

## Course name: Jorge Luis Borges: Visions of Culture and Knowledge

- ✓ *Hours of Instruction per Week: 4*
- ✓ *Total weeks: 15*
- ✓ *Total Hours of Instruction: 60*
- ✓ *Courses transferable to ECTS*
- ✓ *Courses transferable to U.S. System*
- ✓ *Recommendation: Advanced written and spoken English*

### Course Description

Borges' vision of the world as a Library of Babel and an Aleph anticipated the information age and the development of the Internet by several decades. However, although Borges can be regarded as the least representative Latin American writer, not all his fictions address universal problems. This course shows how many of his short stories, essays and poems are embedded in and have contributed to the Latin American and Argentine literary traditions. The course also considers Borges' precursors (Poe, Marcel Schwob and Kafka) and his followers (Donald Barthelme, Italo Calvino and Umberto Eco, among others). Finally, it looks at Borges' presence in visual culture: film, architecture and art.

### Course Requirements

Following UB policy, students need a minimum of 75% of attendance to be in good standing for the final exam. Sliding the ID card is the only way to track record of attendance. Classes missed for national holidays will not be recovered. Students are expected to do close readings, participate in class, and do at least one oral presentation. During the semester, students will write two short papers. The requirements also include a midterm and a final exam. In addition to this, each student will be expected to make a significant contribution to the classroom dialogue.

### Grading Policy

- In-class Participation 10 %
- Oral Presentation 20 %
- Short Papers (2) 30 %
- Midterm Exam 20 %
- Final Exam 20 %

## Academic Calendar

### Week 1

"Introduction to the course. How and when Borges became known outside Argentina. Available translations.

Borges's "An Autobiographical Essay" (in collaboration with Norman Thomas di Giovanni) & The South by Borges.

### Week 2

"Borges's "An Autobiographical Essay"

Borges Interviews by Fernando Sorrentino (65-82, 123- 133)& interview by A. Manara. "Buenos Aires & Beyond" by Gene Bell-Villada.

### Week 3

Averroes' Search & On the Cult of Books by Borges.

What is a Classic by J.M. Coetzee....

### Week 4

Borges and Postmodernity. A Universal History of Infamy.

Imaginary Lives by Marcel Schwob.

**Short paper 1 assigned**

### Week 5

A Universal History of Infamy.

OP on Freud's The Uncanny & Ernst Jentsch's On the Psychology of the Uncanny.

"The Aleph" & "Wor(l)ds Through the Looking Glass" by Beatriz Urraca

### Week 6

"Borges The Poet: The Mythical Founding of Buenos Aires..."

Two versions. Contrast: Oliverio Girondo: Borges' review of Calcomanías.

Horacio Coppola: 1936 photos of Buenos Aires, art & architecture.

**Turn in short paper 1**

## Week 7

"Beatriz Sarlo: "Utopia & the Avant-Garde": (115-137) "The Adventure of Martin Fierro: the Avant-Garde & Criollismo", (95-114).

Impact of Borges on U.S. writing in the 60s: Donald Barthelme's Sixty Stories: Paraguay 127-137 & Gene Bell-Villada's Borges and his Fiction 278-284. OP on above .

## Week 8

Borges as pioneer of the Internet: "Tlon, Ukbar & Orbis Tertius" OP on "Orbis Tertius and Orbis Novus: The Discovery of New Worlds" by Aden Hayes

**Mid-term exam.**

## Week 9

An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge by Ambrose Bierce.

Borges' The Waiting & Hemingway's The Killers

**Short paper 1 assigned**

## Week 10

" Borges' The Secret Miracle: Literary Vanity...literature is constructed in the head. OP Post-Lecture Discussion of His Own Writing by Borges.

Borges & Women: Emma Zunz. Lewald article: The Labyrinth of Time and Place in Two Stories by Borges.

## Week 11

Sergio Waisman's Borges on Translation.

Poe: The murders of Rue Morgue & The Purloined Letter

**Turn in short paper 2**

## Week 12

"Borges, Poe and the detective story: Death and the Compass" by Irwin (1-12) & Borges' The Labyrinths of the Detective

Story & Chesterton. R. Gillespie: "Detections: Borges & F.Brown".

"Borges, Poe and the detective story: The Garden of Forking Paths" by Irwin (30-36) & Daniel Balderston's "Historical Situations in Borges": GFP. Eduardo Gonzalez's "Connecting Pungencies: Borges Conjured & Restored".

### Week 13

Borges and Postmodernity: Pierre Menard, author of the Quixote & Daniel Balderston's "Historical Situations in Borges":

The library of Babel & The Lottery in Babylon.

### Week 14

"Borges' disciples: Six Memos for the Next Millennium by Italo Calvino: Multiplicity 101-124

Last Year in Marienbad (film) by Alain Resnais

### Week 15

Final exam

Final Grade Sheet and signature of "Hoja de situación" (attendance is mandatory).

## Bibliography

- BELL-VILLADA, Gene: Borges and His Fiction: A Guide to His Mind and Art: University of Texas Press, Austin, 1999.
- BORGES, Jorge Luis: Collected Fictions translated by Andrew Hurley, Penguin, New York, 1998.
- BORGES, Jorge Luis: Selected Non-Fictions translated by Eliot Weinberger, Esther Allen, and Suzanne Jill Levine, Penguin, New York, 1999.
- CALVINO, Italo: Six Memos for the Next Millennium, Vintage International, New York, 1993.
- COZARINSKY, Edgardo: Borges in/and/on Film
- HOFSTADTER, Douglas: Gödel, Escher & Bach Vintage Books, New York, 1989.
- IRWIN, John T.: The Mystery to a Solution: Poe, Borges and the Analytic Detective Story Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1996.
- MARTINEZ, Guillermo: Regarding Roderer Saint Martin's Press, New York, 1994.
- NOUZEILLES, Gabriela & MONTALDO, Graciela. An Argentina Reader: History, Culture & Politics Duke University Press, Durham, 2002.
- SARLO, Beatriz Jorge Luis Borges: A Writer on the Edge Verso, London, 2006.
- SCHWOB, Marcel Imaginary Lives Solar Books, Washington D.C., 2009.
- SORRENTINO, Fernando Seven Conversations with Jorge Luis Borges Paul Dry Books, Philadelphia, 2010.
- WILSON, Jason Borges Reaktion Books, London, 2006.