HIST 247 - History of Modern Mexico

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the major historical developments in the formation of the modern Mexican nation (1810-present), events so formative that their history, both written and popular, has reached mythic proportions and defined what it means to be “Mexican.” The course covers topics including the independence movement, nineteenth-century wars and dictatorships, the Revolution, national identity, land and labor reform, and border issues. These issues will be examined through a diverse set of readings, lectures, & supplementary materials including visual & musical sources.

Course Learning Objectives

*By the end of the semester, students should be able to . . .*

- Identify the 31 Mexican states, their capitals, and the national capital on a map & identify a unique geographical, cultural, or historical feature of each state and the capital.

- Write a historical identification (ID) in two to three concise sentences.

- Divide the history of Mexico since independence into significant historical periods, and define the major changes—ideological, political, economic, or cultural—that mark each period.

- Identify historical and national themes and elements in artistic production including
art, music, and novels.

- Explain how the major changes in Mexican history affected and were experienced by ordinary Mexicans.

- Write an essay about cultural nationalism during the Mexican Revolution that incorporates the General Education learning objectives of Information Literacy and Historical Argumentation.

COURSE BOOKS (Other readings listed in the syllabus will be available as PDFs or links on CANVAS) Albarrán, Elena Jackson. *Seen and Heard in Mexico: Children and Revolutionary Cultural Nationalism*. Lincoln:

University of Nebraska Press, 2015.


*You may choose to read it in the original Spanish.*

Prof. Amanda M. López, Ph.D.

(she/her/ella)

Email: alopez@sxu.edu Twitter: @drlopezsxu


Grading: All assignments will be graded on a 100 percent scale unless otherwise noted. Grades will be entered, averaged, and weighted on CANVAS to calculate your final grade.
based on the percentages below. Extra credit will be offered occasionally at the professor's discretion and always offered to all students in the class. I strongly suggest that students keep all graded assignments to verify that grades entered in Canvas are correct.

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A - 100-90% (Superior mastery of the learning objectives)
B - 89-80% (Good mastery of the learning objectives)
C - 79-70% (Average mastery of the learning objectives)
D - 69-59% (Minimum mastery of the learning objectives)
F - 58-0% (Does not accomplish the minimum learning objectives)

Assignments and Exams (Weighted Value)

Map Quiz 10% Weekly Assignments 10% RCN Essay 20% Class Participation 10% Midterm 25% Final 25% Final Grade Total: 100%

¡Aquí están los detalles!

or, THE FINE PRINT

Map Quiz: This map quiz will not only help you learn the basic political geography of Mexico, but it will also provide you with a bit of historical or cultural knowledge for each state. You will be given a study sheet of facts about each state (some common, some not so). It is your responsibility to find a map to study. For the quiz, you will need to identify the state for each historical fact as well as identify the state on a blank map of Mexico.

Weekly Assignments: Throughout the semester, you will periodically complete worksheets or online discussions related to the course content. Some of these worksheets will be due uploaded to Canvas before class and others will be completed in class individually or in groups. These assignments are designed to measure your reading comprehension and aid in discussion of the major historical themes of the day’s class. The discussion topics will ask you to consider important themes in the reading and occasionally ask you to do original research. The discussions will also help me see which concepts interest you most and which concepts you might struggle with so that I can make our in-class time more helpful to your learning. A rubric for the discussions will be provided on Canvas.

Revolutionary Cultural Nationalism (RCN) Essay
Step 1: Read the Book and Explain the Main Themes
As we will learn from Elena Albarrán’s *Seen and Heard in Mexico*, the revolutionary government created many programs to teach children how to be “Mexican” throughout the 1920-1940s. Art programs, radio shows, puppet theater, and student organizations all gave children opportunities to learn nationalist history and proper moral behavior as well as participate in their own formation as citizens. In this writing assignment, you will focus on one of these programs created for children, explaining its function, subject matter, and the participation of children. You will need to tie it to the larger theme of “revolutionary cultural nationalism.”

**Step 2: Pick Your Topic**

**Option 1: “Drawing Like a Mexican”- The Children’s National Art Program**

- You will write an essay discussing the different art programs created by the SEP for children and explain how they were used to teach cultural nationalism. What were the main subjects and messages of cultural nationalism and how did children interpret them in different ways?

- Your assignment will include ONE original piece of artwork (made by you) that incorporates the Best Maugard method. Your art should display content and themes related to Mexican nationalism (history, culture, etc.) although you are free to interpret the specifics of the piece.

- You will write an essay focusing on the “Comino” puppet plays by the Teatro Guiñol and explain the intended purpose of the theater and the themes of nationalism and socialism portrayed in the shows. How did the children interpret the messages of the plays? Was this an effective way to teach these ideas?

