

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**

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

2017-2018 LA ST 360: Latin America in its Literature (in Translation)
(B1 Winter Term)

Instructor: Russell Cobb
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Time: 2:00-2:50 MWF
Place: HC 1-15
Office Hours: Mondays, 3:00-5:00
or by appointment

Course Prerequisite: None

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

Yes No, not needed, no such projects approved

Community Service Learning component

No

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

Additional mandatory Instructional fees (approved by Board of Governors)

Yes No

Course Description and Objectives:

From drug queens and ruthless dictators to mad scientists and cultural innovators, Latin American literature offers a window into life in the rest of the Americas. In this course, we exam lives on the margins of society in Latin America through the region's literature: Cuban true-crime detectives, Colombian drug lords, and victims of dictatorship. If you liked *Narcos*, come get a much fuller sense of the complexities of life in Latin America. Class time will be divided between lecture and discussion, and student work will centre on research of topics of student interest related to coursework.

Course Learning Outcomes: At the end of this course, successful students will be able to:

- demonstrate a basic understanding of Latin American literature by describing and critically reflecting on key events, figures, movements, issues, and attitudes.
 - define and discuss some of the key terms and concepts in literary theory.
 - write critically about Latin America's relationship to the rest of the world, especially Europe and North America.
 - produce a work of depth through a traditional research paper that showcases your expertise in one aspect of Latin American life
 - build capacity for teamwork through presentations and group discussions
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Texts (all required):

Leonardo Padura Fuentes, *Adios, Hemingway*.
Roberto Bolaño, *The Secret of Evil*.
Arturo Perez-Reverte, *The Queen of the South*
Domitila de Chungara, *Let me Speak!*
Isabel Allende, *House of the Spirits*

Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):

Term work: 100%

Close reading assignment: 22.5% **Feb. 9**
Research Prospectus 5% **March 16**
Final project: 22.5% **April 13**
Physical class participation: 10%
Written class participation in class forum: 20% **various dates**
Quizzes x 4: 20% (5% each) various dates

Date of Deferred Final Exam (if applicable):

Recommended; please consult the following site:
[http://www.registrar.ualberta.ca/calendar/Regulations-and-Information/Academic-Regulation/23.5.html#23.5.6\(3\)](http://www.registrar.ualberta.ca/calendar/Regulations-and-Information/Academic-Regulation/23.5.html#23.5.6(3))

Explanatory Notes on Assignments:

Close reading assignment (22.5%) Feb. 9:

3-4 page literary analysis of a text from class using tools and vocabulary developed in class. Hand in via email.

Research Prospectus (5%) March 16

Will include annotated bibliography of at least five sources (3-4 sentences per source), a brief statement (one paragraph) on the question to be explored, why you chose the topic, and your "plan of attack" (methodology and research plan).

Written Class participation (22.5%):

Approximately 4-5 times during the term, contributions to a course forum on discussion of texts will be evaluated. Writing will be informal and not based on research, but will engage with both a). texts assigned, b). class discussion. Each contribution will be 200-300 words in length.

Physical Class Participation (10%)

This portion of the grade exclusively measures your attendance. You are granted two free absences. After that, this grade decreases 10% per absence, with exception for cases of personal illness or domestic affliction. Three late arrivals=one absence.

Final project (20%)

Students will research one specific question in Latin American literature (to be cleared with professor by March 13). The final project will be developed in accordance with the student's interest the topics of class material, and can either: 1. A creative project based around a model of narrative studied in class or 2. A research project on a critical topic in literary studies. 3. An annotated translation of nontranslated work of Latin American literature. Word count must be at least 1800 words, not to exceed 2200 (Approximately 6-8pages) Due on April 13 via email or Google Docs.

Quizzes x 4: 20% (5% each) various dates

Quizzes will be straightforward tests of content covered in class and in readings through true/false, multiple choice, and fill in the blank. Students who complete readings and attend class should have no issues with quizzes.

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 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 “Physical Class Participation” component of the course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

In this course, attendance is evaluated by your presence in the classroom, your active participation in classroom discussions, and presence in online forums. Sleeping, texting, and facebooking in class will reduce your participation grade. See above for exact policies. Every absence after two unexcused absences results in a 10% reduction of the class participation segment of the course. Participation will also be assessed by preparation for discussion.

Policy for Late Assignments:

Students who consult in advance with an 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 with no penalty. Late excuses will not be accepted for any reason. Assignments handed in late will be deducted 10% per each working day (Monday-Friday) they are handed in late.

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 |