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The School for New Learning, DePaul University –Truman College, Chicago City Colleges  
Bridge Program

AI 393 - From Mysticism to Eros in Spanish Mystical Writings  
CCC: Humanities 205  
SNL: A1D, A1E, A3A, A3B, H1G, A5

Fall 2008

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**Location:** Truman College, 9/9, 9/16, 9/23, 9/30, 10/7, 10/14  
Loop Campus, DePaul University, 10/21, 10, 28, 11/4, 11/11, 11/18

**Times/Dates:** Tuesday, 6 – 10 pm

**Our Bliki:** [erosandmysticism.pbwiki.com](http://erosandmysticism.pbwiki.com)

### **Course Description**

This course examines the connections between Eros and mysticism in Spanish literature beginning with the medieval mystics of Spain. We include readings from such mystics as Archpriest of Hita, Saint Teresa of Avila, Saint John of God; and we will compare their writings with modern representations of these mystics. Students with the ability to read and speak Spanish will be given the option to read and discuss the selections in Spanish (or Latin), while those who speak English will read and discuss the selections in English. References to other art forms will enrich the discussions. Included in this course will be field trips to the Art Institute and the National Museum of Mexico.

### **About the Bridge Program**

The Bridge Program is the result of a shared commitment to the success of adult students held by Wright College, Truman College and DePaul University's School for New Learning. The Bridge Program offers students a unique learning experience that couples Chicago City College and DePaul resources, allows students an opportunity to experience the university environment at their own pace, and helps adult students transition smoothly to DePaul University. Bridge classes are team taught by professors from the Chicago City Colleges and DePaul. Bridge students receive extensive advising from both institutions. Chicago City College students pay Chicago City College tuition and earn both Chicago City Colleges and DePaul credit hours.

## **SNL Competences**

Chicago City College students enrolled in this class will earn credit both for Humanities 205 at the City Colleges and for two competences in the SNL program. SNL students enrolled in this class can earn credit for up to three of the following SNL competences.

### **A-1-D: Can analyze writers' or artists' representations of human experience.**

1. Chooses particular artistic or literary works to consider.
2. Analyzes the works of the artists or writers as those works relate to an aspect of the human experience.

Students demonstrate this competence by articulating how the representations of one or several artists or writers inform and enrich our understanding of human experience (for example, friendship, racism, suffering, love, work, leisure, sexuality, class, etc).

Students who elect to fulfill this competency should complete two reflection papers on one or more mystics and their writing on a particular topic; particularly relevant topics for this competency would be suffering, love, friendship and the experience of religious orders. Students may also elect to do their final paper exploring this competency.

### **A-1-E: Can interpret the work of writers or artists within a historical or social context.**

1. Chooses an artistic or literary work to consider.
2. Identifies a historical or social context relevant to the work.
3. Analyzes the work from the perspective of that historical or social context.

Students demonstrate this competence by choosing a work, locating it within a historical moment, describing the social context, and focusing on the issues manifested in the work.

Students who choose this competency should do at least two reflection papers on the historical or social context of the mystics. This competency is often best done as a comparative paper: what, for instance, are the social and historical implications of the

differences in mystical experiences in different periods? Could we compare medieval Sufi mystics and medieval Catholic mystics?

**A-3-A: Can interpret experience in relationship to the perspective of a significant thinker or tradition.**

1. Identifies and describes an individual, social, or cultural experience.
2. Identifies one or more significant thinkers or traditions with philosophical or theological ideas relevant to this experience.
3. Explains one's ideas about the meaning of this experience in relationship to the ideas of this thinker(s) or tradition(s).

Students demonstrate this competence by thinking philosophically about their experience or the experience of others. Students will develop their own ideas about the meaning of an experience and compare or contrast these ideas to those of a significant thinker or tradition. For example, students might reflect on their experience of gender roles in relation to the ideas of feminist thinkers. Or they could use the insights of a philosopher to help clarify their thinking about their relationship to nature.

Students who elect this competency should write at least two reflection papers comparing their own religious experiences with those of the mystics that we are reading. Students may also use this competency for their final paper.

**A-3-B: Can explore a model of spiritual development and apply it to oneself or others.**

1. Discusses the assumptions and implications of a model(s) of spiritual development.
2. Discusses the model in relation to one's or other's experience.

