

Don Juan and Modernity
MWF 10:00-10:50 | KAUKU 237

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OFFICE HOURS: MWF: 2-4 (or by appointment)
OFFICE: 209 Kauke Hall

Course Description: Don Juan remains one of the most enduring literary archetypes of world literature. Since its inception in seventeenth-century Spain, it has been revisited and reinvented by numerous writers and artists outside of Spain, including Mozart, Molière, Alexandre Dumas, Lord Byron and Søren Kierkegaard. The widely popular autobiography of Giacomo Casanova, which recounts in minute detail the sexual exploits of a real-life 18th century Italian adventurer and socialite, represents the most noteworthy example of the sociological phenomenon of *donjuanismo* and attests to the cultural cache that the figure of the womanizer has long enjoyed in the popular imagination. This course will examine the Don Juan tradition primarily in Spanish literature from its origins in the seventeenth-century drama *El burlador de Sevilla* to contemporary manifestations in post-Franco Spain. In the process, students will acquire a foundational knowledge of the main periods of Spanish literature from the Baroque to Postmodernism. Moreover, the selected texts will allow us to discuss and critique universal ideals of masculinity and femininity, as well as other concepts relevant to contemporary society, such as patriarchy, liberalism, free will, and power (social, economic, political, etc.). We will discover through the selected works that Don Juan has been used as either a vehicle of social criticism or as a pretext for promoting an orthodox view of history and national identity. Therefore our readings will serve as a lens through which to interpret and understand Spanish culture during key moments of Spanish history. In the end, our examination of the various constructs of Don Juan will lead us to see how literature mirrors the enduring social divisions that have come to define Spain in the modern age as well as reinforces and articulates the progressive and regressive tendencies that have underscored Spain's protracted transition from absolutism to constitutionalism. Prerequisites: Spanish 223 (Readings in Spanish Culture), Spanish 224 (Readings in Latin American Culture), or permission of the instructor. **Course taught in Spanish.**

Critical Approach and Forewarning: Unlike the idealized and sentimentalized Don Juan that tends to turn up in literary and cultural contexts outside of Spain, the *Spanish* Don Juan is a villain, a manipulator, and a womanizer with few if any redeeming qualities. For this reason it is important to understand that this course constitutes an inquiry into the utilization of the Don Juan figure to generate critical perspectives on modernity. This is not a course that celebrates the romanticized Don Juan, but rather one that attempts to understand the lessons and morals of the stories that we will be reading in the socio-historic context in which they were generated or regenerated. Wherever possible, we will attempt to bring feminist perspectives to bear on the assigned texts in order to bring them into focus in ways that will help us develop useful and relevant viewpoints on the contemporary world. However, as a course that focuses on literature and culture, it is important to recognize that art, by definition, is supposed to stir us, elevate us, and prompt us to reflect on the world. Writers and filmmakers, to that end, often strive to challenge us in unconventional, unanticipated, and even uncomfortable ways. All of the texts that we will study in this course deliberately push boundaries in their own way. Likewise, some of the stories revolving around the exploits of Don Juan may trigger strong emotional responses due to their explicit sexual content and the coercive acts perpetrated towards women that they portray. Therefore a certain critical distance and intellectual maturity is required on the part of the students in order for this to be a successful course. I encourage any student who has concerns about reading and viewing such material to confer with me during office hours. All students are required to complete all of the assigned readings and viewings, without exception.

Student Learning Objectives: 1) To understand the evolution of Don Juan in light of the cultural norms and social transformations in Spain from the Baroque to the present; 2) to acquire a working knowledge of the major periods of Spanish literature and history along with a selection of representative authors; 3) to gain

considerable practice in literary analysis and research; 4) to gain advanced practice in reading, speaking, writing, and listening comprehension as well as strengthened command of vocabulary for everyday communication, literary analysis, and higher-order reasoning. All of the assignments and class activities are designed to achieve these goals. Furthermore, it is also highly recommended that you review grammatical topics independently as needed in consultation with the professor (during office hours).

Expectations and Required Work: All assignments must be completed before class on the dates indicated on the day-by-day. Generally, preparing for class entails the following: 1) actively reading and taking careful notes on the primary reading or viewing assignments; 2) carefully reading any assigned articles; 3) completing and submitting any homework assignments. As a discussion-based course, it is expected that you come to class ready to share your ideas on the assigned readings. It is also expected that you bring copies of the assigned readings to class along with your notes. **NOTE:** Each class session will require a minimum of 3-4 hours of careful preparation.

