

## Spanish 401: Literature of Multicultural Iberia



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synchronous meetings: TR 9:45–11:00A

For some 700 years, the Iberian Peninsula (today Spain and Portugal) was a Muslim country, called al-Andalus, where a uniquely sophisticated and luxurious culture flourished. The political, cultural, and social presence of Islam on the Iberian Peninsula was critical in the development of Spanish and European cultures. Much of what we recognize as typically “Spanish” has its roots in Islam and in the early history of Muslim arrival into the Iberian Peninsula beginning in 711 and lasting, in many different ways, to the present. The fraught question of how to name and describe the interconfessional relationships that emerged among Muslims, Jews, and Christians throughout this period—convivencia, tolerance, coexistence, persecution, to name only a few—points to the complex and contingent circumstances that governed and shaped their interactions. Although the Muslim political presence in Spain came to an end in 1492 with the defeat of the Kingdom of Granada by the Catholic Monarchs Isabella and Ferdinand, the last Muslims did not leave Spain until 1614. Ongoing contact between the Iberian Peninsula the Muslim world across the Strait of Gibraltar continues to this day, and the debate continues to rage about what constitutes “true” Spanish and Iberian identities.

We will read primary sources written by Muslim and Catholic legal scholars, Muslims forcibly converted to Christianity, Catholic literary virtuosos, and men redeemed from captivity in North

Africa. Some of these works are among the most widely read literary texts of the period—Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra's *Novelas ejemplares*, *El Abencerraje*—while others languished unread in manuscript archives and unpublished until the last quarter of the twentieth century. All of these texts grapple with questions of identity, conversion, faith, exclusion, and tolerance—fundamental issues with which our society continues to wrestle. We will read our primary works with an eye to those issues, while also engaging with secondary readings that deal either with specific questions of early modern Spain or with questions of difference and assimilation. Even as we attempt to contextualize and unpack these texts within their own particular historical, social, and political environments, so too will we draw connections between these issues as they were discussed half a millennium ago and the ways in which we deal with them in the twenty-first century.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

After completing this course, students should be able to

- Perform close textual analysis as a means of identifying and deciphering the aesthetic, political, and cultural importance of literature as a means of cultural production.
- Apply a variety of reading strategies, including recognizing the meaning of words in context, learning to skim and scan materials, making inferences, recognizing the organizational structure of texts, etc.
- Demonstrate advanced writing processes including generating ideas, gathering, evaluating, and organizing material; drafting, revising, editing and proofreading text.
- Demonstrate mastery of aspects of Spanish grammar, including spelling, accents, and vocabulary, while also being able to recognize alternative, historical forms.
- Examine and evaluate discourses about intercultural, religious, and ethnic tolerance, coexistence, and difference in texts from the fourteenth through the seventeenth century on the Iberian Peninsula
- Identify and interpret key features of the Arabic alphabet as used in Aljamiado script and learn the Arabic alphabet to collaborate with classmates to decipher short pieces of Aljamiado text, thereby gaining access to texts produced by Iberian Muslims, rather than only descriptions of them by Iberian Catholics.
- Apply vocabulary and knowledge of literary criticism as it relates to these contexts.
- Summarize and relate key events that formed the historical context in which the primary sources were produced, and appraise the relationship between text and context.
- Integrate new insights about intercultural, religious, and ethnic tolerance, coexistence, and difference into a contemporary context in the United States and modern-day Spain.

### **Readings:**

Required textbooks include:

- Chris Lowney, *A Vanished World: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Medieval Spain*, Oxford UP, ISBN: 978-0-19-531191-4
- *El Abencerraje* (Novela y romancero), Cátedra, ISBN: 8437602386
- Matthew Carr, *Blood and Faith: The Purging of Muslim Spain 1492–1614*, Hurst, ISBN: 978-1-84904-801-9

These should be available through the Holy Cross Bookstore or vendors like Amazon.com or Bookshop.org. If you run into trouble ordering them, let me know, and I can try to make a limited number of chapters available in PDF on Canvas until the books come in.

