

“To be a knight-errant oneself is, if you please, the work of a half-mad man, but to populate all Spain with knights-errant is truly a *delirium furibundum* [raging madness].”¹

Phil 4300.01: Special Topics in Philosophy: Don Quixote and Miguel de Unamuno

UTRGV, Spring 2016

1:40-2:55 TR, ARHU 173

Professor: Dr. Mariana Alessandri

Office: ARHU 302 (across from elevator)

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12:30-1:30 and Thursdays, 3-4pm (and by appointment)

Email: mariana.alessandri@utrgv.edu

Required Texts

1. Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote de la Mancha* (any copy/Spanish or English, but my favorite is the Grossman translation, ISBN: 978-0060934347)
2. Miguel de Unamuno, *Our Lord Don Quixote: The life of Don Quixote and Sancho, with related essays*, ISBN: 9780691617190

Unamuno will also be on reserve at the library. Go to the third floor and ask the people at the desk for help. You can use the book for 2 hours, during which you can photocopy the relevant chapters to bring to class.

Why Read *Don Quixote* with Miguel de Unamuno?

Some people would say that reading *Don Quixote* in its entirety is a quixotic task in and of itself. You have decided to take on the challenge of not only reading the *Quixote*, but also reading Unamuno’s commentary on it. In the commentary you will find the themes of madness, justice and injustice, righting wrongs, fights worth fighting, and dreaming impossible dreams. Unamuno made Quixote into his God, and he worshipped him in his books and through his actions. Quixote inspired Unamuno to make certain political moves that were seen as crazy by everyone around him. He turned into a living Quixote, and that is the goal of this class. Can we, just by reading *Quixote* and Unamuno, become quixotized?

This class will test and strengthen us in three different ways: 1) **Discipline:** committing to reading 1-2 chapters of *Don Quixote* on a daily basis is not an easy thing to do. Or perhaps committing to it is easy but actually doing it isn’t. It’s like a New Year’s resolution—it is easy to set lofty goals but this class will test whether you have the stamina and perseverance to actually follow through on them, even when you are busy or don’t feel like it. 2) **Motivation:** This isn’t a class where you get to just listen to lectures. Besides leading a class discussion, you will be expected to come prepared to discuss the texts, through writing and speaking, in groups and alone. No freeloaders allowed. 3) **Beliefs:** Unamuno will try to turn your world upside down. He will constantly challenge conventional wisdom and common sense, and he will try to convince you that Quixote saw the world truly and everyone else sees it falsely. The challenge will be to apply his thinking to everyday life; i.e., what would Quixote be like if he were alive today and attended UTRGV? This question should always be on your mind, and your final project will reflect your answer.

Grade Breakdown (A: 90-100; B: 80-90; C: 70-80; D: 60-70; F: below 60)

Attendance	10%
Daily and Weekly Reading	10%
Reading Accountability Doc.	10%
4 Reflection papers (5% each)	20%
Lead 1 Class Discussion	10%
Festiba Project	10%
Final Presentation	10%
Final Project	20%

1. Søren Kierkegaard, *Stages on Life’s Way*, edited by Howard V. and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 402.

Attendance

You have 4 days for which you will not be penalized for missing class. These are your “sick days” to do what you please with. You may use your sick days for athletics, religious holidays, university activities, military service, illness, or any other reason. You do not need to bring me a doctor’s note. Students who stay within the 4 sick-day allowance will earn a full 10% for the attendance portion of their final grade, students who miss 5-6 classes will earn 5%, and students who miss 7 or more classes will earn 0%. If you are perpetually late to class, you will start getting half-credit for attendance.

Daily and Weekly Reading: In this class we will read *Don Quixote* daily, starting **TODAY**, in order to finish on April 21. I have created a calendar of daily *Quixote* reading for you, attached at the end of this syllabus. It amounts to 1-2 chapters of *Quixote* every day. Those who choose to join the optional reading group (see below) will also be using this calendar. In addition to *Don Quixote*, we will also be reading Unamuno’s commentary, which you need to purchase or photocopy from the reserve room at the library (3rd floor) and bring with you to class. On the schedule of readings in this syllabus, you will find which chapters of Unamuno to read for each class period. During class time, we will discuss the Unamuno reading for the day as well as the chapters from *Quixote* that you are responsible for reading.

Optional Reading Group

Every Tuesday from 3-4 in my office (ARHU 302) there will be a book group dedicated to reading *Quixote*, for those who want to read together (all are welcome, including non-class-members). The calendar of reading for DQ will be posted on my door and on Blackboard, and it is at the end of this syllabus.

