

SPAN 4220 Syllabus

Course Prefix: SPAN

Course Number: 4220

Course Name: Nation and Narration in Latin America

Semester: Fall 2026

Instructor Information

Instructor: Miguel Rosas Buendia

Email: mbuendia3@gatech.edu

General Course Information

Course Description:

This course examines the connection between nation and narration in Latin American literature and film and explores the narrative construction of national identities. This course studies the diverse ways in which the notions of nation, nationalism, and national identity have been constructed in Latin America following the wars of Independence in the early 19th century and throughout the subsequent decades up to the present. The course examines how states were formed from colonial territories and how communities and national identities were constructed within a given historical context and under the influence of dominant ideologies. The course will focus on four countries: Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, and Peru. The course will employ an interdisciplinary approach, integrating concepts and perspectives from the social sciences, as well as history, literature, and the arts.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course student will be able to:

- Students will become familiar with historical periods, cultural products, and political ideologies that carry particular significance in the recent history of the countries studied.
- Students will develop a conceptual framework for examining historical and cultural processes that are critical to contemporary political and social issues in the region.
- Students will explore how the notion of nation and its narrative forms have operated as powerful, yet ambivalent, platforms for articulating Latin America's heterogeneous communities.
- Students will be exposed to a variety of academic perspectives from diverse disciplines, such as history, literature, and the visual arts, to critically analyze the philosophical and ethical implications of the notions of nation and national identity.

- Students will acquire and apply analytical and communicative strategies to approach classroom materials in an interdisciplinary manner, with an emphasis on developing intercultural competence.
- Students will develop oral and written projects through multiple stages, experiencing the collaborative and social aspects of these assignments in the target language.

Required Course Materials:

All course materials (discussions, assignments, grades etc.) will be hosted in Canvas.

Grading Policy:

Grading for the course will be broken down as follows:

- Participation: 16%
- Quizzes (12): 18%
- Asynchronous homework: 30%
- Presentations (3): 24%
- Final project: 12%

Description of Graded Components

Attendance and Participation: 16%

Attendance is mandatory, and students are expected to attend all scheduled sessions. Failure to attend an in-person class meeting (Mondays) will be recorded as an absence. For each absence, one (1) point will be deducted from the student's final grade for the course. In cases of absence, students must provide medical or other official documentation substantiating the reason for the absence and must contact the instructor via email. In each case, the instructor will determine the appropriate steps regarding the participation grade and any assignments associated with the missed session. Students are required to complete all assigned materials prior to each class meeting. Participation will be evaluated according to two primary criteria: evidence of preparation based on engagement with the assigned materials and the initiative to contribute constructively to class discussion.

Quizzes (12): 18%

At the beginning of each in-person session (Mondays), students will complete a brief, one-question quiz based on the assigned material for that class. These quizzes are intended to verify students' preparation and engagement with the required readings and materials. There will be a total of 12 quizzes, and all quizzes will count toward the final course grade. No make-up quizzes, substitute assignments, or alternative assessments will be permitted to replace any missed weekly quiz.

Asynchronous Homework - 30%

Students are required to complete designated assignments covering the second part of each week's content. Assignments are completed individually unless otherwise specified; some assignments consist of group conversation exercises. All assignments must be completed by the specified deadlines. Late assignments will not be accepted. All materials, instructions, and submission guidelines for each assignment are provided on Canvas.

Presentations (3) - 24%

Students will complete three group presentations over the course of the semester. The purpose of these presentations is to deepen and, where appropriate, broaden the topics studied in the course. Students are expected to demonstrate a critical engagement with the assigned sources as well as a creative and analytical approach to the course themes. Detailed instructions and expectations for each presentation will be provided on Canvas in advance of the scheduled presentation dates.

Final Project - 12%

The final project will be completed in pairs. Students will select a topic or guiding question that allows them to connect two or three course materials from different units. Using this shared point of analysis, students will identify similarities and differences in how each material approaches the question of the nation and national community. The project has two components. During the final weeks of the semester, students will deliver an in-class presentation in which they introduce the selected topic, provide a justification for their choice, and outline preliminary ideas. After the conclusion of classes, students will upload a recorded version of their final presentation to Canvas. Detailed instructions will be available on Canvas.

Grade Scale

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

- A 100%-90%
- B 89%-80%
- C 79%-70%
- D 69%-60%
- F <60%

Course Policies

Modified Operations and Digital Learning Days

In the event of a weather-related campus closure or other emergency requiring modified operations, the instructor will communicate with all students via Canvas regarding class cancellations and/or the implementation of a digital learning day. If such an event coincides with an asynchronous assignment day, students are expected to proceed with

the assigned work as scheduled. However, reasonable accommodations will be considered in cases where circumstances (e.g., loss of internet access) prevent a student from completing online work. The instructor will exercise flexibility as appropriate under these conditions.

Extensions, Late Assignments, & Re-Scheduled/Missed Exams

No late assignments or extensions will be granted. Please plan accordingly. Contact your instructor in the case of extenuating circumstances.

Collaboration & Group Work

Language learning occurs in a community of people. However, the following forms of assistance are not allowed for doing any of the work in this course: copying (from someone else's assignments or from another source [a reading in a textbook, the Internet, etc.]) without clear attribution of the source; having another student, a tutor, or a friend suggest changes or correct the work you are to turn in; completing assignments in consultation with other students ("working together") unless specified by your instructor; translating directly from another source; and especially using electronic translation programs. These restrictions apply to any work turned in for this course. The issue of digital plagiarism has raised concerns about ethics, student writing experiences, and academic integrity. GT subscribes to a digital plagiarism detection program called Turnitin, which may be used to check assignments submitted in this course.

Academic Integrity:

Georgia Tech strives to foster a community founded on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest ethical standards. Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, which will investigate the incident and determine the appropriate penalty for the violation. It is strongly recommended that you familiarize yourself with these sites:

- Honor Challenge — <https://osi.gatech.edu/students/honor-code>
- Office of Student Integrity — <http://www.osi.gatech.edu/index.php/>

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. See <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/> for an articulation of some basic expectation that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at (404)894-2563 or <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>, as

soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Core IMPACTS statement:

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Humanities area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help students master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I interpret the human experience through creative, linguistic, and philosophical works?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze and interpret the meaning, cultural significance, and ethical implications of literary/philosophical texts or of works in the visual/performing arts.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Ethical Reasoning
- Information Literacy
- Intercultural Competence

Campus Resources for Students

The Center for Academic Success (success.gatech.edu/) offers a variety of academic support services to help students succeed academically at Georgia Tech (e.g. tutoring, peer-led study groups, study skills, etc.).

The Office of Disability Services (disabilityservices.gatech.edu/) ensures that students with disabilities have equal access to all programs and activities offered at Georgia Tech. They provide documentation and officially sanctioned requests for accommodation for students and serve as a resource for instructors as they build learning environments to meet the needs of all students.

OMED: Educational Services (omed.gatech.edu/) is the unit charged by Georgia Tech with the retention, development, and performance of the complete student learner who is traditionally underrepresented: African American, Hispanic, and Native American. OMED's programming and academic support services are aimed at equipping all students with strategies to navigate the Georgia Tech environment.

Support for Students in Distress

Counseling Center counseling.gatech.edu/ 404-894-2575

Dean of Students (Student Life) studentlife.gatech.edu/ 404-385-8772

GT Police police.gatech.edu/ 404-894-2500

Stamps Health Services health.gatech.edu/ 404-894-1420