All other readings (and translations, where possible) will be made available as PDFs on the course Canvas site. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the English translations (where available) out of class if the original language hinders comprehension of key features of the text. All class discussions will take place in Spanish and will refer to the text in its original language. *Pagination always refers to the internal pagination of the original document, not the number of pages in the PDF file.*

Note that I will occasionally suggest as “Optional” readings in addition to the required reading. Students are encouraged to take advantage of these additional resources, especially when it comes time to write an essay, as they often either shed additional light on the primary sources or give more depth to the historical context we are learning about. I will not check whether or not you’ve done this reading.

## Specifications (“Spec”) Grading System

Your final grade will be determined by a method called “spec” grading. Course grades will be determined by specification grading, an assessment system in which assignments are graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory scale according to previously circulated expectations. One aim of specification grading is to give you control over your grades. Grades are not arbitrarily assigned – they are earned by the work that you do. Further, you get to decide how much time and energy you want to commit to the course in order to achieve the grade you desire.

Course grades will be determined by your satisfactory completion of the following course

Below is the rubric for course grades:

	A-	B-	C-	D-
Forum posts	5	4	3	2
Essays	2	2	1	1
Attendance	>90%	80–89.9%	>70–79.9%	<60%
Participation	S	S	S	U
Arabic alphabet exercises	4	3	2	≤1
Aljamiado transcription exercises	2	2	1	0
Transcription of manuscript	Full	≥50%	≤50%	
Reflection essay	S	S	S	U

Your highest grade will only be as high as your lowest spec. For example, if you achieve every other component satisfactorily but only attend 69% of class, your final grade will at best be a D+. To achieve a certain grade level, students must complete the listed number of satisfactory assignments from each of the 8 different categories (i.e. students who want to earn a B– must satisfactorily complete at least 6 forum posts, attend at least 80% of class meetings, participate satisfactorily, do at least 4 Arabic alphabet exercises, 2 Aljamiado transcription exercises, write an essay reflecting on that process, and transcribe at least 50% of their assigned manuscript). When students have completed the minimum number of satisfactory assignments for their desired final grade, they do not need to submit any more assignments of that type.

Once you have attained a certain grade level, you can improve your grade within that letter range (i.e. move from a B- to a B or B+, but not to A-). This can be done by meeting the criteria for the forum entries and attendance for the next grade level. For instance, a student in the B- range would move to a B by writing 8 forum entries OR attending more than 90% of class meetings and would earn a B+ by doing both of those things. The one exception to this rule is moving from A- to an A. In order to earn an A, you must have satisfactorily completed all your forum entries and attend every class meeting (excused absences excepted).

**Below are brief outlines of expectations for the different course components.** For detailed expectations of specifications, see the corresponding Canvas page.

*Class attendance:* This is a discussion-based course and effective learning—your own and that of others—is contingent on your regular attendance.

*Participation:* On the first day of class, as a learning community we will define our expectations for what counts as active participation, which will count as “spec” for the purposes of the final grade.

*Aljamiado Project:* During the unit on Moriscos, we will work on translating a very brief Aljamiado (Romance written in Arabic characters) text first from Arabic characters into Latin characters and then from the transliterated Romance into a more modernized Spanish. The components of the project are as follows:

- We will spend the first month of the course learning the Arabic alphabet little by little so that by the time we hit the Morisco module, you’re comfortable with it.
- During the Morisco module we will do a workshop that focuses specifically on how Morisco writers used Arabic to write out Romance languages in it.
- Two weeks following this workshop, students will submit a transliteration/translation of a short segment of an Aljamiado text.
- The professor will identify errors with the transliteration as needed and send it back to the student for revision, after which the student will attempt to adapt the text into a more readable, modern Spanish.
- The final piece of the project will involve a reflection on how the paleographic process gave the student additional insight into the text.