Grade Distribution (standard 10 point scale with + and -; below 60 is a failing grade):

Class Participation and Attendance.....	10%
Journal Blog.....	10%
Exams.....	30%
Interpretive Papers.....	20%
Research Paper.....	20%
Annotated Bibliography.....	10%

Primary Texts (available for purchase at the Wilson Bookstore, unless provided via open access):

1. *El burlador de Sevilla*, Tirso de Molina
2. *Don Juan Tenorio*, José Zorrilla [*In lieu of reading the text, you will view a televised performance via Youtube.*]
3. *El estudiante de Salamanca*, José de Espronceda (provided)
4. *Sor Aparición*, Emilia Pardo Bazán (provided)
5. *Tristana*, Benito Pérez Galdós
6. *Sonata de invierno*, Ramón del Valle-Inclán
7. *La esfinge Maragata*, Concha Espina (provided)
8. *Niebla*, Miguel de Unamuno
9. *Nada menos que todo un hombre*, Miguel de Unamuno (provided)

NOTE: Additional required secondary readings are posted on the day-by-day.

Attendance: Regular attendance and participation are essential for success in this and any course taken at The College of Wooster. Therefore, daily class attendance is required. Absences due only to a documented illness or injury, or a situation or circumstance reported to the Office of the Dean of Students, may be excused. Please keep in mind that absences due to co-curricular activities are not automatically excused. I will assess the individual merit of each request in accordance with the College’s policy regarding conflicts with academic responsibilities (see below). If you anticipate missing more than two classes due to involvement in an official co-curricular activity, I encourage you to make an appointment to see me during office hours to discuss your situation. Please understand that I am extremely reluctant to excuse more than any two such absences, as success in this course is predicated on your fullest possible commitment. For every unexcused absence, you will receive a zero for class participation and a zero for the homework assignment.

NOTE: Accumulating nine unexcused absences will result in an automatic **F** in the course (no exceptions). If absent, it is your responsibility to contact one of your classmates in order to ascertain whether the assignment was altered in any way and what was covered in class. Also, habitual tardiness or habitual coming and going during class (i.e. leaving to go to the bathroom) will result in a reduction of your class participation grade. It is imperative for your success and for the success of the course that you be present and focused for the entire class period. As a discussion based course, your peers need you to be present—in mind and body—everyday.

Class Participation and Classroom Dynamic: All assigned readings are to be completed by the dates indicated on the day-by-day. The success of this course depends on your daily preparation and active

participation. In class, you will be asked to engage with your peers about the assigned readings and viewings, remaining within the prescribed textual, contextual, thematic, and/or theoretical framework. In order for learning to take place, it is crucial that all parties involved have a genuine interest in the subject matter and do the assigned work consistently and conscientiously. Above all, I expect you to show initiative and to contribute *substantively* to the class discussions on a regular basis. You can expect to find a relaxed, informal atmosphere in the classroom, and I expect students to actively critique and evaluate the subject matter and express their personal views openly, coherently, and convincingly. Furthermore, I expect the full and equal participation of all of the students in the class, not just a select few. I view your willingness to volunteer as a sign that you are prepared and have completed the required assignments. Your unwillingness or reluctance to volunteer will be viewed as a lack of preparation and interest in participating actively in the class. Your class participation, therefore, will be evaluated based on the substance of your contributions and the rigor with which you engage with your peers. To that end, it is strongly recommended that you do the homework assignments thoroughly and that you think carefully about what you might want to say about them before coming to class. As the professor, my role is to facilitate discussions, lend support to you as you develop and hone your ability to read, understand and interpret complex literary texts, and set the intellectual parameters within which you will carry out your own inquiries and reach your own unique understanding of the assigned material. In other words, the purpose of the course is not for me to share with you everything that I know about the subject matter, but rather to help you make your own discoveries in a controlled, systematic and relevant way. **NOTE:** Having little or nothing to say during class is the best way to lose what should be easy points. Conversely, you can do much to ensure your overall success by coming to class well prepared and willing to discuss and debate. Participation will be assessed periodically throughout the semester, and the following explains how the grades you receive should be interpreted. Receiving a particular grade means that all or some of the description for that particular range applies to you. Please note that absences entail an automatic and cumulative reduction in your grade:

20-19-18 points (A): Student participates regularly and voluntarily and is noticeably well prepared on a daily basis; student's comments are informed, rational, relevant and to the point; student displays a sound knowledge of the assigned terms, readings and films; student arrives on time, remains focused throughout the duration of the class and does not take any questionable intermissions (i.e. bathroom breaks); student has no unexcused absences.

