In this class, we will learn about the history of Mexico and about thinking historically. Our discussions of the struggles over ideology, identity, and citizenship that have defined modern Mexico will lead us to deeper understandings of the ways in which we tell stories about ourselves and others. We will read primary sources written by historically minded authors from across the last two hundred years, both Mexican and foreign. Through their writings, we will engage questions of nation making, regime change, rights, and accountability. We will also read works by historians who use these primary texts to grapple with similar questions from an academic perspective. Looking at the intersections between the two types of writing, we will learn about Mexico’s complicated relationship with its past and make our own arguments about how best to understand that history.

What we read in this class will require practicing critical thinking, analysis, and synthesis as we work toward an understanding of the country’s past. The majority of reading for the class is from primary sources, works produced in or just after the moments we are examining. Each week students will also read a short piece of academic scholarship. By the end of the course, students will have practice bringing these two types of sources together through journal writing, in-class presentations, and discussions. They will be comfortable with analyzing and synthesizing various types of primary materials, as well drawing out connections between scholarly work and its source material. Regular journaling, short essays, and presentations will help students learn best practices with regards to research, analysis, and communication.

**REQUIRED BOOKS**

The following books are available on reserve, used via Amazon or AbeBooks, and the campus bookstore. All other materials are available through the course website.


Recommended survey texts (if you’d like something to flesh out lectures):
ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

Weekly Work:

Weekly Questions (10%) – Due Wednesday night each week
Post two or three broad questions about the week’s reading in the shared workspace on the course website.
- Post large questions, not things that Wikipedia can answer for you.
- Post questions you think would lead to good discussion or questions that might make a good research project.
- As you add to the workspace, engage with other students’ posts.

Online Avatar Journal (15%) – Due last Wednesday of each unit
(Post on Blackboard under Assignments)
At the beginning of the semester you will be assigned a person, or avatar, whose point of view you will take for the rest of the semester in your online journal. You will be given some basic demographic information about your avatar, including gender, class, occupation, and age. Each unit, you will imagine what your avatar’s life would be like during the era we are studying and respond to the unit’s material through your avatar’s eyes. The intention is to take you out of your normal point of view and get you thinking about how the changes we are exploring each unit would affect someone else’s life.

The journal entries should be about 500 words each and can draw on lectures as well as readings. You should write in the first person, establishing in the first few sentences who and where you are this unit (you may decide to change this each unit depending on what we cover in class). The rest of the journal should be dedicated to imagining your avatar’s life during this era and, if you think it within the realm of possibilities, their responses to the week’s primary source. Use your imagination, but keep things as realistic as possible.

In Class Participation (20%)
Students should arrive on time to class and must actively participate in discussion. This means not only having something to say about the topic at hand but also engaging with your classmates and their contributions. You may not always agree with the authors we read or with the other people in the class, but productive discussion emerges from respectful engagement with these differences rather than outright rejection of them.

Complete all secondary readings by Wednesday of the week they are assigned and primary readings by the second Wednesday of each unit. Bring readings to class.

Once During the Quarter:

Map Quiz (10%) – September 18 (map and list of places posted on Blackboard Assignments)

Unit Paper (15%) – Due at the time of your presentation
Write a 5-7 page formal examination of the primary source for your selected unit. You can hone in on a particular theme of the work or write about the piece as a whole.
- Examine the production of the piece and its reception at the time it was created.
- Integrate lecture and readings to situate the author in his or her historical context.
- Speak to how it can be used by historians to better understand Mexican history.
• Include a bibliography of 6-8 additional sources, primary and secondary, that you could use to further examine the central text.

**Unit Presentation (15%)**

Lead discussion of the primary source on the final Thursday of your selected unit.

• Work with the other students who share your unit to assemble a short presentation (15-20 minutes) of the primary source for the unit.
• Discuss the production, reception, and historical use of the primary source.
• After, lead your classmates in a conversation about the source, its connections to secondary readings and lectures for the unit, and the ways it could be used as a source for further research. In preparing these questions, draw on your classmate’s weekly questions posted online.

**Final Avatar Paper (15%) – Due 5pm, December 17 via Blackboard**

This 5-7-page paper will draw on your journal entries to make an argument about how life would have changed for people in your avatar’s position across the period covered by this class. Don’t simply summarize your journal entries, but instead use them to write a more formal historical paper demonstrating how life changed for everyday people. Draw on readings and lectures (using correct citation practices) to back up your argument.

**POLICIES**

**Screen Policy**

Laptops, electronic readers, and cell phones are both a boon and a distraction to higher education. Current research suggests that most of us learn better through longhand note taking. While computers are permitted and I will sometimes request that you bring a device to class in order to facilitate in-class activities, I suggest not engaging with your devices during class. Social media, texting, voice communication, email, and other non-class related activities are unacceptable.

If you’re curious about this policy, see recent research summarized here: www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/

**Absences and Tardiness**

Absences are excused for illness, religious observance, participation in certain university activities, and other circumstances described in the university’s policies. Inform me beforehand if you will miss class. Frequent unexplained absences will result in a lower overall grade. Class will begin promptly at 9am and frequent tardiness will also result in a lower overall grade.

**Email**

I respond to email during regular business hours, 9-5, Monday thru Friday. Allow 24 hours for a response. Please use proper formatting and address when writing your email. It’s good practice.