- Your assignment will include ONE original written puppet theater scene that could be used to teach children about an important part of Mexican history. You may choose real historical or imagined allegorical characters. The one-page scene must have a title (in English or Spanish), it must have at least 2 characters, and it must tell an important historical or moral lesson for children related to Mexican history or culture.

- Your essay will conclude by explaining your puppet theater scene, why you chose the subject and characters, and what message about Mexican history and nationalism the
scene portrays.

Option 3: “Haciendo Patria”: Creating an Active and Engaged Child Citizen

- Your essay will focus on how the SEP encouraged children to be active participants in education and civic engagement through clubs and campaigns. You should explain how and what messages about patria, being “good” Mexicans, and civismo were enacted by children. How did these programs prepare students to be citizens and which children were the programs aimed at?

- You essay should also address these questions: did these programs help create more equality between Mexican children? Or if not, how did ideas about race and class, or the pre-existing inequalities in the country affect these programs? Do you think children truly believed in these ideas tied to the nation?

Step 3: Compose Your Paper

- The paper should have a descriptive, creative title that relates the theme and your specific approach to the theme.

- The body of the paper must be 3 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, 1-inch margins for Option 1 (plus one-page original artwork) & 2 (plus one-page scene) OR 4 pages for Option 3.

- The paper must use specific information from the Albarrán monograph and cite information using footnotes. Brief footnotes are allowed (author’s last name, short book title, pg. #).

- A full list of formatting guidelines available on Canvas

- Papers should answer all the specific and thematic questions, be well organized, and be double-checked for typos and grammatical errors.

Step 4: Submit Your Paper
• Essays will be due, uploaded to Canvas, on _________________.

• For Option 1, the artwork must be submitted as a hard copy in class on the day the essay is due.

• *Indicates extra credit possibility available. Extra Credit Opportunity: For students who Choose Option 1 or 2,

  your original artwork or scene will be evaluated by Prof. Elena Albarrán and her students and first and second place prizes will be awarded to the entries that best capture the spirit of the SEP’s revolutionary cultural nationalist project in a creative manner.

• Your essay will conclude by explaining your drawing, why you chose the subject, and why you think it is important for Mexican history and nationalism.

Option 2: “Comino” the Puppet and Mexican Nationalism and Socialism*

• General Education (GE) ASSESSMENT

• This course fulfills the GE History requirement. There are two GE learning outcomes for History courses:

• Information Literacy- the ability of students to locate, evaluate, and incorporate information as needed, critically, ethically and effectively.

• Historical Argumentation—the ability of students to understand change over time, understand cause and effect relationships, place key events in their chronological order and evaluate/utilize primary sources in the construction of historical arguments.

• You may be asked to submit an assignment from this class for General Education assessment. More directions will be provided in class if needed.
Class Participation: Our class time will include a mixture of lecture and discussion. You will earn full participation points by attending class and actively contributing to discussion. Active contribution includes listening and taking notes, asking questions, and offering insightful comments on discussion days. You are welcome to use your phone, tablet, or laptop as a tool for the information in the class. Attendance is taken daily. Please try to arrive on time and stay for the duration of the class. If you need to arrive late or leave early, please do your best to let me know in advance.

Midterm and Final Exams: Both exams will be held in class. The exams will be a combination of multiple choice and/or short answer, historical identifications (IDs), and essays. The terms for the IDs will be provided on CANVAS, but it is your responsibility to define them. An optional exam review will be held in class before each exam. No exam guide will be provided, so it is in your best interest to attend the review.

Course Policies

Inclusion & Equity: Our classroom is a space where all are welcome [including children in your care]. I promise to treat you with respect and do my best to create an inclusive atmosphere where all have a chance to succeed. Informed discussion and disagreement are encouraged, but there is no room for discriminatory or hateful speech. Please reach out to me if you would like me to be aware of any issues or trigger warnings that might need to be made in the class.

Assignments & Late Work: To get the most out of this class and to offer your best to your fellow classmates, it’s important to submit your assignments on time. That said, I am aware that occasionally, it’s difficult or impossible to turn your assignments in on time. To be eligible to receive full credit for late papers, you will need to arrange with me, at least one class before the due date, a new due date for your assignment. Reach out to me if you are having trouble keeping up. I promise to work with you.

Academic Integrity: All work in this class must be your own. Academic dishonesty, such as cheating or plagiarism, will not be tolerated. The use of outside material must be properly cited, as should any direct quotations from our class texts. You will complete a worksheet designed to guide you through proper historical citations. The university’s policy is available in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog, at http://catalog.sxu.edu/chicago/Shared/ACA/integrity.html. Cases of plagiarism will result in a 0 on the assignment and possible failure of the course. It is my experience that most cases of plagiarism are due to misunderstanding rather than dishonesty, but both will be penalized equally. If you have ANY DOUBTS about what constitutes plagiarism, please visit me in office hours.