Reading Accountability Documentation

Since this class is so reading-intensive, you need to figure out a way to ensure that you are keeping up every day. You must formalize your method by writing about it in a one-page document, including answers to questions like:

- **Motivation:** Why are you committing to reading *Quixote* every day and Unamuno every week? Are you internally motivated or externally motivated? Research shows that external motivation doesn’t work, so how do you propose to get internally motivated? How can you get yourself to commit?
- **Method:** How will you set aside time to read? What are the nuts and bolts of your method?
- **Consequence:** How will you ensure that you will stick to the reading schedule? What is your way of preventing falling behind? What will be the direct consequence of failing to read?

The more precise, well-thought-out, and likely to succeed this document is, the better grade you will earn; the vaguer or less likely to work, the worse. This document is due to me on **Thursday, Jan 28th**.

Reflection Papers

Four times throughout the semester, I will ask you to reflect on *Quixote* in writing. These are personal responses to the text, and should revolve around how *Quixote* and Unamuno are or are not relevant to your current life, and what you can do as a response to reading them. Due dates for the first three are fixed on the syllabus; the fourth will be announced later.

Leading One Class Discussion

Plan for your presentation to be 15 minutes. If you double up with a partner, plan for a 30-minute presentation. Even if you present with a partner, you will be graded individually. Bring a 1-page handout for everyone in class. If you have a partner you will need two pages. An “A” presentation is engaging, asks good questions of the class, and explains the material clearly. It not only discusses this ancient text but bridges it to our current society.

Festiba Project—Represent *Quixote* somewhere on campus, and document it. The more visible, the better. We will hold a special FESTIBA presentation for those of you who want to share your work. Details TBA. **Due: March 3.**

Final Project and Presentation: Populating the world with Quixotes

Your final project should develop your understanding of the philosophy of religion in a way that goes above and beyond our class discussion of the required readings. There are a number of ways you might accomplish this, including (but not limited to):

- **Option 1: Research Quixote in the Valley**
Go to the Border Studies Archives and do a search for “Quixote.” Read everything you can about Quixote’s presence in the Valley, and write an essay about it.
- **Option 2: Find a Valley Quixote**
Is there someone who you think embodies Quixote in the Valley? This can be a living or a deceased person, but you must recreate them and bring them to life for us. You can also find someone in the UTRGV Border Studies Archive who acted like Quixote in the Valley.
- **Option 3: Become a Valley Quixote**
Think about a wrong that you would like to right- maybe it’s possible and maybe it’s impossible, but you are willing to try to make it right. How will you embody Quixote in your fight for justice?

For all three options, your project can come in many forms: books, videos, paper. I encourage you to design your final project in consultation with me during office hours. **The last day for submitting formal project proposals is April 5th**, so that I have time to review and modify them in a mutually satisfactory way by **April 12th**. Final projects will be due on **MAY 9**.

Learning Objectives for Philosophy Degree: This course may be taken to fulfill a requirement for a B.A. in Philosophy. Students who graduate with a degree in philosophy from UTRGV are expected to have attained a certain level of intellectual development which is characteristic of the intense study of philosophy. The goals for all philosophy classes that count towards the major in philosophy include, in combination with the particular goals for the course, the following objectives:

1. **CRITICAL THINKING AND READING:** Students will demonstrate well-developed critical thinking and reading skills orally and in writing.
2. **HISTORY:** Students will describe the history of Philosophy, by identifying and distinguishing between the major historical and conceptual divisions of philosophy, the positions within those divisions, and major thinkers who contributed to those periods and specializations.
3. **COMMUNICATION:** Students will exhibit well-developed oral and written communication skills; will respond effectively to questions and criticisms of presented material.
4. **ALTERNATIVE POINTS OF VIEW:** Students will demonstrate the capacity to accurately present, analyze and evaluate historically underrepresented philosophical concerns, positions and traditions.
5. **PERSONAL, CIVIC, AND/OR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Students will articulate and evaluate their various activities, identities, values, and goals in order to develop a flexible strategy for ongoing personal growth, community engagement, and/or professional achievement.

Academic Honesty

As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.

Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Violence

In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at www.utrgv.edu/equity, including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

Course Drops

According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. Following that date, students must be assigned a letter grade and can no longer drop the class. Students considering dropping the class should be aware of the “3-peat rule” and the “6-drop” rule so they can recognize how dropped classes may affect their academic success. The 6-drop rule refers to Texas law that dictates that undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses during their undergraduate career. Courses dropped at other Texas public higher education institutions will count toward the six-course drop limit. The 3-peat rule refers to additional fees charged to students who take the same class for the third time.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects your academic performance) and would like to receive academic accommodations, please inform your instructor and contact Student Accessibility Services to schedule an appointment to initiate services. It is recommended that you schedule an appointment with Student Accessibility Services before classes start. However, accommodations can be provided at any time. Brownsville Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at accessibility@utrgv.edu. Edinburg Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at accessibility@utrgv.edu.

Mandatory Course Evaluation Period

Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (<http://my.utrgv.edu>); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Online evaluations will be available April 13-May 4. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades.

