

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**
<https://ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

2020-2021 MLCS 210-A1: *Language(s) of Culture*
(Fall Term)

Note: Remote Delivery

Instructor: Ann De León
Office: Remote Delivery
E-mail: adeleon1@ualberta.ca
Course Website: e-class

Time: Tu, Th 12:30-1:50PM
Place: Remote Delivery (Zoom, eclass)
Office Hours: Tu 11AM-12PM,
or by appointment

Bachelor of Arts / Major in Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

<https://www.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies/undergraduate-program-information/prospective-undergraduate-students>

Course Prerequisite: None

Technology requirements (minimum): You must have access to a device such as a desktop computer, laptop, tablet, or cellphone to access e-class and a U of A Zoom account created through first accessing e-class.

It is your responsibility as a student to ensure that you have the appropriate technology for the course. For more information on this visit the IST page:

<https://support.ctl.ualberta.ca/index.php?Knowledgebase/Article/View/402/4/participating-in-online-classes-for-students>

For more information on using Zoom for in class meetings see:

<https://support.ctl.ualberta.ca/index.php?Knowledgebase/Article/View/422/23/using-zoom-for-students>

Experiential Learning Component:

√ Optional. Students in this course have the option to volunteer 20 hours of their time with CSL (Community Service Learning) to work remotely or in person with a local non-for-profit organization. (*This experience can count both towards the required MLCS Major experiential component and towards a Community Service-Learning Certificate*).

For more information on CSL visit: <https://www.ualberta.ca/community-service-learning/index.html>

Course-based Ethics Approval in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

Yes No, not needed

Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available

- Exam registry – Students' Union
<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/infolink/exam/>
- See explanations below
- Document distributed in class
- Other (please specify)
- NA

Course Description, Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes:

In this course, students will be exposed to some major theories and theorists within the discipline of Cultural Studies. Through select critical readings and guest speaker presentations, we will explore how culture and cultural processes are shaped, distributed, and responded to in diverse ways. Students will leave this course equipped with the skills needed to think critically and creatively about how culture and cultural practices are shaped by notions of identity, language, nation, power, class, race, gender, popular culture etc. If students volunteer to do CSL (Community Service-Learning), they will also reflect upon how and if some of the cultural theories learned in the course apply or not to the “real-life” experiences of local non-for-profit organizations in Edmonton.

Topics might include: Globalization & Nationalism, Architecture & Space, Popular Culture & the Market, Race & Multiculturalism, Sexuality & Gender, Media & Public Spheres, Science, Cyberculture & Nature.

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Identify some of the main theorists and theories in the field & their strengths and weaknesses.
- Think critically about how culture and cultural practices are shaped by notions of identity, language, nation, power, class, race, gender, popular culture etc.
- Learn how scholars from different disciplinary, geographical, and linguistic perspectives have engaged with some of these theories in their own work.
- Produce brief critical reflection pieces and e-posts on select readings.
- Create a digital portrait or creative piece accompanied by a micro-narrative on a cultural artefact of their choice.
- (*Non-CSL students*): Write a final critical essay on one cultural practice, icon, celebrity, product, institution, or organization of their choice relating it to one or more of the cultural theories looked at; **or** produce a creative piece (video, art, song, performance etc.) with accompanying text inspired by some of the cultural theories addressed in the course.

or

(*CSL Students*): Develop and implement (individually or in a group) a project in collaboration with their non-for-profit organization and reflect on this experience.

- Both CSL and non-CSL students will showcase their final projects with their peers through a 3-minute mini-presentation at the end of the course.

**This course can count towards the MLCS Major and towards the Certificate in International Learning.*

**The optional/volunteer CSL (Community Service Learning) component can also count towards the MLCS Major experiential learning requirement and towards a Certificate in Community Service Learning.*

Course Format: The objectives of this course will be met through a combination of synchronous (live) and asynchronous (video-recorded) lectures and guest presentations, in-class group discussions and assigned readings and audiovisual materials.

