

HIST 240 Introduction to Mexico: “A Nation in Four Revolutions” Course Syllabus

Class times: Monday, Wednesday 10:10-11:00, Phillips 265. Sakai Course Website

Recitation sections: **240 600**, Carolina Hall 213, Friday 10:10-11:00 am
240 601, Carolina Hall 213, Friday 11:15-12:05
240 602, Graham Memorial 212, Friday 3:30-4:20 pm

Teaching team: Professor Cynthia Radding. Tel 962-5057. Email radding@email.unc.edu.
Professor Radding’s office hours: Monday and Wednesday, 2:00-3:30pm or by appointment, in Hamilton Hall 513.

Teaching Assistant, TBA

Codex Mendoza, Mesoamerica



Casas Grandes, in northern Mexico



This course introduces students to Mexico’s history, the rich diversity of its cultures and peoples, and its place in the world. It focuses on the regions that became the modern nation of Mexico and its borderlands; these include portions of Guatemala and the U.S., and the global networks that connected Mexico with the Spanish imperial spheres in the Atlantic and Pacific. Its major themes concern environmental change, the historical depth of indigenous cultures and their persistence to the present day, the contributions of African and Asian peoples to Mexico, the contested development of the Mexican nation-state, the meanings of citizenship, and Mexico’s mixed economy; these topics open comparisons with many areas of the Americas and beyond. The course will meet with two lectures and one discussion session a week. Student assessment is based on attendance to lecture and discussion sections, participation in class and on the SAKAI fora, written response papers to the readings, films, exhibits, and on-line sources, one midterm and one final exam.

Five principal moments define the structure of this course, setting the themes that will guide the reading assignments and class discussions throughout the semester. The first three class periods will focus on the closely related natural environments and indigenous cultures of northern Mexico and southwestern U.S., beginning with the art exhibit “Way Out West” at the UNC Ackland Museum. Following this introduction, our coverage of Mexico will highlight these

critical periods of its history: 1) **Cycles of conquest** and their consequences: the rise of the Mexica tributary empire from a series of migrations between the fertile basins of central Mexico and the northern arid lands; the Spanish conquest of the Mexica and other Mesoamerican city-states and chiefdoms in Mexico, Central America, and North America (1428-1540). Mexico's colonial history of over three centuries will highlight the persistence of indigenous peoples, the complexity of Mexico's colonial society, its governing institutions, economic production and commerce, art, and science as these evolved over three centuries. 2) **Independence**: from popular insurgency to a conservative republic (1810-1840). Major issues, debates, and conflicts arose over citizenship in Mexico's multi-ethnic society, power struggles between church and state, and the defense of national territory, with comparisons to the U.S. and other Latin American countries. 3) **La Reforma**, modernization, and the many faces of liberalism (1840-1900). Class readings and discussion will focus on the U.S. invasion of Mexico (1846-1848), the juridical and economic reforms established in Mexico, the French invasion and imposed monarchy (1862-1867), the recovery of national independence and industrial modernization at the end of the nineteenth century. 4) **Revolution of 1910**: social upheaval and new paths to modernity. This section of the course will consider the social classes that joined the diverse political movements that came together in the Revolution of 1910-1920. Students will be encouraged to question what this period of Mexican history teaches us about the global concept of revolution and what its legacy is for present-day Mexicans. 5) **Mexico today**: the 21st century challenges for Mexico's internal governance and society, migration, and the U.S.-Mexico border region. Through each of these moments, students will discuss what was at stake in the formation of the Mexican nation-state and how this compares with the U.S. and other countries in the Americas.

Textbooks: Susan M. Deeds, Michael C. Meyer, William L. Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History* 11th edition (Oxford University Press, 2018); Nora E. Jaffery, Edward W. Osowski, Susie S. Porter, *Mexican History. A Primary Source Reader* (Westview Press, 2010); Federico Gamboa, *Santa. A Novel of Mexico City*, trans. John Chasteen (University of North Carolina Press, 2010) *Santa* is available as an ebook in the UNC Library. These will provide the core readings together with articles posted in UNC Library e-reserves or on Sakai.

Our goals for this course are:

- To analyze Mexican history along themes of geography, economy, society, and culture, within Mexico and in relation to global history
- To develop critical reading skills and to evaluate different sources of information
- To work together to improve our discussion and writing skills

To reach these goals, our first objective is to create a community in which students feel comfortable sharing their ideas with mutual respect and constructive criticism. We can develop this sense of community in the lectures where we all come together and in the small discussion sections. Our second objective is to compare and evaluate different sources of information on Mexico, from sixteenth-century conquests to the twentieth-century revolutions and current issues and events.

Honor code: All written work, including exams, must bear either the full honor code pledge (“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on this examination or written assignment”) or the word “Pledge” followed by your signature to indicate your adherence to the UNC Honor Code. **No grade will be recorded without the pledge.** In signing it, you affirm that the work that bears your name is indeed yours. Academic dishonesty and other offenses against the ethical standards of the university are defined at: <http://honor.unc.edu/honor/index.html> and <http://instrument.unc.edu>.

Assistance: Students with registered disabilities are encouraged to inform the teaching team of their needs. We will make every effort to accommodate your learning styles and requirements. Please work with us and through the Academic Success Program at the Learning Center, (<http://learningcenter.unc.edu/>). The Writing Center is also an excellent resource for students: (<http://www.unc.edu/depts.wcweb/>).

