

DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES

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

2017 SPAN 333: B1
Reading Popular Culture
(Winter Term)

Instructor: Dr. Ann De León
Office: Arts 308-C
Telephone: N/A Fax: 780-492-9106
E-mail: adeleon1@ualberta.ca

Time: M,W, F 12-12:50PM
Place: HC1-15
Office Hours: W, 1:30-2:30PM
or by appointment
Course Website: eclass



Course Prerequisite: None

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:

In this course we will thematically explore how various popular cultural expressions in Latin America have contributed to or gone against projects of national identity.

Particular attention will be paid to religion, festivals, museums, sports, food, fashion, film, print, and new media and how these dynamic and often hybrid combinations have helped to shape the lives of Latin Americans.

Some of the questions that will be addressed in the course include (but are not limited to): 1) How do we define popular culture vs. high culture? Who gets to decide? What role do national projects and the construction of national identity play in this? 2) How have the unique historical, religious, political, social etc. conditions of different Latin American countries influenced the production of popular culture? 3) How do constructions of race, gender and socioeconomic status affect the production and consumption of popular culture?

Learning outcomes:

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

- 1) Identify and evaluate some of the most important Latin American popular cultural productions (mainly) from the 20th century to the present.
- 2) Understand how religion, politics, gender, race, socioeconomic status etc. have contributed to the construction of these popular cultural artifacts/performances.
- 3) Learn some basic theories on popular cultural production and increase their Spanish vocabulary on how to critically discuss a diverse array of Latin American cultural productions.
- 4) Carry out research on a popular cultural artifact/performance/song etc. of their choice and be able to write a research paper in Spanish at an intermediate/advanced level.

Texts:

All readings will be available through eclass or through the University of Alberta Libraries website.

Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):

Term Work (100% of grade):

Participation/Group work:	15%
In class Midterm (February 1st, 2017):	25%
In Class Presentation in pairs—sign up by week 2.	15%
Term work (4 critical eposts on eclass at 5% each)	20%
Final paper (due by email on April 21st, 2017:	25%
TOTAL	100%

Explanatory Notes on Assignments:

Class Participation/ Presentations: It is imperative that the students attend class prepared, i.e. having done the readings (thoughtfully) and also be ready to engage in active participation in class discussions. In pairs, students will also have to sign up (by

week two of the course) to do a 20-minute presentation on a particular topic. A list will be provided with topics, dates, and guidelines for the presentation.

Term work: Students will be asked to write one small paragraph posted on the eclass forum (400 words max.) reacting to a text/film assigned. They will do this a total of 4 times throughout the semester. Each small paragraph will be worth 5% each for a total of 20%. Detailed guidelines will be provided in class.

Exams: There will be one in-class midterm test on February 1st, 2017. (A midterm test review will take place that week in class on Monday March 27th, 2017).

Final paper: Students will have to write a final (**6-8 page double-spaced**) paper in Spanish based on a research topic of their choice relevant to the class materials. The essay topic will be pre-approved by the professor. Final essay is due by email April 21, 2017.

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 <http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/en/CodesofConductandResidenceCommunityStandards/CodeofStudentBehaviour.aspx>) 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 [Office of Judicial Affairs](#) 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 of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the content author(s) or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material 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 documented with a sign up sheet and will be factored as part of the participation component of the course. Note though that simply attending the course will not guarantee a high participation mark, so it is essential for the student to thoughtfully engage in individual or group activities.

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	%
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.	A+	4.0	97-100
	A	4.0	93-96
	A-	3.7	90-92
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.	B+	3.3	87-89
	B	3.0	83-86
	B-	2.7	80-82
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.	C+	2.3	77-79
	C	2.0	73-76
	C-	1.7	70-72
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.	D+	1.3	65-69
	D	1.0	60-64
Failure.	F	0.0	0-59