17-16 points (B): Student participates less regularly and voluntarily but is noticeably well prepared on a daily basis; student's comments are informed, rational, relevant and to the point; student displays at the very least an emerging knowledge of the assigned terms, readings and films; the student might have failed to arrive on time on one or two occasions or failed to remain present or focused throughout the duration of the class; or, student has had 1-2 unexcused absences since the last evaluation resulting in an automatic grade reduction.

15-14 points (C): Student participates voluntarily at least occasionally, and is noticeably well prepared at least some of the time; student's comments are usually but not always informed, rational, relevant and to the point; student might only display a minimal or emerging knowledge of the assigned terms, readings and films; student might not always arrive to class on time, might not remain focused throughout the duration of the class, or might be in the habit of taking questionable intermissions (i.e. bathroom breaks); or, student has had 3-4 unexcused absences since the last evaluation resulting in an automatic grade reduction.

13-12 points (D): Student participates infrequently and only very rarely is noticeably well prepared; student's comments might not always be informed, rational, relevant or to the point; student might often display an inadequate knowledge of the assigned terms, readings and films; student might not always arrive to class on time, might not remain focused throughout the duration of the class, or might be in the habit of taking questionable intermissions (i.e. bathroom breaks); or, student has had 5-6 unexcused absences since the last evaluation resulting in an automatic grade reduction.

11-0 points (F): Student participates infrequently and is always noticeably unprepared; student's comments are usually uninformed, irrational, irrelevant or beside the point; student usually displays an insufficient knowledge of the assigned terms, readings and films; student might not always arrive to class on time, might not remain focused throughout the duration of the class, or might be in the habit of taking questionable intermissions (i.e. bathroom breaks); or, student has had 6+ unexcused absences since the last evaluation resulting in an automatic grade reduction.

Journal Blog: Acquiring competency in a foreign language entails sustained practice in *producing* the language. Such practice also leads, over time, to improved overall control and command of the language. Moreover, such practice allows you to develop and exercise higher-order critical thinking skills in the language. In the interest of achieving increased fluency and a sound ability to think rationally in Spanish, you will be required to write and maintain a journal and engage with your peers on the course blog. Early in the semester, I will assign each student to a group of three, and over the course of three weeks each student will be required to post original comments to the blog and respond to those of the two other students in his or her group. The groups will be changed every three weeks. The goal of this exercise is twofold: 1) to practice/develop your writing and critical thinking skills in Spanish without significant consequences for common grammatical or content-related mistakes; 2) to prepare for the class discussions. Your activity on the blog will be carefully monitored, and you will receive a grade for your contributions in three-week

cycles. Each post must be submitted before the beginning of class and will not receive credit if submitted late. Each cycle of homework assignments will be graded, and the following explains the meaning of each of the possible outcomes:

90-100 points (A): By and large, student has completed thoughtful, well-developed, substantive, and well-written posts (with some but relatively few grammatical errors) that demonstrate close familiarity with the assigned texts. Specifically, each post demonstrates cohesion and contains a clear beginning, middle and end, uses predominantly correct grammar and punctuation, thoughtful engagement with the assigned text, and serves as an excellent point of departure for the forthcoming class discussion. Also, the student briefly discusses his or her opinion regarding the assigned text. Finally, Student has met deadline for every post.

80-89 points (B): Student's posts show modest deficiencies in the above areas, but overall are good. **Or**, student has failed to submit one assignment or has missed the deadline for one assignment.

70-79 points (C): Student's posts show more than modest deficiencies in the above areas, but overall are acceptable. **Or**, student has failed to submit between two and three assignments or has missed the deadline for two or three assignments.

60-69 points (D): Student's posts show significant deficiencies in the above areas and are only borderline acceptable. **Or**, student has failed to submit between three and five assignments or has missed the deadline for more than three assignments.

0-59 points (F): Student's posts show significant deficiencies in the above areas, and overall are unacceptable. **Or**, student has failed to submit between six and nine assignments or has missed the deadline for nearly all of the assignments.

