

RMST 202: Romance Studies, Modernism to the Present

Spring 2024 Grading Contract

This course uses “contract grading.” This means that you choose in advance the work you will do, and receive a grade accordingly so long as you fulfil that contract.

The four texts you *have* to read in order to pass this class are those by Proust, Bombal, Rodoreda, and Piglia. If you do not read these four, you will not pass the class. If you do, you will pass. All the other texts are optional, but your grade will rise the more that you read. How do you show that you have read a text? You write and publish a blog post of reaction and response to it, of 400-500 words, and comment on two blogs posts written by your classmates.

You will also write an introductory blogpost (in week one), and a concluding blogpost (in week 13), reflecting on what you have learned.

The more books that you read (and so blogposts and comments that you write), the higher your grade will be, as follows:

| Number of texts read / blogposts written | Percentage Grade | Final Letter Grade |
|--|------------------|--------------------|
| 4 (Proust, Bombal, Rodoreda, and Piglia) / 6 | 64-67 | C+ |
| 5 (the basic four plus one) / 7 | 68-71 | B- |
| 6 (the basic four plus two) / 8 | 72-75 | B |
| 8 (the basic four plus four) / 10 | 76-79 | B+ |
| 9 (the basic four plus five) / 11 | 80-84 | A- |
| 10 (the basic four plus six) / 12 | 85-89 | A |
| 11 (the basic four plus seven) / 13 | 90-100 | A+ |

Note that there is an incremental jump between a B and a B+.

You can choose which books you read and write on (after the basic four). Each week you have more than one option. You tell me in advance how many and which books you plan to read. This is your contract. In return, if you fulfil that contract, I guarantee you the appropriate grade.

Over the semester, you are allowed to make one, and only one, revision of your contract (changing the choice of books, or the number of books, to get a higher or a lower grade). No changes are permitted after week six (February 15).

You also need to attend class for at least as many weeks as the number of books you are reading, as well as the first (introductory) and final (concluding) weeks. So for instance, if you choose to read seven books (for a B), you will need to attend class for 9 weeks, including the introductory and concluding weeks. *Attendance in the weeks you have contracted is compulsory.* If you do not attend, you break your contract. The only exception is for students who are contracting for an A+: they are allowed one week’s free absence. But after the introductory week, you only have to attend one class session per week.

There will be a short midterm and final exam. These will be used to determine your final grade within the parameters determined by the number of texts you have read. The midterm and final exam may also be used to determine your grade if you fail to fulfil your contract.

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Check the boxes below to signify which books you plan to read, meaning that you will write blog posts and comments and come to class on the relevant weeks. (The required texts and weeks are already checked for you.) Some weeks you have to choose between two possibilities. At the bottom of each column, put the total number of boxes you have checked.

| week | text | blogpost | comments | class |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Introductions | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | Marcel Proust, "Combray" | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>January 19: Contract due</i> | | | | |
| 3 | Roberto Arlt, <i>Mad Toy</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <i>or</i> André Breton, <i>Nadja</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 | María Luisa Bombal, <i>The Shrouded Woman</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 | Alberto Moravia, <i>Agostino</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <i>or</i> Carmen Laforet, <i>Nada</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 | Joseph Zobel, <i>Black Shack Alley</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <i>or</i> José María Arguedas, <i>Deep Rivers</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>February 16: Last date to make changes to your contract</i> | | | | |
| 7 | Mercè Rodoreda, <i>The Time of the Doves</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 | Clarice Lispector, <i>The Hour of the Star</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <i>or</i> Italo Calvino, <i>If on a Winter's Night a Traveller</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 | Marguerite Duras, <i>The Lover</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <i>or</i> Norman Manea, <i>The Trenchcoat</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 | Ricardo Piglia, <i>Money to Burn</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 11 | José Eduardo Agualusa, <i>The Book of Chameleons</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <i>or</i> José Saramago, <i>Death with Interruptions</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12 | Valeria Luiselli, <i>Faces in the Crowd</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <i>or</i> Elena Ferrante, <i>My Brilliant Friend</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13 | Conclusions | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Totals: | | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Your name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

On the basis of the above, you will receive a grade of: _____

Signed by Professor Jon Beasley-Murray: _____

Date: _____