

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**

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

2017-2018 SPAN 323 B2:

Latin American Literature and the Environment

(Winter Term)

Instructor: *Odile Cisneros*

Office: *Arts 218-C*

Telephone: N/A

Fax: 780-492-9106

E-mail: *cisneros@ualberta.ca*

Personal Website:

<https://www.ualberta.ca/arts/about/people-collection/odile-cisneros>

Time: *MWF 10:00 AM-10:50 AM*

Place: *HC 2-25*

Office Hours: [*MF 11:00 AM-12:00 PM*](#)

and by appointment

Course Website:

eClass under SPAN 323

Course Prerequisite: SPAN 300 or 306 or 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 N/A

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: Details provided by instructor in class

NA

Additional mandatory Instructional fees (approved by Board of Governors)

Yes No

Course Description and Objectives:

Following the recent critical trend known as “ecocriticism,” this course will explore the relations between Latin literature and the environment. As an ethically committed critical practice, ecocriticism seeks to create an awareness of our responsibilities toward the natural world beyond the human. In this view nature is not simply a human construct, but has value in and of itself. Through a series of selected readings from critical and creative texts, this course will address issues such as: What is the relationship of literature to the environment? How can we read the presence of nature in writing differently and re-imagine our relationship to the non-human world? How have writers and intellectuals in Latin America tried to create environmental

awareness through writing and activism? Is Latin America the ideal “habitat” for the new literary approach known as “ecocriticism”? This course will explore these questions and many more.

This course counts toward the [Certificate in International Learning \(CIL\)](#).

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

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

- Define ecocriticism and develop appropriate vocabulary to explore concepts and approaches in ecocriticism them.
- Discuss assumptions behind Western approaches to humans and nature and how they shape our interactions with the environment.
- Compare and contrast Western notions about nation with Native American and indigenous views.
- Name several environmental problems prevalent in Latin America.
- List 6 major intellectual figures from Latin America who have engaged arts and literature and environmental thinking and comment how they have done that.
- Describe how art and culture can uniquely inform ecological thinking and environmental attitudes.
- Perform a reading of a literary or visual text from an ecocritical perspective.
- Develop skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking as well as appropriate vocabulary and structures that will allow the students to carry out all of the above in Spanish.

Texts:

Required:

SPAN 323 Selected Readings. Posted on eClass.

Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):

Attendance (5%) and Participation (10%):	15 %
This involves an active presence in discussion and activities	
Midterm Exam (Wed., Feb. 28):	25 %
Final Exam (Wednesday, April 25, 9:00 a.m.):	30 %
Written Assignments (2), each 15 % (Due: Mon., March 12 and Wed., Apr. 11):	30 %
Total:	100%

Date of Deferred Final Exam (if applicable):

TBA as per:

[http://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=806#Examinations_\(Exams\)](http://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=806#Examinations_(Exams))

Explanatory Notes on Assignments:

This being a course primarily based on literary texts and films, students are required to attend class properly prepared, having done the readings and/or viewing specified on the class schedule. Notes and other materials for class preparation will be provided electronically by the instructor and posted on eClass; it is the student's responsibility to check the site often for updates. Attendance and participation in class discussion and activities will determine 15% of the grade.

Two written assignments (1200-1500 words) on assigned topics will be due in the course

of the semester (due: Mon., March 12 and Wed., Apr. 11) and will count for 15% of the grade each (30% total). Details on these assignments will be given by the professor ahead of time. Late assignments will lose 1% of the grade for that assignment.

One midterm exam will be given Wed., Feb. 28, based on material from the first part of the semester and will be worth 25% of the grade. The final exam on Wednesday, April 25, 9:00 a.m. will cover the material in the second part of the semester and will count for 30% of the grade.

If you have any questions and/or problems regarding the course, I am available during my office hours or by appointment.

Further details of assignments will also be discussed in the course of the semester and detailed instructions will be posted on eClass.

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 has been or 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 directs 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 and participation will count for 15% of the grade. Please see "Grade Distribution" and "Explanatory Notes on Assignments" above.

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. Otherwise, assignments may be handed in one class-day after the stated deadline without penalty, with a 1%-per-class-day penalty assessed for each subsequent class-day of lateness.

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