The short story genre has held a prominent place in Latin American literature for at least two hundred years, but it is only within the past few decades that it has become widely known in translation in English and in many other languages. The short story serves as an excellent introduction to some of Latin America’s best known contemporary writers including Nobel Laureates Miguel Angel Asturias (Guatemala), Gabriel García Márquez (Columbia) and Mario Vargas Llosa (Peru), as well as Jorge Luis Borges (Argentina) and Isabel Allende (Chile and the U.S.). Most of these writers are well known to U.S. readers as novelists. Our Humanities Seminar will draw on their short stories as well as those of younger writers including outstanding U.S. Latino and Latina writers. The seminar will also have a visual component. The course will focus on the cultural, artistic, social, and political dimensions of a wide variety of this fascinating and interesting literary form.

Readings:


Several additional readings will become available on the Humanities Seminars password-protected website: [http://course.hsp.arizona.edu](http://course.hsp.arizona.edu). A partial list includes:

- Christopher Columbus. “Letter of Discovery”
- Edgar Allan Poe. “Poe on Short Fiction”
- Mary Louise Pratt. “The Short Story: The Long and Short of It”
- Horacio Quiroga’s essay on the short story
- Julio Cortázar. “Some Aspects of the Short Story”
- Elena Garro. “It’s the Fault of the Tlaxcaltecas”
- Selection of U.S. Latina and Latino short stories
Films:

- Blow Up (Michelangelo Antonioni, director). Based on the short story “Blowup” by Julio Cortázar
- Death and the Compass. Based on a short story by the same title by Jorge Luis Borges
- El muerto (English subtitles). Based on a short story by the same title by Borges.
- Gabriel García Márquez. A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings (English subtitles). Based on a short story by the same name by Gabriel García Márquez
- The Place Without Limits (English subtitles). Based on a novella by José Donoso
- La fiesta del chivo (English subtitles). Based on a novel by the same title by Mario Vargas Llosa
- Borges. Profile of a Writer.
- Gabriel García Márquez. A Witch Writing. A Biography in His Own Words

Schedule:

Week 1: January 28
Christopher Columbus. “Letter of Discovery”
Introduction to the short story as a literary genre: readings by Edgar Allan Poe, Mary Louise Pratt, and Horacio Quiroga
The Oxford Book of Latin American Short Stories, pages 3-22

Week 2: February 4
Modern Latin American Literature. A Very Short Introduction, Chapters One and Three
The Oxford Book of Latin American Short Fiction: short stories by Ricardo Palma, Machado de Assis, Rubén Darío, Horacio Quiroga, Rafael Arévalo Martínez
Horacio Quiroga’s essay on the short story

Week 3: February 11
Modern Latin American Literature: A Very Short Introduction, Chapter Five
The Oxford Book of Latin American Short Stories: Alejo Carpentier, João Guimaraes Rosa, María Luisa Bombal, Rosario Castellanos

Week 4: February 18
Juan Rulfo. The Plain in Flames: Introduction, “They gave us the land,” “We’re Very Poor,” “The Burning Plain,” “Tell them not to kill me,” “Luvina,” “No Dogs Bark,” “Paso del norte,” “Anacleto Morones”

Week 5: February 25
Borges: Profile of a Writer (film)
“Borges and I”
“Death and the Compass,” “Deutsches Requiem,”
_The Vintage Book of Latin American Short Stories: “The Aleph”_

**Week 6: March 4**

_Blow Up_ (film)
Julio Cortázar
_The Oxford Book of Latin American Short Stories: “The Night Face Up”_
_The Vintage Book of Latin American Stores: “Blow Up”_
[http://course.hsp.arizona.edu](http://course.hsp.arizona.edu): “Axolotl,” “End of the Game”
_The Oxford Book of Latin American Short Stories: Juan José Arreola: “The Switchman”_

**Week 7: March 11**

_Gabriel García Márquez. A Witch Writing. A Biography in His Own Words_  
_Gabriel García Márquez. Collected Stories: “The Woman Who Came at Six O’Clock,” “Tuesday Siesta,”, “There Are no Thieves in This Town,” “Balthazar’s Marvelous Afternoon,” “Montiel’s Widow”_

**Week 8: March 25**

_A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings_ (film)
Gabriel García Márquez. _Collected Stories: “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings,” “Big Mama’s Funeral,”_

**Week 9: April 1**

_Modern Latin American Literature: A Very Short Introduction, Chapter Six_  

**Week 10: April 8**

[http://course.hsp.arizona.edu](http://course.hsp.arizona.edu) Selection of U.S. Latina and Latino short stories  
Final discussion of the course.