

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**
<https://uofa.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

2016-2017 LA ST 414: Travel Writing
(Fall Term)

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Time: 10:00-10:50 MWF
Place: T 1-105
Office Hours: Monday, 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:
Optional

Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available

- Exam registry – Students' Union
<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/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 course will examine travel narratives based in Latin America from the Conquest to the contemporary period. We will focus on how travel writing constructs regional, ethnic, and political identities. Of special interest here is the encounter between the traveler and the Other vis à vis food, music, and history. We begin with the colonial period and then shift into 19th century travel narratives of Europeans in the newly independent continent. We conclude by examining some contemporary journalistic accounts of Latin America from the Anglo-American perspective. Class presentations, readings, and discussions will be conducted in English. And yes, you, too, will try your hand at travel writing!

Objectives. Successful students will have achieved the following:

- Define and discuss key terms and concepts in Latin American Studies like “transculturation,” “contact zones,” and “postcolonialism”
 - Recognize the stylistic differences between different genres of travel writing; i.e. *crónica*, memoir, journal, narrative nonfiction, etc.
 - Improve writing and research skills in scholarly and popular modes of writing
 - Produce a work of depth—either through the CSL component or through a traditional research paper—that showcases your expertise in one aspect of travel writing around a Latin American topic.
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Texts (all required):

Aguirre, Carmen. *Something Fierce: Memoirs of a Revolutionary Daughter*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2011. Print.

Chatwin, Bruce. *In Patagonia*. New York: Summit, 1977. Print.

Guillermoprieto, Alma, and Esther Allen. *Dancing with Cuba: A Memoir of the Revolution*. New York: Pantheon, 2004. Print.

Martínez, Oscar. *The Beast: Riding the Rails and Dodging Narcos on the Migrant Trail*. Print.

All other readings will be scanned and held in a Google Drive folder. You **MUST** print them out and bring them to class on the assigned day. Sorry trees, but you can recycle the paper later.

Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):

Term Work 100%

Explanatory Notes on Assignments:

Midterm #1 (15%) will be a short answer and short essay test held in class on October 28.

Midterm #2 (15%) will be a short answer and short essay test held in class on December 2.

Informal writing x 4 (20%) This consists of 4 short, 500 word or 2-page papers, marked out of 10 points. They are posted publically but evaluated privately. Each short informal assignment will be based around a different genre: observation, analysis, discovery (or bildungsroman), guide.

Class attendance (10%) Two “free” unexcused absences. After each one after that, this mark decreases by 10% for each absence. Arriving more than five minutes late counts as tardy. Two tardies=one absence.

Oral presentation (15%) 20 minute presentation on a topic of interest. Topics to be discussed and assigned the third week of class.

Research essay based on CSL work or topic of student’s interest (25%) This will come at the end of the course and will involve either an extensive project based on CSL or a student’s research topic. In either case, the final word count must be at least 1800 words, not to exceed 2500 (Approximately 8-12 pages) Due on December 10.

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