



Rewriting Nicaragua: Literacies, Rights, and Social Change

LACB-3000 (3 Credits / 45 class hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
Nicaragua: Youth Culture, Literacy, and Media

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus is representative of a typical term. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Course Description

Contemporary Nicaragua is still immersed in the after-effects of the Revolution that took place in the 1980s. The Sandinista Revolution opened up social themes never previously discussed: literacy campaigns, in particular, empowered poor Nicaraguans to become knowledgeable about their rights and to imagine—indeed, demand—a better world for themselves. At the same time, important movements in the world of literature and the arts accompanied these changes, and another set of voices emerged as protest and hope were expressed in myriad creative genres. These conversations, initiated in the recent past, continue to develop today, albeit in increasingly wider forms and through increasingly diverse venues (oral, written, digital/social media, etc.).

This seminar provides an overview of Nicaraguan realities before and since the Revolution. In particular, it focuses on the National Literacy Campaign as a point of origin for the expansion of awareness of human rights, health and educational rights, and as a backdrop to current demands for both information and expression. It surveys these contemporary challenges and struggles to attain basic rights (human rights, access to education and healthcare, sexual and religious freedoms, etc.) and also reviews the politics of speaking up and speaking out in Nicaragua. Through lectures, readings, site visits, and excursions, students gain knowledge and critical perspectives on post-revolutionary Nicaragua, which will provide them with a frame in which to study youth culture and expression.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the seminar, students will be able to:

- Discuss the significance of the Sandinista Revolution and the National Literacy Campaign within this context.
- Analyze how Nicaraguans have utilized both traditional forms of political protest as well as artistic/creative modes for framing demands for change.
- Critically analyze the successes of the Revolution and the larger social challenges still faced by a diverse Nicaraguan population.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught entirely in Spanish, with the exceptions of lectures on the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua.

Course Schedule

*Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.

The different topics of the seminar are imparted through oral presentations, combined with the study of the basic recommended bibliography, active participation by the students, and the organization of debates once the study of each topic is concluded. The professors will be available to conduct bilateral consultations with those students who request it. All topics will be complemented by field trips to political and cultural centers as well as the preparation of academic tasks and meetings with notable figures from the nation's political and cultural life.

Module 1: Nicaraguan History Before the Revolution

- Indigenous History/Culture, *Mestizaje*, and Colonialism
- Dictators and and Political Pacts
- Under the Shadow of the Eagle: US Regional Hegemony

Module 2: The Revolution and the National Literacy Campaign

- Revolutions: Expanding Concepts of Rights and Citizenship
- Polarizing Ideologies and Cycles of Violence

Module 3: Contemporary Literacies

- From Human Rights to Sexual Rights
- Environmental and Economic Literacies

Module 4: Literacy and Social Change in Nicaragua Today

- Who is speaking, who is writing for and to whom?
- The Role of Social Media and Mobilizations for Change

Excursions

Excursions to both rural and urban areas throughout Nicaragua link classroom learning to interactions with diverse community experiences of different literacies, the Revolution itself, and other themes covered in the seminar.

- Several historical/revolutionary sites that fit the framing aspect of this course. The National Palace, Peace Park, the Workers' Plaza, and the birthplace of Carlos Fonseca, founder of the FSLN.
- Several NGOs and organizations concerned with rights. Centro Nicaragüense de Derechos Humanos. Red de Migrantes. Red de Mujeres Contra la Violencia.
- An excursion to Cuba provides a particularly compelling comparative look at Revolution and Literacy in both countries.

Required Readings

- Kinloch Tijerino, F. (2010). *Historia de Nicaragua* (3rd ed.). Managua: IHNCA-UCA Publications. (Only available in Managua.)
- Walker, T. W., & Wade, C. (2011). *Nicaragua: Living in the shadow of the eagle* (5th Ed.). Boulder: Westview Press.

Other readings will be compiled and available in the program's virtual classroom.

Recommended Readings

- Adendroth, M. (2009). *Rebel Literacy: Cuba's National Literacy Campaign and critical global citizenship*. Sacramento: Litwin Books.
- Babb, F. (2001). *After revolution: Mapping gender and cultural politics in neoliberal Nicaragua*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Kalantzis, M., & Cope, B. (2012.) *Literacies*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Kalantzis, M., & Cope, B. (1999). *Multi-literacies: Literacy learning and the design of social futures*. New York: Routledge.
- Kellner, D. (2000). New technologies/new literacies: Reconstructing education for the new millennium. *Teaching Education*, 11(3), 245-265.
- Kunzle, D. (1995). *The murals of revolutionary Nicaragua 1979–1992*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lankshear, C., & Knobel, M. (2011). *Literacies: Social, cultural and historic perspectives*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Lankshear, C., & Knobel, M. (2011). *New literacies: Everyday practices and social learning*. New York: Open University Press.
- Morris, K.E. (2010). *Unfinished Revolution: Daniel Ortega and Nicaragua's Struggle for Liberation*. Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

In different modes, all written work asks students to critically engage lectures and readings, with experiences in the local sites, homestay families, and on excursions. Written essays, oral and visual presentations, with supporting documentation, can also be used.

Thematic Seminar: Literacy, Rights and Social Change (LRSC)		
Tareas	Porcentaje	Fecha de Entrega
• Campo: Critical Reflection Essay (e-mail)	30%	
• Coast: Artistic Project	30%	
• Cuba: Critical Reflection Essay (e-mail)	30%	
• Participation/Attendance	10%	
Total	100%	

Grading Scale

94-100%	A	Excellent
90-93%	A-	
87-89%	B+	
84-86%	B	Above Average
80-83%	B-	

77-79%	C+	
74-76%	C	Average
70-73%	C-	
67-69%	D+	
64-66%	D	Below Average
below 64	F	Fail

Expectations and Policies

- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies. No plagiarism or cheating; nothing unethical.
- Respect differences of opinion, including classmates', lecturers, and local constituents engaged with on the visits. You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process. Also, refer to the specific information available in the Student Handbook and the Program Dossier given to you at Orientation.

Disability Services: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at disabilityservices@sit.edu for information and support in facilitating an accessible educational experience. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services, including a link to the online request form, can be found on the Disability Services website at <http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices>.