

History of Mexico
HIST 351/551 • Fall 2017
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
Mondays, 4:00 to 6:30 pm, 238 CCC

Instructor:	Dr. Anju Reejhsinghani	Office Hours:	Mon., 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.,
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Course Description

This upper-level seminar course explores Mexican political, economic, social, and cultural history from pre-Conquest to the present. No previous Latin American history training is required.

The stories of the inhabitants of central and southern Mexico – the Olmec, Maya, and Nahua – comprise our initial discussions, but we soon consider Spanish contact with, and conquest of, indigenous peoples and the native environment. The establishment of a culturally rich but highly unequal colonial society, that of New Spain, eventually gave way to a long and turbulent transition to a new nation. We examine the causes and consequences of Mexico’s wars for independence against Spain, as well the viability of the federal state that ultimately emerged from it – especially when tested by liberal-conservative schisms, indigenous resistance, and foreign invasion and occupation.

The heart of the course, aligning with our major readings, focuses on three main strands of Mexican history with lasting legacies for both Mexico and its neighbor to the north. The first is the Texas Revolution and U.S.-Mexico War, which led to the loss of over half of Mexico’s territory to the United States. The second is the decade-long Mexican Revolution, a tragic civil war that fueled migration to the U.S. and resulted in the formation of a one-party state at home. The third is the globalization of Mexican culture, which – along with transnational labor and remittances and expanded diasporic ties – have helped to bring the U.S. and Mexico closer together.

Our final weeks consider how the Mexican state and its people are meeting the challenges of the present day. Grass-roots protest movements and disaffection with the electoral system; deregulation, privatization, free trade, and other neoliberal policies; the explosive growth of drug cartels, narco-related violence, and retribution against journalists; the integration of repatriated Mexicans and new Central American transmigrants; and frayed diplomatic ties with the U.S. during the Trump years have tested Mexico’s democracy, sovereignty, and stability but offer opportunities for it to reshape its external alliances and reconsider domestic priorities.

Goals and Objectives

This course has several aims, including but not limited to the following:

- (1) To obtain a general understanding of Mexican history from pre-Conquest to the present;
- (2) To analyze Mexican political, economic, social, cultural, and diasporic history; and
- (3) To interpret Mexican history using primary and secondary sources and to fashion coherent, well-supported arguments about the historical significance of various events and trends.

Grading

Grading in this course is based on the following:

Attendance/Participation	20%
Modern Mexico Map Quiz	5%
Short Take-Home Exams (2)	30% (15% each)
Final Paper Prospectus	10%
Final Paper Consultation	5%
Final Paper	30%

There are no grade curves in this class. Course grades are determined based on the above criteria and are determined according to the following point system:

92.5 points and above	A	72.5 to 76.4 points	C
89.5 to 92.4 points	A-	69.5 to 72.4 points	C-
86.5 to 89.4 points	B+	66.5 to 69.4 points	D+
82.5 to 86.4 points	B	59.5 to 66.4 points	D
79.5 to 82.4 points	B-	59.4 points and below	F
76.5 to 79.4 points	C+		

Required Texts

Texts for purchase (available at the UWSP University Store)

- Timothy J. Henderson. *A Glorious Defeat: Mexico and Its War with the United States*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2007.
- Mark Wasserman. *The Mexican Revolution: A Brief History with Documents*. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012.
- Jeffrey M. Pilcher. *Planet Taco: A Global History of Mexican Food*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Textbook for rental (available at the UWSP University Store)

- Michael C. Meyer, William S. Sherman, and Susan M. Deeds. *The Course of Mexican History*. 9th edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. [MSD]

Note: While the 10th edition is more recent and the 11th edition is expected soon, the 9th edition is at Text Rental and is our official textbook. If purchasing the text, the 10th and/or 11th editions are acceptable substitutes, but editions earlier than the 9th are not.

Additional readings (available on D2L)

- Elinor G.K. Melville. *A Plague of Sheep: Environmental Consequences of the Conquest of Mexico*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994. Chapter 1: "Introduction," pp. 1-16.