Texts:

Required:

Simon During (Editor), *The Cultural Studies Reader 2nd edition*, New York: Routledge, 1993.

(Note: We will be using this 2nd edition as it is free and fully accessible online).

All other readings and audiovisual materials will be provided through e-class links.

Additional Course Fees

Yes No

Important Dates: [See Academic Schedule in current Calendar](#)

First Day of Class: September 1, 2020

Add/Delete Date: September 15, 2020

50% Withdrawal Date: October 2, 2020

Fall Term Reading Week: November 9-13, 2020

Withdrawal Date: November 30, 2020

Last Day of Class: December 3, 2020

Components of Course Grade (see “Explanatory Notes”):

Both Tracks: Non-CSL and CSL

<i>Participation/Discussions:</i>	20% (ongoing)
<i>5 Critical e-posts @ 5% each:</i>	25% (Sept 9, Sept 23, Oct 7, Oct 26, Nov 18)
<i>Postcard Vignette/Instagram post:</i>	10% (Oct 19)
<i>3-minute final project report:</i>	5% (Nov 24)

Non-CSL Track	CSL Track
<i>Final Project (40%): Breakdown</i>	<i>Final Project (40%): Breakdown</i>
<i>*proposal: 15% (Oct. 23)</i>	<i>*CSL project proposal: 10% (Oct. 7th)</i>

* <i>final paper/or creative work:</i>	25% (Dec. 8)	* <i>final project:</i>	20% (Dec 8)
		* <i>CSL reflection:</i>	10 % (Dec 15)

Explanatory Notes on Assignments: (*Detailed guidelines will be provided on e-class*)

Notes:

- *All class assignments will be submitted through e-class by the due dates (unless noted otherwise). In case of any unforeseen technological issues with e-class, you may send your assignments to me by email by the due date with a written note explaining why it was not possible for you to use e-class.*
- *If you experience any internet issues during class time and are not able to join or re-join a Zoom session in progress, follow the U of A trouble-shooting advice or contact ITS to get help and notify me by email at your earliest convenience.*
- *If the instructor plans to record any live class Zoom sessions (e.g. if there is a guest-speaker), they will notify all students beforehand to allow them to hide their video feed (if they would like to do this).*

Attendance/Participation (20%): While students are encouraged to participate in synchronous/live sessions—they may opt for both synchronous/asynchronous engagement:

- Synchronous/live session:** Attendance will be documented the first 5 minutes of Zoom class start time. Participation will consist of active engagement through verbal (audio) or textual (chat function) contributions to class discussions and through break-out-room group discussions that evidence reading assignments/videos for that day have been completed adequately. After the live session has ended, each student will be asked to respond to a set of questions (**150-200** words max.) in the e-class forum highlighting class and group discussions. Their grade will be a combination of attendance/group participation (10%) and their e-post summary (10%).
- Asynchronous (own time) viewing:** Students who are unable to attend a live session must complete any readings/assignments/videos for that day. Participation will consist of having demonstrated adequate completion/understanding of the readings/videos for that day as evidenced through answering a set of questions about these (**200-250** words max.) submitted to the e-class forum. This grade will be based solely on the e-post submitted for that day (20%).

Note: During live Zoom class sessions, students can opt to have their video on or off and can participate by choosing the “hands” icon in the chat function which will allow the instructor to unmute them (oral participation) or they can choose to type their question/comments in the chat function. During Zoom group break-out sessions, students can opt to have their video on or off and can engage with their peers either through oral participation or they can type their questions/comments in the chat function.

5 Critical e-posts @5% each (25%) due (Sept 9, Sept 23, Oct 7, Oct 26, Nov 18): Students will be asked to submit 5 critical e-posts (400 words max. in length each) throughout the semester. For each post, students will be asked to identify TWO KEY IDEAS in the reading and explain

them in their own words. They will be asked to engage critically with the text by asking questions such as: “Why is this [key idea/text/quotation etc. important? And “How are these concepts or examples relevant (or not) to cultural practices/icons/traditions etc. today?”

