

ENGL 5000-M01: Research Methods: Victorian Perspectives on Spain

Monday, 14:00-16:45 - Fall 2014

3 credits; required for the Masters of English

Instructor: Paul Vita, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: Monday, 17:00-19:00 (or by appointment)

**Description:** An introduction to the resources and methods of research central to scholarly study of literature in English. The primary goal of this course is to familiarize the graduate student with basic research methods for English and literary studies. By studying models of criticism and practicing its component elements, students will be prepared to undertake conference papers and articles as well as larger research projects, including an M.A. thesis or a doctoral dissertation. Special attention is devoted to bibliographical tools, critical methodologies, and libraries and other resources available in Madrid and elsewhere. The course also provides opportunities to explore current issues in the field of English, reviews the conventions of writing about literature, and introduces students to the profession of literary scholarship and research.

**Special Focus:** How do Victorian writers imagine Spain and its people? An exotic land with a Moorish past, an oriental other? A nation defining itself or resisting imposed definitions by others? An imperial project gone awry? A country torn by civil war and political intrigue, which, in spite of its sunshine, remained benighted by Catholicism and stuck in the Middle Ages? And, what do Victorian constructions, attitudes, interpretations, and assumptions about Spain betray about the writers themselves and their own culture? Students in Madrid, living "in between" cultures, are uniquely positioned to formulate research questions responding to these issues; they also have exceptional access to print and electronic resources as they pursue answers. George Borrow's *Bible in Spain* (1842) will serve as a shared primary text to open the discussion of the cross-cultural issues at stake, apply theory, and explore approaches and methodologies to the study of literature. Students are welcome to focus their research on other authors or texts, but, if they do focus on Borrow's account of his travels, they may wish to enter their essay in the international competition held every other year by the George Borrow Trust (next deadline is 1 March 2015).

**Learning Outcomes:** At the end of the course students will have demonstrated through their writing and presentations advanced skills in analyzing literature through a variety of methodological approaches and theoretical lenses. They will also have become better able to define research questions and approaches to answering them. These outcomes will be achieved through:

- Reading works by Victorian authors as well as recent and contemporary scholarship responding to them.
- Reading major theoretical works that informs these works and the Victorian period.
- Completing exercises in which students demonstrate their ability to interpret literary texts, their awareness of approaches to scholarly research, and their ability to use the resources available to literary scholars.
- Completing a research project through which students demonstrates their ability to formulate a research question and sustain and support an argument, following conventions of writing about literature.
- Participating in class discussions about the texts, sources, and methods of literary scholarship; the profession of literary studies; and the role literature in the university and society.

**Required Texts:** George Borrow, *The Bible in Spain* (any edition)  
*MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (Seventh Edition)  
Additional Readings to be posted on-line.

**Texts to Explore:** Julia Clara Busk Byrne, *Cosas de España Illustrative of Spain and the Spaniards as They Are* (1866)  
Joseph Blanco White, *Vargas: A Tale of Spain* (1822)  
Lord Byron, *Don Juan*, Cantos I and II (1819) and *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1818)  
Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quixote* (1605, 1615)  
William George Clark, *Gazpacho; or, Summer Months in Spain* (1850)  
George Eliot, *The Spanish Gypsy* (1868)  
Richard Ford, *A Handbook for Travellers in Spain* (1845)  
Washington Irving, *Tales from the Alhambra* (1832) and *The Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada* (1829)  
Alain-René Lesage, *Gil Blas* (Smollett translation, 1748)  
George Henry Lewes, *The Spanish Drama* (1846)  
Joaquin Telesforo de Trueba y Cosío, *The Romance of History: Spain* (1830)  
Anthony Trollope, "John Bull on the Gaudalquivir" (1860)

**Course Requirements:** Class Preparation and Participation  
Completion of Research Exercises  
Completion of Final Project/Presentation

## Research Exercises

- Exercise 1: Provide a close reading of a short literary text. (2-3 pages)
- Exercise 2: With your classmates, create a “George Borrow” entry for *The Victorian Web*.
- Exercise 3: Using digital resources to which you have access (journals, novels, other writings), explore a specific aspect of Spain or Spaniards that you identify as prevalent in the Victorian period. (2-3 pages + Bibliography)
- Exercise 4: With your classmates, create a definitive annotated bibliography of primary and secondary sources for scholars interested in British constructions of Spain in the nineteenth-century. (no limit)

## Research Project

- Research Proposal (250 words), along with working bibliography.
- Presentation: An 8-10 page conference paper. The paper should develop an original thesis and define its contribution to the field of Victorian Studies.
- A final version of the paper incorporating class feedback, no more than 20 pages, along with a 200-word abstract, should be submitted within one week of the presentation.

All written work should follow the guidelines of the *MLA Handbook* for scholarly form and correct citation of primary and secondary materials. Students who anticipate not meeting an assignment deadline must inform the instructor by e-mail before the due date and identify when the work will be submitted; otherwise, the grade for the essay will be lowered. All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course.

**Final Grades:** Exercises/Presentations/Class Participation: 50%  
Research Project: 50%

**Library Resources:** SLU Madrid Library’s collection is a modest one; nonetheless it contains several critical and theoretical works essential graduate students in this course. In addition to the *PMLA*, students have access to all of the electronic journals, resources, and databases available at Saint Louis University. The SLU Madrid librarian will review how best to use these materials during one of our classes. Students also have full privileges at the Humanities Library at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid and reading privileges at all of the major libraries. Interlibrary loan and the British Library Documents Supply Service are available to students, but only for items (articles or individual book chapters) listed in research proposals and approved by the instructor.