- Douglas Richmond. "The Legacy of African Slavery in Colonial Mexico, 1519-1810." *Journal of Popular Culture* 35:1 (September 2001): 1-16.
- Nichole Sanders. "Gender and Consumption in Porfirian Mexico: Images of Women in Advertising, *El Imparcial*, 1897-1910." *Frontiers* 38:1 (January 2017): 1-30.
- Michael J. Gonzales. "United States Copper Companies, the State, and Labour Conflict in Mexico, 1900-1910." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 26:3 (October 1994): 651-681.

(Additional readings will be assigned for the Week 13 and 14 classes.)

In-Class Film Screenings

Engineering an Empire: The Aztecs. Directed by Mark Cannon. 2006. 44 min.

Black in Latin America: Mexico & Peru: The Black Grandma in the Closet. Directed by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. 2011. 51 min.

The U.S.-Mexican War (1846-1848). Directed by Ginny Martin. 1998. 240 minutes (2 parts).

The Storm that Swept Mexico. Part I: The Tiger Is Unleashed. Part II: The Legacy. Directed by Ray Telles. 2011. 124 min.

The World's Most Wanted. BBC. 2015. 52 min.

(Additional screenings may be scheduled as circumstances permit.)

Course Requirements (Attendance/Participation, Map Quiz, Short Take-Home Exams)

Attendance/Participation. Active class discussion is an integral part of this course and an important factor in your final course grade. Should you need to arrive late or leave early, please inform me ahead of time. Documented absences due to serious medical or personal reasons will be excused but are capped at two per student per semester without the intervention of the Office of the Dean of Students. Attendance/participation comprises 20% of your course grade.

Map Quiz. The map quiz tests your knowledge of Mexico's 31 states and one federal district. During our September 25 class, you will have 10 minutes to match 10 of these names to letters that have been marked on a blank map. The map quiz is worth 5% of your course grade.

Short Take-Home Exams. Students must complete two brief take-home exams distributed in class one week before their deadlines. They ask you to synthesize material from class lectures, readings, and films by answering one of two possible essay questions, each of which should be between 1,000 and 1,250 words (approximately four to five double-spaced pages). Take-home exams are due on October 23 and November 20 and are each worth 15% of your course grade. Together, they comprise 30% of your course grade.

Course Requirements (Final Paper)

The culmination of the course is a final research paper. There are several steps in the process:

Paper Topic. Your final paper is on a topic of your choice related to Mexico from the pre-colonial era to the present. By October 23, you may consult a list of potential topics (including suggested sources) on D2L, but you are encouraged to develop your own topic if you choose. You are strongly advised to submit a one-paragraph description of your topic by November 6 so as to obtain my feedback before writing your prospectus. This assignment is not graded.

Final Paper Prospectus/Bibliography. Students will submit a final paper prospectus of 1-2 pages of narrative with attached bibliography by November 13. This assignment is worth 10% of the course grade.

Final Paper Consultation. You are required to have one 10-minute in-person consultation with Prof. Reejsinghani on your progress toward completing your final paper. These will be held during and possibly before (depending on class size) our class period on November 27. (We will not have regular class on that day.) This assignment is worth 5% of your course grade.

Final Paper. Your final paper should be between 2,250-2,500 words (approximately nine to ten double-spaced pages), not including title, bibliography, and citations. The final paper is due during our scheduled final exam meeting time and counts for 30% of your final course grade.

Reading, Make-Ups, Extra Credit, and Accommodations

Reading. You are expected to finish all reading assignments by the start of the class for which they have been assigned, unless otherwise indicated.

Make-Ups and Extensions. Should there be significant reasons outside of your control (major personal or family issues, major illness or injury, bereavement) that prevent you from completing an assignment, please contact me immediately to discuss your situation. I require documentation prior to scheduling a make-up or extension. Oversleeping, forgetting deadlines, confusion over Daylight Savings Time changes, vacation plans, and the loss of pets are NOT acceptable reasons to obtain a make-up or extension.

Extra Credit. Extra-credit opportunities bolster students' attendance/participation grades and are limited to two per student per semester. Each makes up for one-half of one unexcused absence; this means that you have the opportunity to make up no more than one unexcused absence per semester. Those with perfect attendance may earn attendance/participation grades in excess of 100 points (maxed out at 105 points). As in-person and online opportunities arise during the semester, I will post them to D2L and announce them in class. These are specific to your attendance/participation grade and are not applicable to any other coursework in this class.