**Accommodations**

Accommodations will be made for those who need them. Please come talk with me early in the semester to discuss your needs. Any student with a disability who may need
accommodations in this class must obtain an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services, 385 Garland, (410) 516-4720, studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu.

Late Work and Drafts
Extensions are available, but only well in advance of the due date. Unexcused late assignments will be docked a grade for each day they are late (e.g., an A becomes an A- becomes a B+). Back up your computers and use a cloud storage service like Dropbox, Google Drive, or JHBox – hard drive crashes are not an excuse for missing work.
I will read drafts, so long as they are received with ample time for comment and revision before the deadline. Students should plan on attending office hours to talk about drafts.

Mental Health
The University is aware that many students experience anxiety, depression, and other emotional challenges. If you would like to speak to a professional counselor, please visit the campus Counseling Center. Information is available on the Counseling Center's website: https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/counselingcenter/

Academic Integrity
The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition.
Report any violations you witness to the instructor. You may consult the associate dean of student conduct (or designee) by calling the Office of the Dean of Students at 410-516-8208 or via email at integrity@jhu.edu. For more information, see the Homewood Student Affairs site on academic ethics: (https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/student-life/student-conduct/academic-ethics-undergraduates)
or the e-catalog entry on the undergraduate academic ethics board: (http://ecatalog.jhu.edu/undergrad-students/student-life-policies/#UAEB).
COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION

September 4 – Introduction
September 6 – What’s at Stake?

September 5: Post thoughts on unit presentation and paper standards on Week 1 board.

No need to journal this week.
List your preferences for unit presentations via Blackboard by September 10

UNIT 1: MAKING THE MEXICAN NATION

Unit Source: Broadsides and newspaper coverage of the Mexican-American War, via the UT Arlington online exhibit “A Continent Divided: The U.S.-Mexico War” (http://library.uta.edu/usmexicowar/index.php). Read as many broadsides and newspaper articles as possible, also poke around in the other materials as you see fit.
If this is your week to present, feel free to use other sources linked to on the course website including the Virginia Tech project “The Mexican-American War and the Media” and the Library of Congress site

WEEK 2: CIVIL WARS AND FOREIGN WARS IN THE WAKE OF INDEPENDENCE


September 12: Post questions to Unit 1 board

WEEK 3: BENITO JUÁREZ AND THE RESTORED REPUBLIC


September 18: Map Quiz at the end of class
September 19: Post questions to Unit 1 board
Journal across the unit, finalize entry for September 20
September 20: Unit 1 group presentation and papers due

UNIT 2: THE PORFIRIATO

Unit Source: John Kenneth Turner, Barbarous Mexico (online)

WEEK 4: THE RISE OF DON PORFIRIO


September 25: Class held at Special Collections in the Brody Learning Commons
September 26: Post questions to Unit 2 board
WEEK 5: MAINTAINING THE PAX PORFIRIANA

October 3: Post questions to Unit 2 board
Journal across the unit, finalize entry for October 4
October 4: Unit 2 group presentation and papers due

UNIT 3: THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION
Unit Source: Collection of prints at the Baltimore Museum of Art & on ArtSTOR
SIGN UP FOR MUSEUM VISIT SLOT ON BLACKBOARD BY OCT. 8

WEEK 6: A DECADE OF VIOLENCE
If you would like a concise overview of the Revolution, listen to a discussion with Alan Knight on the BBC

October 10: Post questions to Unit 3 board

WEEK 7: ART AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF REVOLUTION
NO CLASS THURSDAY – PRESENTATION & READING DUE FOR TUESDAY THIS UNIT

Monday October 15: Post questions to Unit 3 board
Journal across the unit, finalize entry for October 18
Tuesday October 16: Unit 3 group presentation and papers due

UNIT 4: WHOSE REVOLUTION?
Unit Source: Castellanos, The Nine Guardians

WEEK 8: FROM REVOLUTION TO GOVERNANCE
October 24: Post questions to Unit 4 board

WEEK 9: WHO IS MEXICO?

October 31: Post questions to Unit 4 board
Journal across the unit, finalize entry for November 1
November 1: Unit 4 group presentation and papers due
UNIT 5: CONSOLIDATION AND CRISIS
Unit Source: Poniatowska, Massacre in Mexico

WEEK 10: THE MEXICAN MIRACLE AND THE CORPORATIST STATE

November 7: Post questions to Unit 5 board

WEEK 11: AUTHORITARIANISM AND RESISTANCE

November 13: Prof. Elaine Carey in class – read her piece before class
4pm lecture by Elaine Carey – required unless excused
November 14: Post questions to Unit 5 board
Journal across the unit, finalize entry for November 15
November 15: Unit 5 group presentation and papers due

NO CLASS THANKSGIVING WEEK (NOVEMBER 19-23)

UNIT 6: WHAT COMES NEXT?
Unit Book: Corchado, Midnight in Mexico

WEEK 12: NEOLIBERALISM, NEO-ZAPATISMO, AND THE FALL OF THE PRI

November 28: Post questions to Unit 6 board

WEEK 13: WHAT STATE? NARCOS AND THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS
No secondary reading – instead, find two good pieces of reporting on a recent event in Mexico and, in your journaling, tell me what the journalists do right from the point of view of your avatar

December 5: Post questions to Unit 6 board
Journal across the unit, finalize entry for December 6
December 6: Unit 6 group presentation and papers due

FINAL DUE DECEMBER 17 BY 5PM – SUBMIT ONLINE USING BLACKBOARD