Exams: Three take-home exams covering the assigned texts will be given over the course of the semester. Preparing effectively for these exams entails: 1) careful and systematic study of the assigned texts; 2) careful completion of the journal assignments; 3) active participation in, and reflection on, the class discussions. Furthermore, it is highly recommended that you create your own system to carefully manage the information that you receive through the assigned readings and in class. Such a system might include written summaries and/or bullet points of the most important/relevant information from the readings and class discussions. You will likely see that success on these exams is directly proportional to the amount, and quality, of work that you put into the class on an ongoing basis. The questions for each exam will be distributed no less than four days prior to the due date and will focus on a particular sequence of readings. You may be asked to analyze a given text with respect to a particular concept, paradigm or critical orientation. You may also be asked to trace/develop conceptual continuities between texts. It must be stressed that these assignments are both analytical and informative in nature. Irrelevant and/or excessive inclusion of plot summary, or simplistically restating what was said in class, is unacceptable and will result in a substantial grade reduction. The goal of these exams is to foster the development of writing and critical thinking skills as well as the retention of information. The exams will be graded on originality, the overall quality and rigor of the responses, and control of the language. The grading rubric for each exam will be posted to the course website well before each exam is due.

Interpretive Papers: You will submit four three-page argumentative essays over the course of the semester that analyze a passage, or a series of passages, from one or more of the assigned texts. For these papers, you are expected to devise an effective thesis, a coherent and logical argument in support of the thesis, relevant observations that support and enhance your argument, and reasonable and relevant conclusions. All essays must be word processed and double-spaced. Times 12 is the required font size with standard margins of one inch (left and right & top and bottom). Both the quality of thought and the quality of your writing will be evaluated and graded. You may confer with me during office hours as you develop your papers for clarification on specific grammar points or to receive informal feedback of a very general nature on your argument. You may also go to the language assistant for specific questions on grammar. The grading rubric for these assignments can be found on the course website. **NOTES:** 1) For these assignments, no unassigned outside sources should be consulted or cited, and you will submit only a final draft; 2) One of the four papers may be revised/rewritten and resubmitted at the end of the semester. However, if you opt to resubmit one of the four papers, it must be accompanied by a reflective essay, in English, on what you have done over the course of the semester to improve your command of Spanish grammar and an assessment of how your revised paper has improved as a result of your overall effort; 3) All of the written work that you submit for a grade in this course must be entirely your own. If it *seems* to me that you have received help with your writing from someone not enrolled in the class you, will be asked to see me during office hours and if in the course of our conversation my perception is confirmed, then penalties will be imposed, which may include failure on the assignment and a meeting with the Dean for Curriculum and Academic Engagement to discuss academic dishonesty. Conversely, you are permitted and encouraged to ask any of your peers enrolled in the

course to read and comment on your rough drafts. Guidelines for peer review can be found on the course website.

Research Paper: Each student is required to complete an independent research project on a topic related to the topic of Don Juan and modernity. You will devise an original question that your research paper will ultimately answer. Your project may focus on one or more of the assigned primary texts, covering a topic left unexplored in the class, or it may focus on a text or cultural issue not covered in the course that is related in some way to Spain or even extends beyond Spain. You are encouraged to think creatively and broadly about your topic. You must email me your question by no later than February 13, at which time you will also schedule an appointment to confer with me about successfully completing the project. Also, you must turn in a rough draft of the introduction and a detailed outline of the paper during the week of March 30 (you will be given an assigned day at a later point). While the rough draft of your introduction and outline will not be graded, I will take note of their overall quality as well as the feedback and guidance that I offer you, which I will refer to and take into consideration as I grade the paper at the end of the semester. The general parameters of this assignment are the same as those of the argumentative papers, but with two important caveats: 1) the minimum required length is ten pages; 2) your argument and analysis should be supported by peer-reviewed academic sources that come from the MLA and/or JSTOR databases (articles) **and** the CONSORT and/or OhioLINK databases (books). Research projects that rely primarily on Google and/or non-peer-reviewed sources will receive an **F**. Furthermore, severe penalties will be imposed on any project that was clearly done at the last minute. As a semester-long project that comprises 20% of your final grade, the outcome will depend on your sustained and systematic commitment to completing it in a manner that is commensurate to its relative importance. Projects that merit an **A** will demonstrate excellence in the following areas: organization, cohesion, clarity, rigor, complexity, depth, insightfulness, and expression. Essays must be word processed (using a 12-point font) and formatted according to the specifications of the most recent edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. All papers must have at least eight bibliographical sources, and these sources must be academic. As a general rule, if it comes from one of the above named databases it is considered academic. *Wikipedia* or any other encyclopedia can and should be consulted during the developmental stages of the project. However, you will not receive credit for encyclopedia entries in your bibliography. The criteria used to grade the final paper can be found on the course website. The final paper is due in hard copy form by no later than 12:00 PM on Monday, **May 4**. **NOTE:** Resources related to academic writing can be found on the course website as well as the website for the Writing Center.

