

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**

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

**2017-2018 SPAN 399 B1: *Special Topics: Human Rights in Latin America*  
(Winter Term)**

Instructor: Ann De León  
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Time: MWF 1-1:50PM  
Place: HC2-14  
Office Hours: M 2-3pm,  
or by appointment  
Course Website: [eclass](http://eclass)

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**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.? : 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 analyze a diverse selection of literature (poems, plays, essays, personal testimonies etc.), film and visual art of Human Rights created by some of Latin America's most and least well-known writers, artists and activists primarily from the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. These literary and artistic productions will be studied within their historical and political contexts in order to better situate them within larger social movements and international solidarity networks. These "texts" will be read as forms of protest and as creative acts of resistance against repressive governments that have carried out human rights abuses towards different sectors of the population (indigenous peoples, women, and other minorities). Students will also be exposed to various debates on the value, use, and limits of "Human Rights," in literary and artistic production in light of globalization and the ascent of global capital. (This course counts towards the CIL Certificate in International Studies:

<http://www.globaled.ualberta.ca/CertificateinInternationalLearning.aspx>)

**Learning outcomes:**

By the end of this course, students will:

- \* Have read and compared different definitions of Human Rights.
- \* Be exposed to different debates and theories on the value, use, and limits of Human Rights in Literature/Art/Activism in a Globalized world.

- \* Have an understanding of the different historical, cultural, social conditions (i.e. legacies of colonialism, racism, sexism, civil wars, dictatorships etc.) that enabled the emergence of different Latin American social justice or solidarity movements.
- \* Be able to perform a close and critical reading in Spanish of various Latin American literary texts that deal with Human Rights.
- \* Be able to understand Latin American literary and artistic Human Rights production in relation to other civil rights movements (rights of indigenous peoples, women, and other minorities).
- \* Be able give a 15-20 minute presentation in Spanish on a Latin American Human Rights case study of their choice.
- \* Gain further competence and confidence in their reading, writing, speaking and listening comprehension skills in Spanish.

**Texts:**

All reading materials will be available through eclass.

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

<b>Participation/Group work:</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>In class Midterm (February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018)</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>In Class Presentation (sign up by week 2)</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>4 small reaction papers at 5% each (dates TBA)</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>In class final test (April 11th, 2018)</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Date of Deferred Final Exam (if applicable): N/A**

**Explanatory Notes on Assignments:**

A more detailed explanation of each graded assignment will be provided on eclass.

**Participation/Group Work: 15%** class attendance and thoughtful/active participation in discussions, debates and group work.

**Midterm exam (in class): 25%** (February 14, 2018) The midterm will cover all materials read during the first half of the course and will consist of short questions and developing longer answers (mini-essays).

**In Class Presentation: 15%** (Sign up by the second week of classes). Students will be asked to do a presentation in Spanish (15-20 minutes) on a Human Rights topic/case study of their choice. Guidelines will be provided in eclass.

**Four small reaction papers: 20%** Four times throughout the semester students will be asked to write a short reaction paper in Spanish on a Human Rights case study or a theoretical reading. Students will write a small paragraph (250-350 words) reacting to the reading for that day. They will do this a total of 4 times (@ 5% each). Dates will be posted on eclass.

**Final test (in class): 25%** (April 11, 2018) The final test will cover materials read during the second half of the course and will consist of short questions and developing longer answers (mini-essays).

**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 (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 will be taken regularly with an attendance sheet and will be factored in as part of the participation component of the course (15%). Note though, that simply attending the course will not guarantee a high participation grade. It is essential that the student attend class having completed the daily assignment and that they actively and critically participate. Students who fail to attend 50% of the classes can expect to do poorly or even fail the course.

***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 2% per day late deduction. After three days, no late 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](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 Undergraduate Grading Scale”**

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	%
<b>Excellent.</b> 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.	<b>A+</b>	4.0	<b>97-100</b>
	<b>A</b>	4.0	<b>93-96</b>
	<b>A-</b>	3.7	<b>90-92</b>
<b>Good.</b> 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	<b>87-89</b>
	<b>B</b>	3.0	<b>83-86</b>
	<b>B-</b>	2.7	<b>80-82</b>
<b>Satisfactory.</b> 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.	<b>C+</b>	2.3	<b>77-79</b>
	<b>C</b>	2.0	<b>73-76</b>
	<b>C-</b>	1.7	<b>70-72</b>
<b>Poor/Minimal Pass.</b> 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.	<b>D+</b>	1.3	<b>65-69</b>
	<b>D</b>	1.0	<b>60-64</b>
<b>Failure.</b>	<b>F</b>	0.0	<b>0-59</b>