Accommodations. UWSP is committed to providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities and temporary impairments. If you have a disability or acquire a condition during the semester where you need assistance, please contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center on the sixth floor of Albertson Hall (the library) as soon as possible. DATC can be reached at 715-346-3365 or DATC@uwsp.edu.

Policy on Electronic Devices and Copyright Notice

You are not permitted to use laptops, tablet computers, smart phones or other cellular phones, MP3 players, smart watches, video and/or audio recorders, cameras, headphones, or any other electronic devices and accessories during our class meetings, whether for personal reasons or as an aid to your note taking. (Such devices may be brought to the classroom but must be stored among your personal items for the duration of the class period. You may use electronic devices during our break periods, which are usually scheduled for the halfway point of each class except on abbreviated class days, but you must store them once class resumes.)

As an enrolled student in this class, you may download and/or utilize the instructor's course materials for your own personal academic purposes outside of class time, although doing so does not in any way infringe upon the instructor's copyright protections. You are not permitted to videotape, audiotape, photograph, digitize, upload to another web site, or otherwise reproduce or distribute any images, data, and other course materials – including syllabus, lecture outlines, timelines, assignment prompts, and other handouts – produced by the instructor.

This electronic device and copyright policy will be strictly enforced. Students who violate this policy will be asked to leave class. Violators may also be subject to Academic Misconduct charges (see below). Exceptions may be made for students with prior written documentation of a disability from UWSP Disability Services and with the instructor's written consent.

Student Academic Misconduct

Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of student academic misconduct will not be tolerated in this class. They are a mark of disrespect to your peers, your instructor, your university, and yourself. Students who violate University policy on this matter will be subject to disciplinary penalties, including (but not limited to) the possibility of failing this course. Please consult Chapter 14 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code, "Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures" (<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf>), for more information on what types of activities are considered "academic misconduct" and what the disciplinary sanctions are for students who engage in them.

Course Drops and Withdrawals

Students wishing to "clear drop" this course may do so via accesSPoint until the end of the business day on Thursday, September 14. After that, students withdrawing from this course no later than Friday, November 10, will receive a "W" on their transcripts. Drops after that deadline are generally not permitted. See <http://www.uwsp.edu/regrec/Pages/AddDropSchedule.aspx> for information.

Emergency Response

To familiarize yourself with UWSP response scenarios in the case of an emergency, consult the university's Emergency Procedures at <http://www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Pages/em/procedures>.

Use of Email for Official Correspondence to Students

Email is an official mode of university correspondence; you are therefore responsible for reading your email for university- and course-related information and announcements. You are responsible for keeping the university informed about changes to your email address. Please check your email regularly to stay current with course-related communications, some of which may be time-critical.

Syllabus

This syllabus is subject to change (though major change is unlikely). Should there be a modification of lecture topic, required reading or film screening, assignment deadline, or other item, I shall strive to give you adequate notice.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Introduction

M 9/11 **Discussion: Why Mexican History Matters**

No reading assignments due before our first class

Week 2: The Conquest

M 9/18 **Lecture 1: From the Aztec Empire to New Spain**

Read: Melville, *A Plague of Sheep*, Introduction
Pilcher, *Planet Taco*, Introduction and Chapter 1

Skim: MSD, Chapters 1-7

Watch in class: *Engineering an Empire: The Aztecs*

Week 3: Colonial Society and the Stirrings of Revolution

M 9/25 **Lecture 2: The Colonial Economy, Society, and Church**

Read: Richmond, "The Legacy of African Slavery"
Pilcher, *Planet Taco*, Chapter 2

Skim: MSD, Chapters 8-12

Watch in class: *Black in Latin America: Mexico & Peru: The Black Grandma in the Closet*

Assignments:

- The map quiz will be held at the start of today's class.

Week 4: The Wars for Independence and Aftermath

M 10/2 **Lecture 3: Reform, Revolutions, and the Rise of Santa Anna**

Read: Henderson, *A Glorious Defeat*, Map, Chronology, Preface, and Chapters 1-2

Skim: MSD, Chapters 13-16

Watch: *The U.S.-Mexican War (1846-1848)*

Week 5: One Nation Divided

M 10/9 **Lecture 4: Santa Anna and the Texas Problem**

Read: Henderson, *A Glorious Defeat*, Chapters 3-5

Skim: MSD, Chapters 17-18

Watch: *The U.S.-Mexican War (1846-1848)*, cont.