*Forum:* To facilitate discussion, I invite you to write responses to the assigned readings and share them on the designated class discussion board on Canvas. Your posts are due by Sunday at midnight. In the week you post, you must also respond to at least 2 of your classmates’ forum posts. Your responses to your classmates’ posts are due by midnight Monday so that we’re all ready to go for our in-class meeting on Tuesday. You will have 10 opportunities to contribute 5 total “Foro” posts, starting with week two.

*Essays:* During the semester, you will be asked to write up to three 1500–1750-word responses to a prompt relating to the course material. Instructions will be given via a Canvas assignment on a Thursday and the completed assignment will be due the following Friday. These assignments are intended to develop writing skills, assess your understanding of the text, and ask you to develop an original interpretation of the material we’re studying in class. You may consult notes, the text, and any supporting texts we have seen during class (cited appropriately) but should work independently on the written product.

If the original draft does not meet “spec” according to the guidelines, students can revise it with input from classmates or the professor until it meets “spec.”

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Available</b>	<b>First Version Due</b>
Essay #1	Thurs. 2/25	Fri. 3/5
Essay #2	Thurs. 4/8	Fri. 4/16

Essay #3	Thurs. 5/6	Sun. 5/16
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### **Statement on Academic Honesty**

Each student is responsible for knowing what constitutes violating the policy. The policy is in the College Catalog and can be accessed at this link: <https://catalog.holycross.edu/requirements-policies/academic-policies/#academicintegritytext>. All assignments handed in during the semesters should be your own work. You can discuss your ideas with others, but you must write your assignments on your own. You cannot ask friends or family to proofread, edit or correct the first draft of any graded assignment. You are welcome to use any sources or materials you may need (magazine articles, websites, etc.), but you are required to cite them (see above).

### **Students with Disabilities**

The College of the Holy Cross is committed "to providing students with disabilities equal access to the educational opportunities and programs available at Holy Cross in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Massachusetts laws." (<https://catalog.holycross.edu/requirements-policies/academic-policies/#coursepolicies>).

Any student who feels the need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Accessibility Services (<https://www.holycross.edu/health-wellness-and-access/office-accessibility-services>) to discuss support services available. Once the office receives documentation supporting the request for accommodation, the student would meet privately with Accessibility Services to discuss reasonable and appropriate accommodations. The office can be reached by calling 508-793-3693. Students can also consult the "Remote Environment Accommodations" page: <https://www.holycross.edu/health-wellness-and-access/office-accessibility-services/services-offered/remote-environment-accommodations>.

If you are already registered with Accessibility Services, please be sure to get your accommodation letters and deliver them to your instructors in a timely fashion. Instructors need at least 4-5 days advance notice to be able to facilitate the process of receiving testing accommodations.

## Course Calendar

### Week 1: Introductions | al-Andalus

Tuesday, 2/2

#### Course introduction

Negotiation of Participation "Spec"

Homework:

- Watch Perspectives on Islam videos
- Watch *Cities of Light: The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain*
- Read Lowney, *A Vanished World*, pp. 1–42.
- Introduce yourself on the Discussion Board

Thursday, 2/4

#### Lecture 1: History of al-Andalus

Discussion:

- *Cities of Light*
- Lowney reading

Assign Concepts/Laws groups

Homework:

- Read *Accounts of the Muslim Conquest* [PDF on Canvas]
- Carr, "Prologue: 'The End of Spain's Calamities,'" *Blood & Faith*, pp. 7–18
- Do assigned Concepts & Laws reading [PDFs on Canvas]:
  - Grupo 1: Dhimma
  - Grupo 2: Convivencia
  - Grupo 3: Siete partidas
  - Grupo 4: Visigothic laws
- Read and comment (≥2x) on classmates' documentary summaries in discussion boards

### Week 2: Al-Andalus

Tuesday, 2/9

#### Lecture 2: Alfonso el Sabio y *Calila e Dimna*

Definition of Concepts and Laws

#### Arabic alphabet workshop #1: Teeth and Lines

Homework:

- Read Lowney, *A Vanished World*, pp. 209–226
- Read Carr, "The Iberian Exception," *Blood & Faith*, pp. 21–34
- Read *Calila e Dimna*, pp. 115–120, 371–78
- Flashcard practice with Teeth and Lines [Canvas]

Thursday, 2/11

#### *Calila e Dimna* & Alfonso el Sabio

#### Arabic alphabet workshop #2: Hooks and Zig-Zags

Homework:

- Read rest of *Calila e Dimna*
- Read María Rosa Menocal, *Ornament of the World* [PDF on Canvas]

- Option to participate in **Foro 1** (post *and* respond  $\geq 2x$ )
- Flashcard practice with Hooks and Zig-Zags
- Optional:
  - Watch David Wacks lecture, “Cultural Exchange” [link to YouTube on Canvas]
  - Carr, “The Victors,” *Blood & Faith*, pp. 35–51

### Week 3: Al-Andalus

Tuesday, 2/16

Discussion *Calila e Dimna*

Lecture 3: Introducción a *El Conde Lucanor*

Arabic alphabet workshop #3: Loops

Homework:

- Read selections from don Juan Manuel, *El Conde Lucanor* [PDF on Canvas]
- Lowney, *A Vanished World*, pp. 103–117
- Flashcard practice with Loops [Canvas]

Thursday, 2/18

Discussion *El Conde Lucanor*

Arabic alphabet workshop #4: Vowels

Discuss “spec” for an essay

Homework:

- Read rest of *Conde Lucanor*
- Read Lowney, *A Vanished World*, 119–129
- Option to participate in **Foro 2**
- Optional:
  - Read Wacks, “Reconquest Colonialism” [PDF on Canvas]

Essay #1 prompts available on Canvas starting Thursday at noon.

### Week 4: Al-Andalus | Moriscos

Tuesday, 2/23

Discussion *Conde Lucanor*

Lecture 4: Introducción a los moriscos

Time for resolving doubts about Arabic alphabet

Homework:

- Read Carr, “Introduction,” & “The Vanquished,” *Blood & Faith*, pp. 1–6; 53–66
- Núñez Muley, *Memorandum*, pp. 204–209 [PDF on Canvas]
- Read Wendy Brown, “Tolerance as a Discourse of Power,” *Regulating Aversion* 25–30, [opt. 31–74]
- Full Arabic Alphabet Practice #1 [Canvas]
- Optional:
  - Harvey, “The Beginnings of Crypto-Islam,” *Muslim Spain*

Keep working on Essay #1!

Thursday, 2/25

Discuss Núñez Muley (part 1)

Writing Workshop: MLA and Chicago Citation Styles



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Homework:

- Read Núñez Muley, *Memorandum*, pp. 210–215
- Carr, “Broken Promises,” *Blood & Faith*, pp. 67–77
- Full Arabic Alphabet Practice #2 [Canvas]

**Essay #1 due Friday, 2/26 by 11:59pm EST!**

### Week 5: Moriscos

Tuesday, 3/2

#### Aljamiado Transcription Workshop

Homework:

- Read Núñez Muley, *Memorandum*, pp. 216–220
- Read Carr, “Rebellion and Conversion,” & “Faith Triumphant,” *Blood & Faith*, pp. 79–100
- Aljamiado transcription exercises 1 on Canvas
- Optional:
  - Harvey, “The Intellectual Life of Spain’s Clandestine Muslims,” *Muslims in Spain*

Thursday, 3/3

#### Discuss Núñez Muley (part 2)

More Aljamiado practice

Homework:

- Read Núñez Muley, *Memorandum*, pp. 221–226
- Read Carr, “A ‘House Full of Snakes and Scorpions,’” *Blood & Faith*, 117–129
- Option to participate in **Foro 3**

### Week 6: Moriscos

Tuesday, 3/9

In-class activity with Aljamiado transcription

#### Lecture 5: Race and the Moriscos

Homework:

- Read Valero Cuadra, ed., “Leyenda de la Carcayona,” pp. 240–52
- Work on Aljamiado transcription
- Optional:
  - Quinn, “La carcayona”

