Description and Objectives:

Since the 1990s Luso-Hispanic cinema has become increasingly globalized, bringing representations of the cultures of Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula to international audiences. This course will critically consider the construction of a new Latin American international cinema from a Cultural Studies approach, investigating how it fulfills or disrupts desires for a borderless world, how it represents local and global conflict, whether it successfully “translates” the cultural particularities of the Luso-Hispanic world, indeed of specific countries within the region, or whether it results in the erasure of difference and regional particularities in order to “sell” itself to a global audience. On a formal level we will study how conventions of classical cinematic language (continuity editing, linear narrative, shot-reverse-shot, etc.) that have become globalized are upheld or disrupted locally, and to what end. In this context, we will examine the interplay between small and large nation cinema, as well as aesthetic and formal responses to geopolitical and historical conditions in Cuba, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, and the United States. By analyzing films from the last half-century (with an emphasis on the last two decades), we will explore such questions as globalization, gender roles, immigration and exile, drugs and political violence, examining how these issues are imagined by filmmakers and critics, while considering the sociological, cultural and political trends that gave rise to the films.

Some of the films we might view (list still being developed):

Fresa y chocolate (Cuba, 1993), Machuca (Chile, 2004), Volver (Spain, 2006), Death and the Maiden, (USA, 1994), Amores perros (Mexico, 2000), Central do Brasil (Brazil, 1998), Nueve reinas (Argentina, 2000), El laberinto del fauno (Mexico / Spain, 2006), Cidade de Deus (Brazil 2002), Ratas, ratones, rateros (Ecuador, 1999), Las viudas de los jueves (Argentina, 2009 ), La teta asustada (Peru / Spain, 2009), Biutiful (Mexico / Spain, 2010), Real Women Have Curves (U.S.A., 2002).