Decolonizing Aesthetics in African and Caribbean Literature” *

Dr. Patoimbasba Nikiema

Tuesdays, 10:00 am-12:45 pm

ROOM 210.02

(*This course counts for the Caribbean Studies Graduate concentration)

This doctoral seminar investigates the major intellectual and aesthetic movements that have shaped Francophone African and Caribbean literature from the late nineteenth century to the present. Organized around a historical and theoretical trajectory, from proto-Negritude and Negritude to post-independence realism, créolité, and contemporary Afrotopian thought, the course draws equally from African and Caribbean literary traditions to examine how writers have reimagined identity, culture, and literary form in response to colonialism and its aftermath. The seminar begins with the emergence of proto-Negritude

and the awakening of Black diasporic consciousness through foundational figures such as Anténor Firmin and Jean Price-Mars, whose works laid the intellectual groundwork for later movements affirming Black cultural autonomy. It then traces the development of Negritude through the writings of Aimé Césaire, Léopold Sédar Senghor, and Léon-Gontran Damas, examining how this movement sought to reclaim Black identity, history, and cultural dignity within the colonial world. Subsequent units explore post-independence realism and the literature of disenchantment, as well as the emergence of créolité and creolization, which foreground the linguistic, cultural, and historical entanglements of the Black Atlantic. The seminar concludes with contemporary theoretical perspectives, including *le devenir* (Souleymane Bachir Diagne, Achille Mbembe) and *Afrotopia* (Felwine Sarr), which articulate new imaginaries of cultural and political renewal. The course situates literary texts within their broader historical and theoretical contexts while engaging the ongoing project of decolonizing literary aesthetics and cultural thought.