Translation is all around us, even though we often don’t see it. From the multilingual instructions on the bottles of shampoo that compulsive readers might examine in the shower, to the subtitles or comically out-of-synch dubbing in foreign films, to the establishment of a whole set of vocabulary for theories like Freud’s theory of the unconscious, our cultural experience is deeply affected by the choices translators make. In “Translating Hispanic Cultures,” we’ll take a look at the ways that translators have shaped U.S. understandings of the cultures of Spain and Latin America over the past four centuries. For instance, we’ll study the 1990s translation of the memoirs of a 16th-century transgender nun-turned-colonial-soldier, see how a nineteenth-century Spanish play about the original “player,” Don Juan, got transformed into a Johnny Depp movie, and think about whether you really need to have had the experience of good Mexican hot chocolate to appreciate the movie “Like Water for Chocolate.” We’ll read a few essays about translation as a cultural practice, then launch into conversations and short writings about books and movies that have been translated from Spanish to English. We’ll also converse with a professional translator about the challenges and choices of translating a set of stories about gender and sexuality in nineteenth-century Spain to English for a contemporary U.S. audience. (This course is for students in the Campus Honors Program. Knowledge of Spanish is NOT required, but if you do read or write Spanish, you may opt to do some assignments in that language.)