Students fulfill this competence by discussing a model of spiritual development. Such models always imply assumptions about the meaning of the spiritual and the value and purpose of spiritual development. They also have implications for how we choose to live. Models of spiritual development might include twelve-step, evangelical, feminist, contemplative, Eastern, or liberation spiritualities.

For this competency, the student should explore in a meaningful way the contemplative spirituality expressed by the mystics and compare those assumptions and implications to their own contemplative tradition. Students should devote at least two reflection papers to this competency and may elect to do the final paper on this subject. They may also want to demonstrate the different spiritual developments to their fellow students in an oral presentation.

**H-1-G: Can effectively speak or write a language other than one's native language.**

1. Speaks or writes intelligibly in a second language.
2. Understands spoken or written sentences in a created or natural cultural environment.
3. Maintains conversations or writes effectively in the second language.

Students demonstrate this competence by showing that they can read, listen, speak, or

write in a language other than English. The emphasis of this competence is on the communicative aspects of language and therefore refers both to receptive competence (reading or listening comprehension) and to productive competence (speaking or writing) or any combination of these sufficient for effective communication.

Students who elect this competency should write their reflection papers in Spanish and pick particular mystics that write in Spanish or come from the Spanish tradition.

## **Creativity**

### **A-5: Can define and analyze a creative process.**

1. Can define the concept of creativity.
2. Can identify, analyze, and describe the components of a creative process in one or more fields of human endeavor.
3. Can explain how engaging in a creative process affects one's perception of the world.

Creativity is often associated with forms of human expression in the literary, fine, and applied arts. Because it involves the development of innovative ideas and fresh approaches to problems, however, the practice of creativity is no less integral a component of the social, physical, and technological sciences. In any field of human endeavor, the creative process requires ability to question accepted and “acceptable” ways of perceiving and thinking, as well as a willingness to forge connections and refine knowledge through doubt, curiosity, and imagination. Through engagement, reflection, and analysis, this competence invites the student to understand how a creative process is born, how it functions, and how it changes our perception and experience of the world. Such insights may develop, for example, by analyzing the creative process in the writing of a poem, the production of a visual narrative, the planning of a city, the design of a web site, or the development of an innovative way of perceiving and explaining a natural phenomenon.

In this class, we will look at the concept and process of creativity as imagined by the mystics and analyze our own creative processes. We will pay particular attention to how our creative work informs our perceptions and understandings of our readings.

For this competency, students will be asked to complete a creative project and present the project to the class.

## **Learning Experience**

In this course the following teaching and learning techniques are used: workshops, discussions, short lectures, small group work, movie analyses, collaborative learning, creative projects, conferences, at home and in class assignments, critical reading, learning from others through peer editing, and lots of writing and reading. There are no tests, although formal writing assignments should be approached with the seriousness of a test.

### **Required Texts**

Beverly Donofrio. *Looking for Mary, or the Blessed Mother and Me*. 2000  
Mark Salzman. *Lying Awake*. 2000  
Ron Hansen. *Mariette in Ecstasy*. 1991  
Monica Furlong. *Visions and Longings: Medieval Women Mystics*. 1997

### **Selections of the following texts will be provided by your instructors:**

Carol Flinders. *Living Portraits of Seven Women Mystics*. 1993  
Stephen Haliczer. *Between Exaltation and Infamy: Female Mystics in the Golden Age of Spain*. 2002  
Silvia Evangelisti. *Nuns: A History of Convent Life*. 2008  
Caroline Walker Bynum. *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*. 1988  
Amy Hollywood. *Sensible Ecstasy*. 2002  
Virginia Burrus and Catherine Keller, edd. *Toward a Theology of Eros*. 2006

### **Course Requirements/Evidence the Students Will Submit**

In this class, you will complete the following:

- Eight reflection papers
- One final project
- One final paper
- One presentation on the creative process
- Short class and homework assignments
- A final portfolio of your work this semester that documents your attainment of the course competences

### **Reflection assignments:**

These should be about two pages and preferably should be posted to the Bliki, so that other students may read the postings. The content is dependent upon the competencies that you want to complete for this course. (See above for some suggestions.)