- Full marks (5%) will be received for completing the critical e-post adequately;
- Half-marks (2.5%) will be received if the work appears last minute or shows evidence of not having completed the reading or failure to comprehend the main ideas of the text.
- A Zero (0%) will be received if you choose not to submit anything.

Postcard Vignette/Instagram post (10%) due Oct 19: This assignment aims to empower students to take ownership of a popular cultural ‘object/artifact’ in their possession by creating a digital portrait of it (or creating art, short video-clip, song etc.) inspired by it and writing a postcard-like micro-narrative about this ‘artifact’, taking into account one or two of the cultural theories addressed in the course. (*Students can opt to have the instructor post these onto a private Instagram account to share with the class or can just submit it to the instructor through e-class as a word.doc/word.docx post-card. Guidelines and examples will be provided through e-class.*

Final Project (40%):

Non-CSL Track:

Final project proposal (15%) due Oct 23: Students will be asked to develop a proposal to explain the final topic they wish to develop. There are two non-CSL options:

Non-CSL option 1: Write a critical research paper on a cultural practice/product/celebrity etc.
or

Non-CSL option 2: Carry out a creative project in an alternative format (e.g. art/collage/video/song/dance).

The proposal must explain:

- a) What cultural practice/product/celebrity etc. they wish to write a critical cultural analysis on/ or what alternative creative project they plan to develop.
- b) Why this cultural practice/product/celebrity/medium is being selected.
- c) What cultural theory/ies addressed in this course they will use in their written analysis or creative project, and explain how they will use these and why.
- d) The proposal must also include a preliminary list of scholarly and non-scholarly sources that will be consulted on this research paper/or creative project. (**Our subject area librarian will prepare a helpful sheet to aid you in selecting resources*).

Non-CSL Final project (25%) due Dec 8: Once the project proposal has been approved, students can work on their final critical research essay or creative project. If doing the essay, it must be between 2,000-2,500 words max. double spaced 12 size font (excluding the bibliography) and must be formatted in the MLA style (8th edition): https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html

If doing a creative project (art, song, video, dance etc.), your work must be accompanied by a 500-word explanation of this work and how it relates to a cultural theory/ies addressed in the

course. (All essays or creative works must be original and must not have been submitted to any other courses or venues).

or

CSL Track:

CSL project proposal (10%) due by Oct 7: By week 5 students (in groups or as individuals) will be asked to hand in a Project Proposal. They will be provided with a template where they will:

- a) Address a key issue/question/need they will work on for their community organization.
- b) Explain how they will communicate/engage with their community partner.
- c) Explain how they will communicate/collaborate effectively with their team members.
- d) Develop a feasible timeline with stated goals/tasks to ensure completion of the project.
- e) Include individual team member project proposals and explain how these fit into the larger picture.

(*Students will be provided a CSL project proposal example from the CSL office).

CSL Final Project (20%) due Dec 8th: Once the Project Proposal has been approved by both the course instructor and community partner, each student group (or individual) will complete their project and hand it in to the course instructor and community partner. The format/medium and expectations of the final project will have already been agreed/approved from the project proposal.

CSL reflection piece (10%) due Dec 15: Upon completion of their CSL project and placement (20 hours), students will be provided with a set of questions to reflect upon their experience (500 words in length). Guidelines will be provided in e-class.

**Both Tracks: 3-minute final project report (5%).* Towards the end of the course, students will be asked to share with their peers a 3-minute mini presentation/report summarizing their final project/creative work. Guidelines will be provided in e-class. (Due on Nov 24. Presentations will be held on Nov 26th and Dec 1).

