

Winter 2018: Mexico: Past & Present

(Chc/Lat 169 / Hist 169 / Intl St 179 / Soc Sci 189)

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Course Description:

Mexico is an enigma—from tropical rainforests to searing deserts, pinnacles of wealth to depths of despair, it is a land of extremes. On the verge of collapse more than once, Mexico now boasts one of the world's largest economies. This course introduces students to the story of Mexico's formation and evolution from colonial times to the present. This will be a broad analysis of the place that history has played in national political structures, economic formations, and social movements. We will examine the indigenous roots of pre-Columbian Mexico, the impact of conquest and colonization, the struggle of nation-building, revolution, reconstruction, and development. Particular attention will focus on the forces and processes—both internal and external—that have contributed to shaping a Mexican identity. These issues will be covered through lectures, videos, and primary/secondary readings. Along the way, students will gain practical skills in critical thinking, reading, and writing through assignments that will stress identifying and building arguments, analyzing and presenting evidence, and employing effective writing styles.



Required book:

Mariano Azuela, [The Underdogs](#) (Hackett Publishing Co., 2006) (ISBN: 9780872208346)

Selected articles: available on course website

Requirements:

Each class will be a combination of lecture, discussion, and videos. Grading is based on a midterm (25% / February 9), a final (35% / March 21), one 4-5 page paper based on the readings (25% / March 2), and attendance as well as participation in discussion sections (15%). Exams will combine short identifications and longer essays based on the assigned readings and material covered in lecture and discussion section. Students, therefore, must attend lectures, finish all readings by the assigned date, and be prepared for classroom discussion.

Course Schedule

Week 1:

- January 8) Introduction: Vital Statistics, Geography, & Resources
- January 10) Pre-Columbian Civilization in Mesoamerica
- January 12) Indigenous Imperialism: The Mexicas in Context

Readings:

- Beezley, William H. "Diversity: More Kinds of Corn than One Can Count," in Mexico: The Essentials (Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 1-15.
 - Lucero, Lisa J. "The Collapse of the Classic Maya: A Case for the Role of Water Control," American Anthropologist 104:3 (Sept., 2002), pp. 814-826.
 - Saunders, Nicholas J. "A Dark Light: Reflections on Obsidian in Mesoamerica," World Archaeology 33:2 (Oct. 2001), pp. 220-236.
 - Dodds Pennock, Caroline. "Mass Murder or Religious Homicide? Rethinking Human Sacrifice and Interpersonal Violence in Aztec Society," Historical Social Research 37:3 (2012), pp. 276-302.
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Week 2:

- January 15) Martin Luther King Holiday
- January 17) The Spain that Encountered Mexico
- January 19) Cortés & the Conquest of Tenochtitlan

Readings:

- Bartosik-Vélez, Elise. "The First Interpretations of the Columbian Enterprise," Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos 33:2 (Winter 2009), pp. 317-334.
- Knight, Alan. "The Conquest of Mexico," in Mexico: From the Beginning to the Spanish Conquest (Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 221-240.
- Karttunen, Frances. "Rethinking Malinche," in Susan Schroeder (ed.) Indian Women of Early Mexico (University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), pp. 291-312.
- Townshend, Camilla. "Burying the White Gods: Perspectives on the Conquest of Mexico," American Historical Review 108 (June, 2003), pp. 659-687.

Week 3:

- January 22) The Spiritual Conquest
- January 24) Consolidating an Empire: The Political Economy of Mexico
- January 26) Race, Gender, & Family in Colonial Mexico

Readings:

- Conover, Cornelius. "Reassessing the Rise of Mexico's Virgin of Guadalupe, 1650s–1780s," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 27:2 (Summer 2011), pp. 251-279.
 - Seed, Patricia. "Social Dimensions of Race: Mexico City, 1753," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 62:4 (1982), pp. 569-606.
 - Lavrin, Asunción. "Indian Brides of Christ: Creating New Spaces for Indigenous Women in New Spain," *Mexican Studies / Estudios Mexicanos* 15:2 (1999), pp. 225-260.
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Week 4:

- January 29) Late Colonial Mexico & the Rise of Identity
- January 31) The Meaning of Independence
- February 2) Creating an "Imagined Community" in Mexico

Readings:

- Voekel, Pamela. "Peeing on the Palace: Bodily Resistance to Bourbon Reforms in Mexico City," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 5:2 (June 1992), pp. 183–208.
 - Guedea, Virginia. "The Process of Mexican Independence," *The American Historical Review* 105:1 (Feb., 2000), pp. 116-130.
 - Rodríguez, Jaime E. "The Struggle for the Nation: The First Centralist-Federalist Conflict in Mexico," *The Americas* 49:1 (July 1992), pp. 1-22.
 - O'Hara, Matthew. "Miserables and Citizens: Indians, Legal Pluralism, and Religious Practice in Early Republican Mexico" in Martin Nesvig (ed.) *Religious Culture in Modern Mexico* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), pp 14-34.
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Week 5:

- February 5) Instability, Wars, & Invasions, 1824-1854

February 7) Juárez, Liberalism, & Mexico's Second Empire

February 9) Midterm

Readings:

- *Guardino, Peter. "Barbarism or Republican Law? Guerrero's Peasants and National Politics," Hispanic American Historical Review 75:2 (May 1995), pp. 185-213.*
 - *Rodríguez Piña, Javier. "Conservatives Contest the Meaning of Independence (1846-1855)," in William Beezley and David Lorey (eds.) Viva Mexico! Viva la independencia! Celebrations of September 16 (SR Books: 2001), pp. 101-129.*
 - *Zoraida Vásquez, Josefina. "Causes of the War with the United States," in Richard V. Frangaviglia (ed.) Dueling Eagles: Reinterpreting the U.S.-Mexican War, 1846-1848 (Texas Christian University Press, 2000), pp. 41-65.*
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Week 6:

February 12) Order & Progress: Authoritarianism in the late 19th Century

February 14) Order & Progress: The Porfirian Economy

February 16) The Wind that Swept Mexico (Part 1)

Readings:

- *Beezley, William H. "The Porfirian Persuasion," in Judas at the Jockey Club (University of Nebraska Press, 1987), pp. 13-66.*
 - *Turner, John Kenneth. Barbarous Mexico (University of Texas Press, 1990 [1910]), pp. 27-37, 116-134.*
 - *Topik, Steven. "The Revolution, the State, and Economic Development in Mexico," History Compass 2 (2004), pp. 1-36.*
 - *Knight, Alan. The Mexican Revolution: A Very Short Introduction (Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 27-54.*
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Week 7:

February 19) President's Day Holiday

February 21) The Wind that Swept Mexico (Part 2)

February 23) Institutionalizing the Revolutionary State: 1920-1940

Readings:

- Azuela, Mariano. *The Underdogs*, (Hackett Publishing Co., 2006) [all]
 - Benjamin, Thomas. *La Revolución: Mexico's Great Revolution* (University of Texas Press, 2000), pp. 99-136.
 - Lewis, Stephen E. "The Nation, Education, and the "Indian Problem" in Mexico, 1920-1940" in Mary Kay Vaughan, ed., *The Eagle and the Virgin: Nation and Cultural Revolution in Mexico, 1920-1940* (Duke University Press, 2006), pp. 176-195.
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Week 8:

February 26) Consolidating the Revolutionary State: 1920-1940

February 28) Urbanism & the Growth of Mexico City

March 2) Modernization & the Mexican Miracle (paper due)

Readings:

- Sherman, John W. "Reassessing Cardenismo: The Mexican Right and the Failure of a Revolutionary Regime, 1934-1940," *The Americas* 54:3 (Jan. 1998), pp. 357-378.
 - Ochoa, Enrique C. "Coercion, Reform, and the Welfare State: The Campaign against "Begging" in Mexico City during the 1930s," *The Americas* 58:1 (July 2001), pp. 39-64.
 - Doremus, Anne T. "Authenticity, the Pelado and the Mexican National Identity: Essay versus Film during the 1930s and the 1940s," *Confluencia* 16:1 (Fall 2000), pp. 35-48.
 - Sackett, Andrew. "Fun in Acapulco? The Politics of Development on the Mexican Riviera," in Dina Berger (ed.) *Holiday in Mexico* (Duke University, 2010), pp. 161-182.
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Week 9:

March 5) Breakdown of the Institutionalized Rule: The "Lost Decade"

March 7) Free Trade & the Transition to Democracy

March 9) A Nation on the Move

Readings:

- González de Bustamante, Celeste. "1968 Olympic Dreams and Tlatelolco Nightmares: Imagining and Imaging Modernity on Television," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 26: 1 (Winter 2010), pp. 1-30.
 - Mendoza García, Jorge. "Reconstructing the Collective Memory of Mexico's Dirty War: Ideologization, Clandestine Detention, and Torture," *Latin American Perspectives* 43: 6 (Nov. 2016), pp. 124–140.
 - Browning, Anjali. "Corn, Tomatoes, and a Dead Dog: Mexican Agricultural Restructuring after NAFTA and Rural Responses to Declining Maize Production in Oaxaca, Mexico," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 29: 1 (Winter 2013), pp. 85-119.
 - Rovira Sancho, Guiomar. "From armed struggle to interaction with civil society: Chiapas' Zapatista National Liberation Army," in Véronique Dudouet, ed. *Civil Resistance and Conflict Transformation* (Routledge, 2015), pp. 126-153.
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Week 10:

- March 12) Distant Neighbors
- March 14) The Drug War
- March 16) Conclusions: Mexico in the 21st Century

Readings:

- Henderson, Timothy J. "Mexican Immigration to the United States," in William H. Beezley, ed., *A Companion to Mexican History and Culture*, (Blackwell Publishing, 2011), pp. 604-15.
- Maldonado Aranda, Salvador. "Stories of Drug Trafficking in Rural Mexico: Territories, Drugs and Cartels in Michoacán," *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 94 (April 2013), pp. 43-66.
- Shirk, David A. "A Tale of Two Mexican Border Cities: The Rise and Decline of Drug Violence in Juárez and Tijuana," *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 29: 4 (2014), pp. 481-502.
- Selected current news