Annotated Bibliography: The annotated bibliography will be completed in tandem with your research paper and is due by no later than noon on **May 1**. See the course website for a link to a website that provides an overview on how to complete an annotated bibliography. Your annotated bibliography must include a minimum of eight sources and conform to the MLA's formatting rules and conventions.

Guidelines for All Written Assignments: All essays must be word-processed, double-spaced, and stapled. The required font is Times 12 with standard margins of 1 inch (left and right) & 1 inch (top and bottom). All papers must follow the MLA rules of citation and formatting. Papers that do not adhere to MLA guidelines may incur a significant loss of points or may not be read at all. For each essay, the quality of writing will be evaluated along with the quality of interpretation, analysis and insight.

Statement on Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the copying of a sentence (partial or full) or segment of discourse from another source without giving proper credit to its origins. The college has a zero tolerance policy on plagiarism. Any act of plagiarism will receive an automatic **F** on the assignment and will be reported to the Committee on Academic Standards, which may recommend that the student fail the course or be dismissed from the college.

Policy on Acceptance of Late Work: All written assignments are due when specified on the day-by-day. Points will be deducted, as follows, for work received after the established deadlines: ten points for papers turned in **6 hours late or less**, fifteen for papers turned in **6-12 hours late**, twenty for papers turned in **12-24 hours late**, and twenty-five for papers turned in **24-48 hours late**. All papers turned in more than 48 hours

late will receive an automatic F. Remember, too, that sliding a paper under my door does not mean that it has been received and that late papers can be turned electronically so that the time of submission is documented.

Policy Regarding Conflicts with Academic Responsibilities: The College of Wooster is an academic institution and its fundamental purpose is to stimulate its students to reach the highest standard of intellectual achievement. As an academic institution with this purpose, the College expects students to give the highest priority to their academic responsibilities. When conflicts arise between academic commitments and complementary programs (including athletic, cultural, educational, and volunteer activities), students, faculty, staff, and administrators all share the responsibility of minimizing and resolving them. As a student you have the responsibility to inform the faculty member of potential conflicts as soon as you are aware of them, and to discuss and work with the faculty member to identify alternative ways to fulfill your academic commitments without sacrificing the academic integrity and rigor of the course.

Academic Integrity at The College of Wooster: Members of The College of Wooster community are committed to the high standards of academic integrity and to this end have accepted a Code of Academic Integrity, which can be found online at <http://www.wooster.edu/policies/coai.pdf>. As a student at The College of Wooster you are a part of this tradition and are expected to be familiar with the Code, to understand what constitutes academically dishonest behavior, and to avoid such behavior. Confirmed violations of the code will result in appropriate punishment and may constitute grounds for failure in the course. If you have any questions about the code and what it prohibits please contact me or your academic advisor.

IMPORTANT:

- 1) The structure of the course and its governing policies are designed to accomplish the proposed objectives and assure the fair and equal treatment of the students as responsible adults. Your presence in the class is an indication that you understand and agree to the requirements of the class as stipulated in the syllabus.
- 2) Cell phones and any communication devices must be turned off and out of sight at all times. No exceptions. Points will be deducted from your class participation grade whenever I see or hear your cell phone during the semester.
- 3) The Learning Center offers services designed to help students improve their overall academic performance. Sessions are structured to promote principles of effective learning and academic management. Any student on campus may schedule sessions at the Learning Center.
- 4) If you are a student with a documented disability, please register with Pam Rose, Director of the Learning Center. The Learning Center is located in APEX and is the office that will assist you in developing a plan to address your academic needs.
- 5) It is expected that students will demonstrate courtesy, respect and professionalism towards their peers at all times, in accordance with the Wooster Ethic. As the professor of the course, I will do and expect the same. In general, a constructive attitude is appreciated by all.