History 480: Modern Mexico (1810-2010)

2012 Summer Sessions
Time: MTWU 2:00-3:50pm

Instructor: Luis F. Ruiz
Office: 340E McKenzie
Office Hours: TBA
Email: lruiz1@uoregon.edu

Course Description

This course will look at the history of Modern Mexico from the Independence Wars of 1810 to the present day, focusing primarily on major political, social, and economic transformations. Students will read a combination of primary sources (essays, newspaper articles, communiqués, declarations) and secondary sources (articles, monographs) in order to understand the different ways in which scholars and eyewitnesses have interpreted the plight of Mexico’s elite and popular classes throughout the past 200 years.

The content of the course will be divided in two sections, the first dedicated to the nineteenth century and the second to the twentieth century. Week one will explore the origins and causes of Mexico’s Independence movement and the challenges of nation-building. Here we will try to answer the following questions: Why did the social rebellion of Miguel Hidalgo and José María Morelos fail? What factors led to the actual consolidation of Mexican Independence and what sort of nation was founded in 1821? Why could one describe the early Mexican Republic as deeply fragmented, both politically and socially? Week two will cover foreign interventions and the rise of the liberal state in the mid nineteenth century. Why did world powers like France and the US invade and successfully occupy Mexico in 1848 and 1862 respectively? How did external and internal conflict lead to the emergence of a liberal state that valued capitalism, industrialization, order, and progress? What were the repercussions of the Pax Porfiriana that preceded the Mexican Revolution? Week three will move on to the twentieth century, beginning with the Mexican Revolution, its causes, participants, ideologies, and outcomes. We will try to answer the following questions: Who fought in the Revolution and for what purpose? What did the Revolution accomplish? Which goals were fulfilled and which were neglected? How did the Revolution change the political, social, and cultural order of Mexico? The final week will examine the rise and fall of the postrevolutionary state dominated by the PRI. How and why did the PRI emerge as a nationalistic, prosperous, modernizing state between 1940 and the 1968? Conversely, what happened between 1968 and 2000 that transformed the PRI into a neoliberal, privatizing, austere state?

We will navigate through the chronology laid out above while paying close attention to the following themes: the struggle for democracy, land ownership, social inequality, popular and indigenous movements, Mexico’s relationship with the United States, and the concept of “Many Mexicos” as it applies to cultural, geographic, and political divisions that cut across the different regions and social classes.

Classroom Policies

1. Attendance will be taken and it will be part of your participation grade. Numerous unexcused absences will affect this portion of your grade negatively, just like regular attendance and contribution in class will affect it positively.
2. In class, I expect students to be respectful to each other and to the instructor. Please turn off all electronic devices before class begins. In a small class that will feature discussion, laptops are probably not necessary, but if you do want to take notes on your computer, know that you can only use your laptop for notes and not for surfing the internet.

3. Plagiarism, defined as “the inclusion of someone else’s product, words, ideas, or data as one’s own work,” will be punished severely.

4. You will be responsible for one term paper, due on Monday of week 3 (August 2nd). Late papers will be graded down a full letter grade for every day that the paper is late.

5. There will be two in-class quizzes, both of which will be based on material covered in the readings and in lecture.

6. Your grade will be calculated on a number scale with the following equivalencies: 100 = A+, 93-99 = A, 90-92 = A-, 87-89 = B+, 83-86 = B, 80-82 = B-, 77-79 = C+, 73-76 = C, 70-72 = C-, 67-69 = D+, 63-66 = D, 60-62 = D-, 59 or below = F.

**Requirements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>10 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes (two)</td>
<td>20 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>40 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reading List**


*All other journal articles and primary documents will be made available as pdf files on Blackboard (blackboard.uoregon.edu). If a document is designated with (BB) on the syllabus, this means it is available on Blackboard.

There are several chapters from *The Oxford History of Mexico* which will be offered as optional reading for those who want further details or explanation from a reliable textbook. This book will be available on Reserve at Knight Library.