Technology Integration: Course materials, including syllabus, assignments, reading, and
grades will be posted on CANVAS. In the classroom, PowerPoint, online media, videos and music will be used to enhance instructional content.

Learning Center: The staff and tutors at SXU’s Learning Center, located in L110, are fantastic and I encourage you to visit them for all of your classes! Subject tutors are available to help improve your study skills, go over study guides, and practice exams. Subject tutoring is by appointment only and can be accessed via the portal under “Tutoring and Writing Sign-up.” The Learning Center also provides writing consultants that excel at helping students think about the development of ideas, the arguments of an essay, grammar, punctuation, and documentation. Writing consultants are available by appointment or walk-in. If you would like after hours or a supplement to face-to-face services, you can access the Smarthinking Online Tutoring via Canvas. If you choose to use their resources, please be sure to make an appointment with them well enough in advance to complete your assignment on time: https://sxu.mywconline.com For questions stop by L110 or call (773)298-5148. For more information visit the Learning Center’s website.

Disability Accommodations: A variety of options are available to students with disabilities to help them achieve the success they desire. Students who have disability documentation can present it to me either in office hours or after class and discuss specific arrangements. If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Learning Center and Disability Services (LCDS) in L-108 or call (773) 298-3308 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. LCDS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented disabilities “Confidential Accommodation Plan” letters, as appropriate.

Office Hours: I believe that a good classroom environment is built on mutual respect and friendliness and I encourage you all to come visit me during my office hours (listed at the top of the syllabus) to discuss this class and any other questions you may have. To help us get to know one another, all students are encouraged to visit my office hours. Students who visit once before the midterm will receive 10 extra credit points on their participation grade. Students who visit after the midterm are eligible to receive 5 points extra credit. I will be happy to discuss the readings with you one-on-one or discuss your exams and papers throughout the semester.

Reading and Assignment Schedule

(any changes will be announced in class and posted on Canvas):
Readings and Assignments are due by the start of class on the date they are listed below unless otherwise indicated.

Week 1 What is Mexico and what was Mexico?
Mon Course Introduction: Syllabus & Mexico in the Imaginary Exercise
Wed Mexico Today in Images and Sound
Assignment: Mexico in the News & Popular Culture Discussion Board
Fri Colonial Legacies: From New Spain to Independent Mexico
Reading: *Mexican Mosaic*, Ch. 1, pgs. 27-35
Image: “Cortes y Malintzin” in the History of Tlaxcala (1580s)

Week 2 Death to the Gachupines!: The Independence Movement
Mon MLK DAY – NO CLASS
Wed Priests and Peons in the War for Independence
Reading: *Mexican Mosaic*, Chapter 2, pgs. 37-45; Morelos’ “Sentiments of the Nation” (CANVAS)
Image: Estandarte de Hidalgo (Hidalgo’s Banner), 1810
Fri International Response to Mexico’s Independence
Reading: Poinsett, “The Mexican Character” (CANVAS)
Assignment: Online Discussion on Poinsett reading
In-Class Activity: Writing Historical IDs for Exams; Map Quiz Resources

Week 3 Liberals, Conservatives, the United States, and France: Mid-19th Century Chaos
Mon Caudillos, Liberals & Conservatives: An Intro
Reading: *Mexican Mosaic*, Chapter 2, pgs 46-53
Wed In-Class Discussion: Liberals vs. Conservatives
Reading: Selections from various liberal and conservative politicians (CANVAS)
Assignment: Worksheet on reading. Also, in class you will defend your assigned side's position according to the assigned reading.
Fri Liberal Triumph? The French Intervention & La Reforma
Reading: *Mexican Mosaic*, Chapter 2, pgs. 53-59; Empress Carlota, “A Letter from Mexico” (CANVAS)
Week 4 “Liberal Modernity” and “Order and Progress” under Don Porfirio Díaz

Mon The Porfiriato: Introductory Themes & Terms Reading: *Mexican Mosaic*, Chapter 3, pgs. 60-73

Wed The Pax Porfiriana in Mexico City (La París de las Americas) Reading: Creelman, “President Díaz, Hero of the Americas” (CANVAS)

Assignment: Online discussion
Fri Map Quiz in Class (See Canvas Resources to Study)

Week 5 Order and Progress for Everyone?: Problems in Porfirian Mexico (Online Discussion Posts all week)

Mon The Victims of Porfirián Social & Economic Reform Reading: *Mexican Mosaic*, Chapter 3, pgs. 73-77; Chasteen, Intro to Santa

Wed Women in the Porfiriato in Focus: The Sad Tale of Santa Reading: Gamboa, *Santa*, Part I, Chs. 1-3