Thursday, 3/10

#### Discuss Carcayona

Homework:

- Read “Carcayona,” pp. 252–64
- Option to participate in **Foro 4**
- Work on individual Aljamiado reflection
- Work with group on Aljamiado transcription

### Week 7: Moriscos

Tuesday, 3/16

#### Discuss Carcayona

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Homework:

- Read "Carcayona," pp. 264–76
- Work on Aljamiado transcription
- Work on individual Aljamiado reflection
- Optional:
  - excerpt from Perry *The Handless Maiden*

Thursday, 3/18

### Discuss Carcayona

Homework:

- Read "Carcayona" pp. 276–289
- Finish Aljamiado transcription
- Work on individual Aljamiado reflection
- Option to participate in Foro 5

**Final Aljamiado edition + individual reflections due to professor by 11:59pm on 3/21**

### Week 8: Moriscos–Maurophilia

Tuesday, 3/23

### Final Carcayona discussion

Lecture 6: Reconquest and Maurophilia

Homework:

- Read *El Abencerraje*, pp. 131–142
- Lowney, "A Common Life Among Three Shared Faiths," pp. 199–208

Thursday, 3/25

### Discuss El Abencerraje

### Lecture 7: Petrarchism and Courtly Love

Homework:

- Read *El Abencerraje*, pp. 142–152
- Read Fuchs, Brewer-García & Ilika, "Introduction"
- Option to participate in Foro 6

**EASTER BREAK (no class 4/1 or 4/6)**

### Week 9: Maurophilia

Thursday, 4/8

### El Abencerraje

Homework:

- Read *El Abencerraje*, pp. 152–164
- Read Fuchs, "Introduction," *Exotic Nation*
- Option to participate in Foro 7

**Essay #2 prompts available on Canvas starting Thursday at noon.**

### Week 10: Maurophilia

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Tuesday, 4/13

**Discuss Fuchs and Abencerraje ending**

Homework:

- Finish El Abencerraje if you haven't already
- Burshatin, "Power, Discourse, Metaphor"
- Garcés, *Cervantes in Algiers*, pp. 15–38

**Keep working on Essay #2**

(Try to come prepared to Thursday's class with a key component of the specifications ready: an outline of your argument, passages you want to analyze, a thesis, etc.)

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Thursday, 4/15

**Writing Café for Ensayo #2**

Discuss Garcés, *Cervantes in Algiers*

Homework:

- Read Garcés, *Cervantes in Algiers*, pp. 39–65
- Option to participate in **Foro 8**

**Essay #2 due Friday, 4/16 by 11:59pm EST!**

**Week 11: Mediterranean captivity**

Tuesday, 4/20

**Lecture 8: Mediterranean captivity**

Homework:

- Read Cervantes, "El amante liberal," pp. 161–171
- Reading comprehension activity
- Hershenson, *The Captive Sea*, pp. 1–20

Thursday, 4/22

**Discuss Hershenson and "El amante liberal"**

Homework:

- Read "El amante liberal," pp. 171–181
- Reading comprehension activity
- Read Hershenson, *The Captive Sea*, pp. 20–40
- Option to participate in **Foro 9**

**Week 12: Mediterranean captivity**

Tuesday, 4/27

The geographical space of "El amante liberal"

Homework

- Read "El amante liberal," pp. 181–191
- Read Fuchs, "Passing Pleasures"

Thursday, 4/29

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Gender and identity in “El amante liberal”

Homework:

- Read “El amante liberal,” pp. 191–201
- Option to participate in **Foro 10**

### **Week 13: Mediterranean captivity**

Tuesday, 5/4

“El amante liberal”

#### **Writing Workshop for Essay #3**

*(Try to come prepared to Thursday's class with a key component of the specifications ready: an outline of your argument, passages you want to analyze, a thesis, etc.)*

Homework:

- Read Goytisolo, “El legado andalusi”

Tuesday, 5/6

**Conclusions**

***Essay #3 to professor by midnight, Sunday, May 16<sup>th</sup>.***