**Lecture Topics and Assigned Reading**

**WEEK ONE**

July 23: Introduction to the Course: Guidelines and an Overview Of Mexican History

July 24: The Social Revolution of Hidalgo and Morelos (1810-1813)

**Readings:**
Alicia Hernández Chávez, “Independent Mexico” (BB)  
Lucas Alamán, “The Siege of Guanajuato” (BB)  
José María Morelos, “Sentiments of a Nation” (BB)  
John Tutino, “The Limits of Insurrection, “Regional Reactions to the Hidalgo Revolt (BB)
July 25: Consolidating Mexican Independence and the New Republic (1810-1821)
Readings: Agustín de Iturbide, “Plan de Iguala” (BB)
Begin Wasserman, Everyday Life and Politics, 1-73
Optional Reading: Christon Archer, “Fashioning a New Nation,” from The Oxford History of Mexico (on reserve)

July 26: Nation-Building, Instability, and Political Divisions (1821-1846)
Readings: José Fuentes Mares, “Poinsett, a Story of a Great Intrigue” (BB)
Finish Wasserman, Everyday Life and Politics, 1-73

WEEK TWO
July 30: Texas, US Imperialism, and the “Disastrous War” of 1846-1848
Readings: Mariano Otero, “Considerations Relating to the Political and Social Situation of the Mexican Republic in the Year 1847” (BB)
Carlos Bustamante, “The New Bernal Díaz del Castillo” (BB)
Editors of El Tiempo, “A Conservative Profession of Faith” (BB)
Wasserman, Everyday Life and Politics, 74-90

July 31: La Reforma and French Intervention (1857-1876) QUIZ 1
Readings: Luis Gonzalez y Gonzalez, “Liberals and the Land” (BB)
Empress Carlotta, “A Letter from Mexico” (BB)
Wasserman, Everyday Life and Politics, 91-158

August 1: The Porfiriato: Order, Progress, and the Preconditions for a Revolution (1876-1910)
Readings: James Creelman, “President Díaz, Hero of the Americas” (BB)
John Kenneth Turner, “The Díaz System” (BB)
Wasserman, Everyday Life and Politics, 159-229

August 2: Discussion: Nineteenth-Century Mexico
Readings: Finish Wasserman book

*In this class we will review the central themes and concepts covered in the first two weeks. However, we will go one step further and consider not just the broader political developments of the nineteenth century, but also the lives of ordinary Mexicans. How did marginalized groups—such as indigenous communities, campesinos, hacienda peons, the urban poor, and women—experience such things like the independence wars, the Reforma, the wars against the US and France, and the Porfiriato? This discussion will serve as preparation for the term paper due the following week.

WEEK THREE
August 6: The Mexican Revolution (1910-1920)
Readings: Thomas Benjamin, “Pantheon of Heroes” (BB)
John Reed, Selections from Insurgent Mexico (BB)
Emiliano Zapata, “El Plan de Ayala” (BB)
Freidrich Katz, “Peasants in the Mexican Revolution”
August 7: Postrevolutionary Mexico: Building a Hegemonic State (1920-1940)

Readings: Plutarco Elías Calles, “Mexico Must Become a Nation of Institutions and Laws” (BB)
           Alan Knight, “Revolutionary Project, Recalcitrant People” (BB)

Optional Reading: Thomas Benjamin, “Building a Nation, 1920-1940” from The Oxford History of Mexico (on reserve)

August 8: Modern Mexico? The Economic Miracle and the PRI’s Corporatist State (1940-1968)

*TERM PAPER DUE IN CLASS

Readings: Andrew Sackett, “The Two Faces of Acapulco in the Golden Age,” (BB)

Optional Reading: John W. Sherman, “The Mexican ‘Miracle’ and its Collapse,” from The Oxford History of Mexico (on reserve)

August 9: Modernization, Authoritarianism and the 1968 Tlatelolco Massacre  QUIZ 2

Readings: Elena Poniatowska, “The Student Movement of 1968” (BB)

WEEK FOUR
August 13: Economic Crisis, the Neoliberal Solution, and the Fall of the PRI (1982-2000)

Readings: Stephen Haber and Kevin Middlebrook, “The Second Mexican Revolution” (BB)
           Alexander Dawson, “Salinostroika” (BB)
           Anonymous, Letters to Cuauhtémoc Cardenas, (BB)

August 14: The Social Impact of Neoliberalism: Immigration and the EZLN

Readings: Subcomandante Marcos, “Chiapas: The Southeast in Two Winds” (BB)
           Alexander Dawson, “Border Crossing in the Age of Terror” (BB)
           Michael Foley, “Privatizing the Countryside: Peasant Movements and Neoliberal Reform (BB)

August 15: Discussion and Review

Readings: Elisa Servín, “Another Turn of the Screw: Toward a New Political Order” (BB)

August 17: Final Exam, 214 McKenzie Hall at 3:15-5:15 PM  Bring Green Exam Books