Fri Class Discussion on Santa Reading: Gamboa, *Santa*, Part I, Chs. 4-6

Week 6 MIDTERM WEEK

Mon Santa vs. History? Reading: Gamboa, *Santa*, Part I, Chs. 7-10; Overmeyer-Velazquez, “Portraits of a Lady: Visions of Modernity in Porfirián Oaxaca City” (Canvas) Assignment: Online Discussion

Wed Optional Midterm Review in Class

Fri Midterm over nineteenth-century Mexico

Week 7 The Fall of Don Porfirio: The Mexican Revolution in Focus, 1910-1920

Mon The Mexican Revolution: An intro to the players and their sides Reading: *Mexican Mosaic*, Ch. 3, pgs. 73-77; Ch. 4, pgs. 78-89

Assignment: Online discussion
Wed The Violence of the Mexican Revolution Assignment: Revolutionary Factions Report

Fri Compromise & Construction: Building a Revolutionary Government
Reading: Mexican Mosaic, Chapter 4, pgs. 89-99; Calles, “Mexico Must Become a Nation of Institutions & Laws” (CANVAS)

Week 8 The Cultural Revolution

Mon The Cultural Revolution: Mestizaje and Mexican Nationalism Reading: Vasconcelos, “The Cosmic Race” (CANVAS)

Assignment: Online discussion

Wed Oil and Land: Cardenas’s Redistributive Revolution
Reading: Mexican Mosaic, Chapter 4, pgs. 99-104; Benítez, “Agrarian Reform in La Laguna” and Daniels “The Oil Expropriation” (CANVAS)

Fri Children of the Revolution
Reading: Albarrán, Seen and Heard in Mexico, Introduction, pgs 1-15, Ch. 1 Assignment: Worksheet on Albarrán book

Week 9 Children & Revolutionary Cultural Nationalism (Online Discussion all Week)

Mon Children of the Revolution
Reading: Albarrán, Seen and Heard in Mexico, Ch. 2-3

Wed Children of the Revolution
Reading: Albarrán, Seen and Heard in Mexico, Ch. 4

Fri Children of the Revolution
Reading: Albarrán, Seen and Heard in Mexico, Ch. 5 & 6

Week 10 Miracles, Metros, and Massacres: Mexico in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s

Mon The Culture of Poverty & the Miracle of Economic Growth
Reading: Mexican Mosaic, Chapter 5, pgs. 105, 113; Excerpt from Oscar Lewis’s, The Children of Sanchez (Canvas)
Watch in Class: Excerpt from Luis Buñuel’s Los Olvidados

Wed The Tlatelolco Massacre and the 1968 Olympics
Reading: Mexican Mosaic, Chapter 5, pgs. 114-118,177-200; Excerpts from Poniatowska, “Massacre in Mexico” (Canvas)

Fri The Mexico City: Culture and Progress in the Twentieth Century Images: Mexico metro
station icons

Due: Revolution Cultural Nationalism (RCN) Essay

Week 11 Debt Crisis and Disaster: Mexico in the 1980s

Mon The Debt Crisis
Reading: *Mexican Mosaic*, Chapter 5, pgs. 118-121

Wed The Mexico City Earthquake: 1985 & 2017
Reading: “After the Earthquake” (Canvas); articles/videos about the 2017 Mexico City earthquake (Canvas)
Assignment: Online discussion

Fri NO CLASS

Week 12 NAFTA: Neoliberalism, Food and the Body

Mon What is NAFTA and Neoliberalism?
Reading: *Mexican Mosaic*, Chapter 5, pgs. 121-129; Gálvez, *Eating NAFTA*, Preface & Ch. 1
Assignment: Reading Response/Reflection

Wed Milpas, Corn, and Food Sovereignty
Reading: Gálvez, *Eating NAFTA* Chapter 2 & 3
Assignment: Online Discussion Fri NO CLASS – STUDY DAY

Week 13 Eating NAFTA, cont.: Diet, Disease, and Migration


Wed Transnational Effects and Resistance
Reading: Reading: Gálvez, *Eating NAFTA*, Chs. 6-8

Assignment: Reading Response/Reflection

Fri Discussion: Reflecting on Mexico’s Past and Present Assignment: Class Survey on Topics for Next Week
Week 14 OPEN WEEK - CLASS’s Choice of Topic (possibly the border? narcos? music? film?)

Mon TBA Wed TBA Fri TBA

Week 15 Mexico’s Present & Future: the PRI, AMLO, & the U.S.

Mon Wed

Fri

The Death & Resurrection of the PRI
Reading: Watt, “Business as Usual: the Anniversary of the Return of the PRI” (Canvas)

Understanding AMLO
Reading: Carlsen, “AMLO’s Inauguration and the Future of Mexico” (Canvas) Assignment:
Online Discussion on AMLO then and now

OPTIONAL FINAL EXAM REVIEW

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!!!! FINAL EXAM DATE:
_____________________.

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