**Class Preparation and Participation:** Research Methods is a workshop/discussion-based course; student learning results from collaboration among the students in the class and the professor. Thus, class attendance and participation is essential. Two absences for any reason signals that the student plans to withdraw from (or fail) the course. If a student anticipates missing a class, he/she should notify the instructor at least 24-hours in advance.

**Blackboard Learn:** All course handouts, including this syllabus, will be posted on Blackboard Learn, available through MY SLU. In addition, students will be able to access assignments, a course calendar, their grades, and additional resources on-line via this learning technology tool.

**E-mail:** Announcements and additional information will often be handled by e-mail. Students should check their “@slu.edu” e-mail regularly.

**Students with Special Needs:** In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Academic Dean's Office (San Ignacio Hall) or by going to [http://spain.slu.edu/academics/learning\\_resources.html](http://spain.slu.edu/academics/learning_resources.html).

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at +34 915 54 58 58, ext. 230, e-mail [counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu](mailto:counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu), or visit the Counseling Office (San Ignacio Hall). Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter

from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.

**Statement on Academic Integrity:** The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity, such as would be expected at a Jesuit, Catholic institution. As members of this community, students, faculty, and staff members share the responsibility to maintain this environment. Academic dishonesty violates it. Although not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, it can be said in general that soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of any work submitted toward academic credit is dishonest. It not only violates the mutual trust necessary between faculty and students but also undermines the validity of the University's evaluation of students and takes unfair advantage of fellow students. Further, it is the responsibility of any student who observes such dishonest conduct to call it to the attention of a faculty member or administrator.

Examples of academic dishonesty would be copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed-book exam, submitting materials authored by or editorially revised by another person but presented as the student's own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, tampering with another student's work, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, and colluding with another student or students to engage in an act of academic dishonesty.

Where there is clear indication of such dishonesty, a faculty member or administrator has the responsibility to apply appropriate sanctions. Investigations of violations will be conducted in accord with standards and procedures of the school or college through which the course or research is offered. Recommendations of sanctions to be imposed will be made to the Academic Dean of the Madrid Campus in which the student is enrolled. Possible sanctions for a violation of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University.

The complete Academic Honesty Policy can be found at the following link:  
[http://spain.slu.edu/academics/academic\\_advising/docs/Academic\\_integrity.pdf](http://spain.slu.edu/academics/academic_advising/docs/Academic_integrity.pdf)

**Statement on Assessment:** Saint Louis University - Madrid Campus is committed to excellent and innovative educational practices. In order to maintain quality academic offerings and to conform to relevant accreditation requirements, we regularly assess our teaching, services, and programs for evidence of student learning outcomes achievement. For this purpose we keep on file anonymized representative examples of student work from all courses and programs such as: assignments, papers, exams, portfolios, and results from student surveys, focus groups, and reflective exercises. *Thus, copies of your work for this course, including exercises submitted and the final research paper may be kept on file for institutional research, assessment and accreditation purposes.* If you prefer that Saint Louis University-Madrid Campus does not keep your work on file, you will need to communicate your decision in writing to your professor.

### **Class Schedule/Outline:**

Monday, September 8: Course Introduction and Goals

Monday, September 15: Research Tools  
*PMLA*: Browse through the last four issues.  
Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation"  
MLA Handbook, Chapters 1 and 2  
Exercise 1: Close Reading  
*Last day to drop a class without a grade of W or to add a class*

Friday, September 19: Class Visit to the *Biblioteca Nacional/Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza*.

Monday, September 22: Class begins at 2:15 and ends at 5:00 pm.  
Historical Backgrounds and Contexts: Victorian England/Nineteenth-Century Spain  
Student Presentations on the 1830's and 1840's (both Spain and England).  
Video Conference with Alexander Wulff, Director of University Writing Services  
Introduction to the Graduate Writing Center in SLU-St. Louis

Friday, September 26: *No Classes.*

Monday, September 29: First Responses: *The Bible in Spain* (via video link in the US)

Tuesday, September 30: *Last day to choose audit (AU) or pass/no pass (P/NP) options*

- Friday, October 3:* Inauguration of SLU's 33<sup>rd</sup> President, Dr. Fred Pestello
- Monday, October 6: Recent Borrow Criticism  
Student summaries and critiques of critical responses to Borrow.
- Monday, October 13: Borrow on the Victorian Web  
Exercise 2: Webpage Due
- Friday, October 17: Class Visit to the *Museo de Romanticismo*
- Monday, October 20: Narrative Theory  
Bakhtin, "Discourse and the Novel" and "Theory of the Novel"  
Benjamin, "The Story-teller"  
Guest Speaker: Jeremy Tambling, Professor Emeritus, University of Manchester
- Monday, October 27: Presentation and Discussion of Research Questions
- Thursday, October 30:* Last day to drop a class and receive a grade of W
- Monday, November 3: Exercise 3: Archival Research Project  
Presentation and Discussion of Victorian Constructions of Spain
- Monday, November 10:* Holiday
- Monday, November 17: Presentation of Research Proposals  
Guest Presentation on Research: Dr. Anne Dewey
- Monday, November 24: Forays into the Profession  
Guest Presentation on Research: Dr. Anne McCabe
- Monday, December 1: Writing Workshop/Individual Paper Conferences  
Guest Presentation on Research: Dr. Andrew Power
- Monday, December 8:* Holiday
- Monday, December 15: Conclusions, Evaluations, and Celebration  
Presentation of Papers
- Monday, December 22: Deadline for Submission of Revised Presentations with Bibliographies