Grades: Student assessments are based on the following distribution: lecture attendance 5%; discussion section attendance and participation 5%; written responses to the assigned readings 40%; midterm 20%; final exam 30%. Response papers should explain the main arguments of the required readings and express your ideas about these readings, taking into account class lectures and discussion; their length should be 600-800 words. Students are required to attend ALL classes with the exception of recognized religious holidays and approved athletic schedules. Excused absences for medical or family reasons will be admitted with documentation. Three unexcused absences will result in a one-step lowered grade.

Tenochtitlan and its Rulers



Codex Mendoza, INAH, Mexico

Sources of Information through UNC Libraries:
LANIC, Latin American Network Information Center,
<https://guides.lib.unc.edu/go.php?c=23608969>

Latin American Newsstand
<https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/latinamericanews1/advanced?ip?accountid=14244>

La Jornada, Mexico City daily newspaper, available in English translation on-line (<https://www.jornada.com.mx>)

Topics and Weekly Readings

- August 19 **First Class.** Mexico's geography and unique place in global history.
- August 24 Mexico's Enduring Past in the Present.
Course of Mexican History, 3-28.
- August 26 The Development of Mesoamerican Cultures and Frontiers
Mexican History Reader, p. 1-15; "Popol Vuh," 16-24.
- September 2 Mexica and Iberian Empires
Course of Mexican History, 29-72; *Mexican History Reader*, 25-42.
First response paper due on Popol Vuh
- September 7 Encounters: Cortés and the Court of Moctezuma
Course of Mexican History, 75-95.
- September 9 From Anáhuac to New Spain
Course of Mexican History, 96-112; *Mexican History Reader*, 57-73.
Discussion will emphasize different sources of information and visions of the Iberian and Mesoamerican encounters in the early sixteenth century, with examples from the *Florentine Codex*, Cortés's letters, and Bernal Díaz's *True History of the Conquest*.
Second response paper due on Treasury of Mexica Power and Gender, Markets and Temples in Tlatlalolco and Tenochtitlan.
- September 14 Early Years of Spanish Rule, expansion into the north, colonial economy
Course of Mexican History, 115-141; *Mexican History Reader*, 51-56, 74-80, 100-104, 109-112.
- September 16 Religion and the Colonial Church
Course of Mexican History, 142-157; *Mexican History Reader*, 85-99.
- September 21 Families, Communities, and Identities in New Spain
Course of Mexican History, 158-175; *Mexican History Reader*, 128-141.
- September 23 Architecture, Art, Music, Science: Baroque Culture in New Spain
Course of Mexican History, 176-194; *Mexican History Reader*, 142-148.
- September 28 African and Asian cultural presence in New Spain. Class visits to the Ackland Art Museum during recitation sections this week.

- September 30 Imperial Crises and Reforms
Course of Mexican History, 197-223; *Mexican History Reader*, 149-154.
- October 5 From Colonial Reforms to Independence
Course of Mexican History, 224-234; *Mexican History Reader*, 155-177.
Third response paper due in class on a selection of three primary sources assigned from the *Mexican History Reader*.
Visits to Wilson Library Special Collection during recitation section periods.
- October 7 In-class review of the revolutions of Mexica and Iberian imperial conquests and the complexities of colonial society in New Spain.
- October 12 **Midterm Exam in class (20 points)**
- October 14 FALL BREAK
- October 19 Early 19th-century Mexican State
Course of Mexican History, 235-250; *Mexican History Reader*, 177-187, 197-204.
- October 21 Nationalism, Society, and Foreign Invasions
Course of Mexican History, 251-280; *Mexican History Reader*, 211-218, 223-232.
- October 26 La Reforma: Goals and Contradictions
Course of Mexican History, 283-299; *Mexican History Reader*, 233-250.
- October 28 Modernization in the Economy and Society.
Course of Mexican History, 300-320.
- November 2 Porfirian Order and Social Revolution
Course of Mexican History, 321-356; *Mexican History Reader*, 251-259.
- November 4 Themes and Timeline for the Revolution of 1910-1920
Course of Mexican History, 359-422; *Mexican History Reader*, 264-271.
- November 11 Peasants and City Folk: *Zapatistas*, *Villistas*, and *Constitucionalistas*
Course of Mexican History, 425-454; *Mexican History Reader*, 272-286.
- November 16 The Paradoxes of Revolution
Course of Mexican History, 455-481; *Mexican History Reader*, 293-311.

- November 18 Agrarianism and Capitalism in Post-Revolutionary Mexico
Santa, a Novel of Mexico City, 3-117 (Part I).
- November 23 Contradictions of citizenship in post-revolutionary Mexico
Santa, a Novel of Mexico City, 121-238 (Part II)
- November 26 THANKSGIVING
- November 30 The Legacy of Tlatalolco, 1968; the Zapatista Movement of Chiapas, 1994.
Course of Mexican History, 482-543.
Fourth Response paper due on *Santa*.
- December 2 Memory and history: the past and future meet in present-day Mexico
Mexican History Reader, 385-399, 417-428.
- December 4 **Fifth response paper due on present-day Mexico, based on two
selections from *Mexico History Reader* assigned readings (see guidelines
on the Assignments Tab of the Sakai course site).**

Course Review Session (First Reading Day of Exam Schedule)

FINAL EXAM 8:00 AM in Phillips Hall 265.