

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**

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

2016-2017 LA ST 210: Introduction to Latin American Studies: South America  
(B1 Winter Term)

Instructor: Russell Cobb

Time: 11:00-12:20 TR

Office: 409 C, Old Arts Bldg.

Place: T 1-96

Telephone: 780-938-3183 Fax: 780-492-9106

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

E-mail: [rcobb@ualberta.ca](mailto:rcobb@ualberta.ca)

or by appointment

Personal Website: <http://www.mlcs.ualberta.ca/People/Faculty/CobbRussell.aspx>

Twitter: @Scissortail74

---

**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

Optional

**Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available**

Exam registry – Students' Union

[http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services\\_and\\_businesses/services/infolink/exams](http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services_and_businesses/services/infolink/exams)

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:**

This introductory course will provide students with a panoramic view of South America using an interdisciplinary method. The course will rely mainly on a historical approach as a means to understanding the issues that have shaped South American identities, but it will also explore other means of cultural expression to better convey the rich diversity that makes up the South American continent. Class time will be devoted to the discussion of texts—movies, art, music, etc.—in relation to their historical, political, and social contexts. The active participation of students in debates and discussions is fundamental. Class presentations, readings, and discussions will be conducted in English.

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

- demonstrate a basic understanding of Latin American culture, history, and geography by describing and critically reflecting on key events, figures, movements, issues, and attitudes
  - define and discuss some of the key terms and concepts in Latin American studies.
  - write critically about Latin America's relationship to the rest of the world, especially Europe and North America.
  - produce a work of depth—either through the CSL component or 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
- 

**Texts (all required):**

John Charles Chasteen. *Born in Blood and Fire: A Concise History of Latin America*. W.W. Norton: New York, 2011. Third Edition. ISBN 0-393-92769-5 (at U of A Bookstore).

John Charles Chasteen. *Born in Blood and Fire: Latin American Voices*. W.W. Norton: New York, 2011. Third Edition.  
NOTE: This is the companion reader and is required.

Various supplementary readings on eClass. It is highly advised (although not required) that you print out the readings from eClass unless you are used to reading in-depth on the computer.

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

**Term work: 100%**

Exam 1: 20% **Feb. 16**

Research Prospectus 5% **March 30**

Final project: 20% **April 10**

Class participation in written forums on eClass and group discussion in class:  
15% **various dates**

Oral presentation 10%

Exam 2: 20% **April 6**

Benchmark quizzes: 10% (Two very short quizzes to make sure you are on the right track. Think of them as mid-mid-terms). **Jan. 24** and **March 14**

**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:**

Exams: There will be two exams, each worth 20% of the final grade. They are a straightforward test of your knowledge of course material—lecture, readings, and some class discussion. There will be one essay. There is NO final exam in this course.

Dates: February 16 and April 6

Research Prospectus (5%): 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). March 30

Class participation (15%): Students should make the effort to attend class prepared, i.e. having done the readings (thoughtfully) and also be ready to engage in active participation in class discussions and in individual and group activities. Simply showing up to class does not constitute “active” participation. Facebooking or texting during class will lower your participation grade. Approximately every fourth class will be devoted to discussion and group work—i.e., no lecture. It is during these classes that I will assess your participation. Forums will be posted approximately four times during the term to evaluate your intellectual engagement with a polemical topic. You will have one week to write them and there should be no more than one page, double-spaced. The writing is informal and you have the option of either offering your own opinion or responding to someone else’s opinion. You must post original thoughts twice, and response to others' thoughts twice as well.

Benchmark quizzes: 10% Very short true/false quizzes to gauge students’ progress, midway between midterms. Jan. 24 and March 14

Oral presentation (10%) 10 minute presentation on a topic of interest. Topics to be discussed and assigned the third week of class. You will pick some topic you’re interested in (Brazil’s “beautiful game,” cumbia music, Peruvian cuisine, etc.) and share your enthusiasm with the class.

Non-CSL students: Research essay on topic of student’s interest (20%) Students will research one specific question in Latin American Studies (to be cleared with professor by March 23). Word count must be at least 1500 words, not to exceed 2000 (Approximately 7-10 pages) Due on April 10 via email or Google Docs.

---OR---

CSL Students: Transcript and reflection on CSL project (20%)

Students will log at least 20 hours of community service while building an audio or visual documentary about Latin American culture in Edmonton through CJSR radio or the Memoria Viva Society. By April 10, students will hand in an annotated transcript of the broadcast with CJSR and Memoria Viva, along with a one-page reflection on the intersection between the project and course materials.

---

### **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 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 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 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>