Explanatory Notes on Experiential Learning:

Experiential learning is students' purposeful engagement in direct experience, focused reflection, and authentic assessment in order to promote learners' initiative, increase knowledge, develop skills and strategies, clarify values, and apply knowledge in the real-world setting (adapted from [the Association of Experiential Education](#)). Experiential learning may include Community-service learning, project-based learning, field work, or other type of activity that allows students to apply their knowledge in practice in a multitude of settings inside and outside of the classroom. For more information on experiential learning in MLCS see [URL](#).

*In this course, students who opt for CSL (Community-service learning) will be required to volunteer at least 20 hours of their time through either remote or in-person activities with their non-for-profit organization. (Students must track their hours to ensure completion. Hours can include: Learning about their organization/research (online or in person), meetings with their organization (online or in person), any travel time required for project work, group meetings

(online or in person), working on their individual or group proposals, working on their tasks/projects etc.)

Required Notes:

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

Student Responsibilities:

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](#) 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.

All students should consult [the Academic Integrity website](#). If you have any questions, ask your instructor.

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](#).

Learning and Working Environment:

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students, faculty and staff are able to work and study 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](#).

Sexual Violence Policy:

It is the policy of the University of Alberta that sexual violence committed by any member of the University community is prohibited and constitutes misconduct. Resources and more information can be found at <https://www.ualberta.ca/campus-life/sexual-violence>

Territorial Statement:

“The University of Alberta acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, and respects the histories, languages, and cultures of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community.”
(from the beginning of the Calendar).

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 and participation through synchronous or asynchronous delivery is optimal for 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.

Deferral of term work is a privilege and not a right; there is no guarantee that a deferral will be granted. Misrepresentation of facts to gain a deferral is a serious breach of the Code of Student Behaviour.

In this course, attendance and participation in group discussions (e-posts) are an essential part of the course and constitute 20% of the final grade. Students are expected to participate actively in class/group discussions and e-posts, having thoughtfully completed their readings for that day. In the case of an unforeseen emergency, students may request an excused absence within two working days through email (providing an explanation/proper documentation). In the case of religious holidays, students should contact the instructor within the first two weeks of the semester to plan in advance for how missed components attendance/participation will be met.

Policy for Late Assignments:

All assignments should be handed in on the stated deadline. Students who consult in advance with the instructor regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the instructor, be granted an extension just one time throughout the course without penalty. Should a student be given an extension for a late assignment but fail to abide by the new deadline, no further extension will be granted and the student will receive a zero for that assignment. In case of an emergency which has impeded the student from submitting an assignment by the deadline, an email should be sent to the instructor within 48 hours of the due date explaining the situation. Unless supported by substantial reasons, a grade of zero will be assigned to any work not submitted on time.

Disclaimer:

Any typographical errors in this syllabus are subject to change and will be announced in class and posted on e-class. The date of the final examination is set by the Registrar and takes precedence over the final examination date reported in this syllabus.

Student Resources:

The best all-purpose website for student services is: <https://www.ualberta.ca/current-students>.

Accessibility Resources: (1 – 80 SUB)

The University of Alberta is committed to creating work and learning communities that inspire and enable all people to reach their full potential. Accessibility Resources promotes an accessible, inclusive, and universally designed environment. For general information to register for services visit the [Accessibility Resources](#) webpage.

The Academic Success Centre: (1-80 SUB)

[The Academic Success Centre](#) offers a variety of workshops on effective study and exam strategies. There are in-person and online sessions available for a modest fee.

The Centre for Writers: (1-42 Assiniboia Hall)

The [Centre for Writers](#) offers free one-on-one writing support to students, faculty, and staff. Students can request consultation for a writing project at any stage of development. Instructors can request class visits and presentations.

Health and Wellness Support: There are many health and community services available to current students. For more information visit the [Health and Wellness Support](#) webpage.

Office of the Student Ombuds:

The [Office of the Student Ombuds](#) offers confidential interviews, advice and support to students facing academic, discipline, interpersonal and financial difficulties.

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

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