### **Creativity Assignment: Creating Outside the Essay**

For your creativity assignment, choose one of the following guidelines to illustrate your creative processes and your thoughts about them. Be as creative in this assignment as you can. This is not a linear assignment; take risks; be bold and audacious. You'll need to be able to discuss your processes in class. Some possibilities:

- ❖ Make a 3D map which is a visual journey through your creative processes. What are the compass points of your map, what are your beginnings and destinations, your detours, short cuts, rest stops along the way?
- ❖ Use the childhood game of 'Show and Tell' to show how objects evoke memories and stimulate your thoughts.
- ❖ Manipulate fanciful creatures, metaphoric objects, or mythical heroes to create a Lilliputian reflection of your creative process.
- ❖ Create your own creative process presentation. But it must not be in a PowerPoint form; remember this should illustrate thinking outside linear modes of thought.

**Portfolio:** Your portfolio gives you the chance to demonstrate and reflect upon what you have learned over the quarter. Your portfolio may include one and should include two and three below:

1. You may choose to include in your portfolio revisions of your reflection papers. If you choose to include revisions, please add a note at the end of your revision indicating what you changed and why.
2. Make a case for which of the “Course Competencies” and/or “Expected Outcomes” you have achieved by explaining how your work and learning in the class has fulfilled these competencies and outcomes. You may do this part of the portfolio either in paragraphs or in a table. Please see below for the “Course Competencies” and “Expected Outcomes” from the syllabus.
3. A brief essay (about two pages) in which you step back and reflect upon what you have learned in this class. Consider not only what you have learned about the topics we have covered, but also what you may have learned about yourself or others, what you have learned about college and learning and how what you have learned does or does not apply to your life.

### **Attendance**

A great deal of the work and learning of the course will take place in class. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that you come to class, be prepared and participate. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed. While you should do your best to keep up, it is always better to come to class under prepared than to skip class because you did not do all of the work. If you must be absent, contact us as soon as possible, so we can make sure you do not get behind. *All work must be handed in on time, whether you are in class or not.*

### **Method of Evaluation/Criteria for Assessment**

Your class grade will be based on the extent to which your papers, active class participation and successful, timely completion of reflection papers and other assignments indicate your mastery of your course competences.

#### Assignment

Eight reflection papers (0/3/5)

#### Maximum Possible Points

40

Presentation on the creative process	20
Final paper	20
Final creative project	20
Portfolio	10
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	110

Final grades will be calculated according to this scale:

- 90-110 points = A
- 80-89 points = B
- 70-79 points = C
- 60-69 points = D
- 59 points or less = F

### **Plagiarism**

In college, knowing why, when and how to cite sources is vital. By using sources appropriately, you participate in the scholarly community as you relate your ideas and experiences to those of others. When citations are lacking or incorrect, you weaken your paper by failing to clearly make those connections. You also leave yourself open to charges of plagiarism which can have serious academic consequences. We follow both the DePaul's and the City College's plagiarism policies.

Chicago City College's Plagiarism Policy: "The City Colleges of Chicago are committed to the ideal of truth and honesty. In view of this, students are expected to adhere to high standards of honest in their academic endeavor. Plagiarism and cheating of any kind are serious violations of these standards and will result, minimally, in the grade of 'F' by the instructor" (City Colleges of Chicago Student Policy Manual, 22).

DePaul University Plagiarism Policy: "DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details."

### **DePaul University Incomplete Policy**

Undergraduate and graduate students have two quarters to complete an incomplete. At the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the incomplete grade was assigned, remaining incompletes will automatically convert to "F" grades. In the case of the Law School incompletes must be completed by the end of the semester following the one in which the

incomplete was assigned. Ordinarily no incomplete grade may be completed after the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee. This policy applies to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

n.b. The SNL student who wishes to receive the grade of IN must formally request in writing that the instructor issue this grade. This request must be made before the end of the quarter in which the student is enrolled in a course.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact either of us privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.

To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact us as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class). If you are a DePaul student, make sure that you have contacted the:

- PLS Program (for LD, AD/HD) at 773-325-4239 in SAC 220, or
- The Office for Students with Disabilities (for all other disabilities) at 773-325-7290  
Student Center 307

### **Don't Panic**

This class is cumulative, with assignments building upon each other, so if you find yourself confused, stuck or falling behind let us know right away so we can address the problem before it becomes unmanageable.