

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**

<https://uofa.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

2017-2018 SPAN 499: A1

Special Topics: Constructing the Nation

(Fall Term)

Instructor: Dr. Ann De León

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Time: T, Th 2-3:20PM

Place: HC 2-38

Office Hours: T, 12:30-1:30PM

or by appointment

Course Website: eclass



Course Prerequisite: SPAN 320 & and an additional *3 in SPAN at the 300 level (excluding 300 or 306) or consent of the Spanish Undergraduate Advisor.

Course-based Ethics Approval in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.? No, not needed, no such projects approved.

Community Service Learning component None

Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available Document distributed in class

Additional mandatory Instructional fees (approved by Board of Governors) No

Course Description and Objectives:

During the 19th century many Spanish-American countries gained their independence from Spain and sought to define their identities through various nation-building projects. Part of the process of nation-formation constituted the production of “foundational fictions” or textual and visual narratives that would define and establish who the desired citizen was for that particular country. In this course, as a case study we will mainly focus on how the Mexican nation was constructed, imagined, and represented during the 19th-20th centuries, primarily through the analysis of various texts and other visual media (e.g. novel, essay, public monuments, museums, worlds-fairs, movies, fashion etc.). As their final project, students will write a research paper in Spanish focusing on a Spanish-American country and a national symbol/icon/text etc. of their choice and explore various strategies that were used in forming an idea of national identity. Themes that will be explored include: Civilization vs. Barbarism, Modernity vs. Tradition, Patriarchy and Women’s (in) Subordination, Indigenous peoples & African Slaves vs. European “Whitening” Projects etc.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of this course students will be able to:

*Carry out a close reading of some texts, symbols, and visual projects related to Nation-building.

*Understand how Spanish-American patriarchal nations relied on racist, classist and sexist discourses, symbols, and performances to maintain power over subjugated “Others”.

*Appreciate the role of women and other marginalized groups in challenging national patriarchal narratives.

*Write a research paper of their choice investigating the role of a particular symbol, icon, monument, art piece, song, text, museum, festival, fashion etc. in nation and identity building projects of a Spanish-American country of their choice.

While primary readings and class discussions will be conducted mainly in Spanish, some theoretical readings will be in English to facilitate comprehension.

Texts:

All texts will be provided on eclass or online links will be provided to e-book reading materials at Rutherford library.

Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):

Attendance/Active Participation: 20%

Take Home test: 20% (handed out October 19 due in class October 26th)

Oral Presentation (sign up by week 2): 15%

Course work: 20% (Assignments conducted throughout the semester).

Final Paper in Spanish (8 pages) (due by email on December 14): 25%

Date of Deferred Final Exam (if applicable): N/A

Explanatory Notes on Assignments:

A detailed explanation of each graded assignment will be provided on the course website. The final paper will be 8 pages long and written in Spanish.

Required Notes:

“Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) of the University Calendar.”

Academic Integrity:

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.governance.ualberta.ca) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

Learning and Working Environment:

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students; faculty and staff are able to study and work in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the [Office of the Student Ombuds](#). Information about the [University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures](#) is described in [UAPPOL](#).

Academic Honesty:

All students should consult the information provided by the [Student Conduct & Accountability Office](#) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the [Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook](#) and [Information for Students](#)). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

Students involved in language courses and translation courses should be aware that on-line “translation engines” produce very dubious and unreliable “translations.” **Students in languages courses** should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, **excessive editorial and creative help** in assignments is considered a form of “cheating” that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

Recording of Lectures:

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections [Attendance](#) and [Examinations](#) of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

In this course attendance will be taken regularly with an attendance sheet and will be factored in as part of the participation component of the course. Note though that simply attending the course will not guarantee a high participation grade. It is essential that the student actively and critically participate. Students who fail to attend 50% of the classes can expect to do poorly or even fail the course.

Policy for Late Assignments:

Students who consult the instructor with **sufficient advance notice** regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the instructor, be granted an extension. Otherwise, assignments will incur a 5% per day late deduction. After three days late no assignments will be accepted.

Student Accessibility Services:

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with [Student Accessibility Services](#), contact their office immediately (1-80 SUB; Email sasrec@ualberta.ca; Email; phone 780-492-3381).

Grading:

Assessment of the individual course components may be in the form of numerical marks or letter grades. The final letter grade will be based on "a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class" (University Calendar, [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#)). The University Grading Procedure mandates that "a student's level of achievement of the goals/outcomes of a course, their grade, and the descriptor of that grade must be aligned" (<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/>). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

“MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale”

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	%
<p>Excellent. A+, A or A- is earned by work which is superior in content and form and demonstrates an exceptional grasp of the subject matter. The grade of A+ designates work that far exceeds course expectations. Grades in the A range are normally achieved by a small number of students.</p>	A+	4.0	97-100
	A	4.0	93-96
	A-	3.7	90-92
<p>Good. B+, B or B- is earned by work that demonstrates a thorough comprehension of the course material and a good command of relevant skills. Grades in the B range are normally achieved by the largest number of students.</p>	B+	3.3	87-89
	B	3.0	83-86
	B-	2.7	80-82
<p>Satisfactory. C+, C or C- is earned by work that demonstrates an adequate grasp of the course material and relevant skills. Grades in the C range designate work that has met the basic requirements of the course.</p>	C+	2.3	77-79
	C	2.0	73-76
	C-	1.7	70-72
<p>Poor/Minimal Pass. D+ or D is earned by work that demonstrates minimal familiarity with the course material. Grades in the D range generally indicate insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.</p>	D+	1.3	65-69
	D	1.0	60-64
<p>Failure.</p>	F	0.0	0-59