

**Brooklyn College, CUNY**  
**Department of Modern Languages and Literatures**

**Spring 2022**  
**SPAN 3260 Literary Translation**

Instructor: Kristina Cordero

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Class Days and Times: Wednesdays, 5:05 – 7:05pm

Class Delivery Mode: Hybrid

Zoom Meeting Room for Wednesday class and Friday office hours:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87089611440?pwd=REZOR2tWYlIHdE1tQURSSXNUeEltdz09>

Meeting ID: 870 8961 1440

Passcode: 686406

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 9-10am and by appointment

**Bulletin Description**

SPAN 3260 Literary Translation

3 hours, 3 credits

Practical and theoretical approaches to translating literary texts including poetry, plays, and narrative fiction. Analysis of selected published translations and of the cultural factors bearing upon the process of translation. Integration of resources available in the multimedia laboratory. (Not open to students who have completed Spanish 54.) Qualifies as a LOTE (Language Other Than English) course for Pathways College Option purposes.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The translation of literary texts is an art, a skill, and a responsibility, for it is what permits the transmission of ideas from one culture to another. It can also be a fascinating and rewarding exercise for people who are fluent in two or more languages, for it is a true bridge between cultures. The literary translator must be capable of integrating a wide range of abilities: at any given moment a good translator is a reader, writer, editor, interpreter, actor, critic, and cultural agent. This course will explore the opportunities and challenges of literary translation, particularly in those areas that distinguish it from other forms of translation. Through readings, exercises, individual and group projects, students will develop their own criteria and experiences in this challenging, essential discipline.

**GENERAL OBJECTIVE**

The general objective of this course is to develop the criteria and skills needed to evaluate and undertake translations of literary works.

## **COURSE GOALS**

By the end of this course students should:

1. Understand the qualitative difference between translating non-literary and literary texts
2. Possess a practical understanding of the challenges, the opportunities and the craft of translating works of literature
3. Develop an appreciation of translation as an essential cultural practice
4. Demonstrate an awareness of and sensitivity to the responsibility of working with a text written by someone else (whether living or dead)
5. Gain experience translating different types of literary works.
6. Have a working practical methodology for approaching translations of literary works

## **READINGS: On Translation**

*All materials will be provided to students*

Bloom, Ryan. "Lost in Translation: What the first line of *The Stranger* should be." *The New Yorker*, May 11, 2012.

Grossman, Edith. "Introduction: Why Translation Matters," in *Why Translation Matters*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010.

Polizzotti, Mark. "Introduction: Ground Rules," in *Sympathy for the Traitor*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2018.

## **READINGS: Literature**

- Berlin, Lucia, "My Jockey," from *A Manual for Cleaning Women*. New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux, 2015.
- Cervantes, Miguel de. *Don Quixote de la Mancha*, first chapter; *Don Quixote de la Mancha*, translation by Edith Grossman, New York: Ecco Press, 2003; and *Don Quijote: Versión abreviada y adaptada al español de América*. Ed. Pablo Chiuminatto. Santiago: Ediciones UC, 2017.
- Luis de Góngora, "Soneto CLXVI" and "Sonnet CLXVI," 1582
- Hemingway, Ernest, short story "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" and translation, "Un lugar limpio y bien iluminado" (translator not credited), 1933.
- Ursula Le Guin, short story "Sur," 1982 and translation by Susana Matallana Peláez
- J.D. Salinger, first chapter of *The Catcher in the Rye*, 1951, and two translations: (1) *El guardian entre el Centeno*, by Carmen Criado. Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1978. and (2) *El cazador oculto*, by Manuel Méndez de Andes. Buenos Aires: Compañía General Fabril Editora.
- García Lorca, Federico. Poems, including "La casada infiel" and "Canción de jinete (I)" and "Canción de Jinete (2)"

- Mistral, Gabriela. Poems: “Canción de Muerte,” “Dame la mano” and “Canto que amabas” and translations by Ursula Le Guin, “Song of Death,” “Give me your hand,” and “What you loved”
- William Wordsworth, “Surprised by Joy” and “Sorprendido por la alegría,” 1815

### SUGGESTED READINGS

- Cortázar, Julio. “La noche boca arriba” and translation “The night face-up” by Paul Blackburn
- Schweblin, Samanta. “Mis padres y mis hijos” and translation “My parents and my children” by Megan McDowell.
- Lemebel, Pedro. “La historia de Margarito”
- Rey Rosa, Rodrigo. “La hija que nunca tuve”
- Ferrada, María José. first chapter “Kramp,” Emecé Editores.
- Larra, Lola. first chapter “Al sur de la Alameda,”
- Parks, Tim. “The Writer-Translator Equation.” *The New York Review of Books*, September 1, 2020.
- Queneau, Raymond. *Exercises in Style*. Translated by Barbara Wright. New York: New Directions, 2013.
- Snyder, Stephen. “The Murakami Effect: On the homogenizing dangers of easily translated literature,” *Literary Hub*, January 4, 2017.

