

Nation and Narration in Latin America

Last Updated: Fri, 08/01/2025

Course prefix: SPAN

Course number: 4220

Section: A

CRN (you may add up to five):

88830

Instructor First Name: Miguel

Instructor Last Name: Rosas Buendia

Semester: Fall

Academic year: 2025

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:

Cultural and Historical Knowledge:

This course aims to build on students' background in Latin American studies and expand their understanding of the significance of cultural and historical processes in the region.

- 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.

Critical Reading and Thinking

Critical reading and thinking imply developing the ability to analyze, interpret, and evaluate information, concepts, and contexts. Since notions such as nation, nationalism, and national identity are common to all citizens of any given country, this course explores the basis of these notions in the Western world and the countries studied.

- 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.

Speaking and Writing Skills

As a language class, all conceptual goals are accompanied by assignments that aim to develop students' language skills at multiple levels.

- 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:

N/A

Grading policy:

Assignments

- Attendance and Participation: 16%
- Discussions (16): 32%
- Essays (1): 12%
- Presentations (3): 27%
- Final project: 13%

Grading Scale

A – 90-100%

Superior performance: demonstrating advanced understanding of the material studied and participation in the assignments.

B – 80-89%

Above-average performance: demonstrating good understanding of the material studied and participation in the assignments

C – 70-79%

Average performance: demonstrating a competent and acceptable understanding of the material studied and participation in the assignments.

D – 60-69%

Below-average performance: needs substantive work to demonstrate an acceptable understanding of the material studied and sufficient participation in the assignments.

F – 0-59%

Unacceptable performance: failure to meet the minimum criteria of the course.

Attendance policy:

Attendance is mandatory, and students are expected to attend all sessions. Not attending a scheduled class session in person (on Mondays) and online (on Wednesdays) results in an absence. The student may miss one (1) session during the semester without justification. It is recommended to reserve these absences for emergency cases. After the second non-attendance, one (1) point will be subtracted from the final grade of the course for each non-attendance. In the case of an absence, the student must submit medical or other official documentation that proves the reason for the absence. Please contact me via email. In each case, I will determine the steps to follow regarding the participation grade and the assignments for the session. The student will be required to work on assigned materials before each session. The professor will evaluate participation under two central criteria: the evidence of having worked on the materials before class and the initiative to intervene productively in the discussion.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

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/>

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

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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