Key: DQ = *Don Quixote*; MU = Miguel de Unamuno's *Our Lord Don Quixote*

Week 1

Jan 19 I will explain/describe "Sobre la Lectura"
Jan 21 DQ: Prologue, "To the Book," chs. 1-3; MU:
chs. 1-2.

Week 2

Jan 26 DQ: through ch. 13; MU: chs. 4&5
Jan 28 DQ: thro. ch. 15; MU: chs 7&8 (Reading Doc Due)

Week 3 (brainstorm about Festiba projects)

Feb 2 DQ: through ch. 20; MU: chs. 12-13
Feb 4 DQ: thro ch. 22; MU: 15 & 18 (reflection 1 due)

Week 4

Feb 9 DQ: through ch. 27; MU: chs. 22-23
Feb 11 DQ: through ch. 29; MU: chs. 24-25

Week 5

Feb 16 DQ: through ch. 34; MU: chs. 29, 31
Feb 18 DQ: through ch. 36; MU: ch. 32 (reflection 2 due)

Week 6

Feb 23 DQ: through ch. 41; MU: chs. 35-36
Feb 25 DQ: through ch. 44; MU: ch. 43-44

Week 7 (FESTIBA PRESENTATIONS)

Mar 1 DQ: through ch. 49; MU: chs. 45-48
Mar 3 DQ: finish part I; MU: 49-50 (Festiba project due)

Week 8 (PART II)

Mar 8 DQ: through ch. 7; MU, 1-7
Mar 10 DQ: through ch. 10; MU, 8-10 (reflection 3 due)

Spring break (Mar 15&17; don't fall behind!)

Week 9

Mar 22 DQ: through ch. 28; MU: chs. 12, 15, 16&17, 25
Mar 24 DQ: through ch. 31; MU: chs. 29, 31

Week 10

Mar 29 DQ: through ch. 38; MU: chs. 32, 33
Mar 31 DQ: through ch. 42; MU: chs. 40-43

Week 11

April 5 DQ: through ch. 49; MU: ch. 44 (Proposal Due)
April 7 DQ: through ch. 51; MU: ch. 46

Week 12

April 12 DQ: through ch. 59; MU: chs. 47, 49, 51, 55, 57
April 14 DQ: through ch. 62; MU: chs. 58, 61, 62, 63

Week 13

April 19 DQ: through ch. 71; MU: chs. 64, 67, 68
April 21 DQ: Finish Don Quixote part II; MU: chs. 71-74

Week 14

April 26 **Final presentations**
April 28 **Final presentations**

Week 15

May 3 **QUIXOTE PARTY**

Final projects due on May 9

January

2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		19 Prol&"tothebook"	20 PART I chapters 1&2	21 Chapters 3&4	22 Chapters 5&6	23 Chapters 7&8
24 Chapters 9&10	25 Chapters	26 Chapter 13	27 Chapter 14	28 Chapter 15	29 Chapter 16	30 Chapter 17
31 Chapter 18						

February

2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Chapter 19	2 Chapter 20	3 Chapter 21	4 Chapter 22	5 Chapter 23	6 Chapter 24
7 Chapter 25	8 Chapter 26	9 Chapter 27	10 Chapter 28	11 Chapter 29	12 Chapter 30	13 Chapter 31
14 Chapter 32	15 Chapter 33	16 Chapter 34	17 Chapter 35	18 Chapter 36	19 Chapter 37	20 Chapter 38
21 Chapter 39	22 Chapter 40	23 Chapter 41	24 Chapter 42	25 Chapter 43	26 Chapter 44	27 Chapter 45
28 Chapter 46	29 Chapter 47					

March

2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Chapters 48&49	2 Chapters 50&51	3 Chapter 52	4 PART II Dedication&ch1	5 Chapter 2
6 Chapter 3	7 Chapters 4&5	8 Chapters 6&7	9 Chapters 8&9	10 Chapter 10	11 Chapters 11&12	12 Chapters 13&14
13 Chapters	14 Chapter 17	15 Chapters 18&19	16 Chapter 20	17 Chapters 21&22	18 Chapter 23	19 Chapter 24
20 Chapter 25	21 Chapter 26	22 Chapters 27&28	23 Chapters 29&30	24 Chapter 31	25 Chapter 32	26 Chapter 33
27 Chapter 34	28 Chapters 35&36	29 Chapters 37&38	30 Chapters 39&40	31 Chapters 41&42		

April

2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Chapters 43&44	2 Chapters 45&46
3 Chapter 47	4 Chapter 48	5 Chapter 49	6 Chapter 50	7 Chapter 51	8 Chapters 52&53	9 Chapter 54
10 Chapters 55&56	11 Chapters 57&58	12 Chapter 59	13 Chapter 60	14 Chapters 61&62	15 Chapter 63	16 Chapters 64&65
17 Chapters 66&67	18 Chapters 68&69	19 Chapters 70&71	20 Chapters 72&73	21 Chapter 74		