Week 6: The “Most Unjust” War

M 10/16 **Lecture 5: The U.S.-Mexico War**

Read: Henderson, *A Glorious Defeat*, Chapters 6-7 and Epilogue and Conclusion

Skim: MSD, Chapter 19

Watch in class: *The U.S.-Mexican War (1846-1848)*, cont.

Assignments:

- Short take-home exam guidelines and grading rubric, Chicago Manual of Style guidelines, and the prompt for Short Take-Home Exam #1 will be distributed.

Week 7: Civil War and Foreign Occupation

M 10/23 **Lecture 6: The Reform, French Intervention, and Restoration**

Read: Pilcher, *Planet Taco*, Chapters 3-4

Skim: MSD, Chapters 20-22

Assignments:

- Short Take-Home Exam #1 is due at the start of today’s class.
- We will discuss final paper topic guidelines and suggested final paper sources.

Week 8: The Costs of Industrialization

M 10/30 **Lecture 7: The Porfiriato**

Read: Sanders, “Gender and Consumption in Porfirian Mexico”
Gonzales, “United States Copper Companies”

Skim: MSD, Chapters 23-25

Watch in class: *The Storm that Swept Mexico*, Part I: The Tiger Is Unleashed

Week 9: Civil War and Aftermath

M 11/6 **Lecture 8: The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1920**

Read: Wasserman, Introduction and selected documents

Skim: MSD, Chapters 26-30

Watch in class: *The Storm that Swept Mexico*, Part II: The Legacy

Assignments:

- Final paper topics received by today will have my feedback by Thursday.
- Short Take-Home Exam #1 grades and feedback will be available by today.
- The final paper prospectus/bibliography guidelines will be distributed, along with the final paper guidelines and grading checklist.

Week 10: The Revolution Institutionalized

M 11/13 **Lecture 9: The Mexican Revolution, 1920-1940**

Read: Wasserman, selected documents

Skim: MSD, Chapters 31-34

Assignments:

- The final paper prospectus/bibliography is due at the start of today's class.
- The Short Take-Home Exam #2 prompt will be distributed.

Week 11: Neoliberalism

M 11/20 **Lecture 10: The Rise, Fall, and Rise of the PRI**

Read: Pilcher, *Planet Taco*, Chapters 5-7 and Conclusion

Skim: MSD, Chapters 35-39

Assignments:

- Short Take-Home Exam #2 is due at the start of today's class.
- Paper prospectus/bibliography grades and feedback will be available by today.
- The guidelines for and schedule of consultations will be distributed.

Week 12: Final Paper Consultations

M 11/27 **No regular class or office hours today; paper consultations held**

No new assignments due; read for your final paper

Assignment:

- Final paper consultations will be held in my office, 457 CCC, in scheduled 10-minute intervals from 4:00-6:30 p.m. (and, if necessary, will begin earlier in the day).
- Arrive 5 minutes before your consultation time, bring a hard copy of your paper prospectus/bibliography and something non-electronic to write with, and be ready with your own questions as well as ready to answer mine.

Week 13: The Drug War

M 12/4 **Lecture 11: Narco-Violence and the Drug War in Mexico**

Read: TBD; I will post journalistic articles to D2L one week before our class

Watch in class: *The World's Most Wanted*

Assignment:

- We will have a reduced reading load this week so that you may read for your final paper.
- Short-Take Home Exam #2 and final paper consultation grades and feedback will be available by today.

Week 14: Mexico in the Shadow of Trump

M 12/11 **Discussion: Where U.S.-Mexico Relations Stand Today**

Read: TBD; I will post journalistic articles to D2L one week before our class

Watch in class: TBD; I hope to use excerpts from Mexican media

Assignment:

- We will have a reduced reading load this week so that you may read for your final paper.
- Online extra-credit opportunities must be completed by the end of the day today.

FINAL PAPERS are due by the end of our regularly scheduled final exam meeting time, which is Thursday, December 21, 2017, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. To avoid late penalties, you will need to upload your final paper to the relevant D2L drop box by 7:00 p.m. CST on December 21, 2017.