### CONTENTS

#### Wednesday February 2-Wednesday May 11 (14 sessions)

- course introduction, presentations, intro to literature
- Spanish-Spanish translation and English-English translation
- Translating into different voices (Wordsworth and Góngora)
- Reading literature: English original, Spanish translations
- Reading literature: Spanish original, English translation
- Prose translation: first person (Salinger)
- Prose translation: first paragraphs
- Nonfiction translation
- Translation methodologies
- Poetry & Music: Federico García Lorca and Gabriela Mistral
- Theater/Film: *El filósofo declara*, Juan Villoro; *Art*, Yasmina Reza; *The Sunset Limited*, Cormac McCarthy
- Children’s literature

## EVALUATIONS

1. Attendance & participation and contributions to the class glossary (5 contributions):

**30%**

2. Tareas:

- summary of readings on translation
- translation exercise: English to English or Spanish to Spanish
- short story readings: original and translation
- translation exercise: first paragraphs

**30%**

3. Translation swap and review (each student will comment on one classmate's work-in-progress. Due April 15.

**10%**

4. Translation of one short text (3-5 pp). Text choice due March 8. Text ready for review April 1. Final version Due May 11.

**30%**

<b>assignments</b>	<b>important dates</b>
<b>Participation and contributions</b>	<b>ongoing</b>
<b>Tareas</b>	<b>ongoing</b>
<b>Text choice for final translation</b>	<b>March 8</b>
<b>Text ready for review</b>	<b>April 1</b>
<b>Translation swap and review</b>	<b>April 15</b>
<b>Final translation due</b>	<b>May 11</b>

## SE HABLA ESPAÑOL

Spanish is the official language of the class. You are expected to make every effort to speak the language at all times. Of course, given that this is a course in literary translation we will naturally be exploring texts in English, too. However, since this course is titled "SPAN" I want us to adhere to our goal as much as possible. I know that many of you wish to improve your spoken Spanish, and for that you need to experiment with the language, in real situations, as much as possible. I will strive to use Spanish as much as possible during the class, and so should you. As you will see, I was a non-Spanish speaker when I was in college studying Spanish literature and I understand how difficult it is but also how important it is to try, to make mistakes, learn from the mistakes and hone your skills. The more you interact in Spanish with me and your classmates, the more you will be able to comprehend and to produce Spanish -- and the better able you will get at using the language outside the classroom in real life!

## **ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

The attendance policy in this class is strict: only three (3) class sessions may be missed without an added adverse impact on your grade. After your third absence your grade will be reduced by 2 points with each successive absence. Punctuality is also a factor in online attendance: every three times that you are more than 5 minutes late, it will count as an absence. Please let me know in advance of any circumstances that may prevent you from coming to class.

## **BROOKLYN COLLEGE POLICIES: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

"Academic dishonesty of any type, including cheating and plagiarism, is unacceptable at Brooklyn College. Cheating is any misrepresentation in academic work. Plagiarism is the representation of another person's work, words or ideas as your own. Students should consult the Brooklyn College Student Handbook for a fuller, more specific discussion of related academic integrity standards. Faculty are encouraged to discuss with students the application of these standards to work in each course. Academic dishonesty is punishable by failure of the "test, examination, term paper, or other assignment on which cheating occurred" (Faculty Council, May 18, 1954). In addition, disciplinary proceedings in cases of academic dishonesty may result in penalties of admonition, warning, censure, disciplinary probation, restitution, suspension, expulsion, complaint to civil authorities, and ejection."

"The Center for Student Disability Services (CSDS), located in 138 Roosevelt Hall, is committed to ensuring that students with disabilities enjoy an equal opportunity to participate in the classrooms, programs, and services that the college has to offer by facilitating the necessary accommodations. According to the Americans with Disabilities Act, no otherwise qualified person with a disability shall be denied a benefit or opportunity or be excluded from participation solely on the basis of that disability."