

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**

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

**2017-2018** MLCS 697: Latin American Encounters in the Contact Zone  
(Winter Term)

Instructor: Russell Cobb

Time: MWF 2:00-2:50

Office: 409-C

Place: HC 1-15

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Office Hours: Monday 3:00-5:00,

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or by appointment

Personal Website: <https://www.ualberta.ca/arts/about/people-collection/russell-cobb>

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**Course Prerequisite:** Consent of Department

**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

Required     Optional     None

**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 focus on literal and metaphoric translations as we examine the theme of “encounters” between cultures in Latin American literature. Class time will be divided between lecture and discussion, and student work will centre on research of topics of student interest related to coursework.

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- define and discuss some of the key terms and concepts in translation and cultural theory.
- produce an original translation of a work of Latin American literature intended for publication
- deliver an undergraduate class with lecture and discussion on the theme of Afro-Cuban literature

**Texts:**

Argueta, Manlio. *A Day in the Life*.

De Jesus, Maria Carolina. *Child of the Dark*.

Gonzalez Echevarria, *The Oxford Collection of Latin American Short Stories*

Other articles and book chapters collected on a Google Drive folder

**Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):**

1. Short analysis assignment: 20% **Feb. 9**
  - You can rewrite and edit for up to 10% added on to your assignment grade if you revise and resubmit by **Feb. 23**
2. Research Prospectus 5% **March 16**
3. Final project: 40% **April 13**
4. Physical class participation: 10%
5. Written participation in class forum of informal writing: 10% **various dates**
6. Class discussion lead (15%) **date to be determined**

**Date of Deferred Final Exam (if applicable):**

*N/A*

**Explanatory Notes on Assignments:**

Close reading assignment 20% Feb. 9:

3-4 page analysis and interpretation of a question generated from class discussion and readings. (Example: Analyze the concept of “imagined communities” or “cultural contact zones” in two texts from class). Hand in via email.

- After I return your assignment with comments, you can revise it to improve your mark by up to 10%. (Example, your initial mark of 74% becomes 84%). Revisions must be submitted by Feb. 23.

Research Prospectus (5%) March 16:

Will include annotated bibliography of at least hour 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 (10%):

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.

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

The best way to think about the quizzes is to think of a good recap of TV show or movie. There will be 10 straightforward questions about the readings and our discussions. If you do the reading and attend the discussion, you should do very well on quizzes.

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 (40%)

Students will end the course with an original translation of a significant work of literature in Spanish, either a short story or a collection of poetry. Each project will be accompanied by a three-page reflection on how themes from class inform your project. Due on April 13 via email or Google Docs.

Class discussion lead 15%

Students will be responsible for delivering an entire undergraduate class on a topic of interest in LA ST 360, incorporating lecture and discussion.

**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](http://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. 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 language 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 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.

**Important notes about attendance:**

1. Always bring a HARD COPY of the day's reading to class.
2. Refrain from any internet or social media interaction in class unless told to do so.

***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](mailto: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 Graduate Grading Scale”**

A+	97-100	Excellent
A	93-96	Excellent
A-	90-92	Excellent
B+	87-89	Good
B	79-86	Good
B-	74-78	Satisfactory

C+	68-73	Satisfactory
C	63-67	Failure
C-	58-62	Failure
D+	54-57	Failure
D-	50-53	Failure
F	00-49	Failure