**HIST 4368**

**History of Mexico**

Instructor: David C. LaFevor Course Meetings: TR 11-12:20

Email Address: [dlafevor@uta.edu](mailto:dlafevor@uta.edu) Meeting Place: Trimble Hall 110

Office: 327 University Hall

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1-4

and by appointment

**Description**:

This course examines Mexican history as a narrative told through local, national, and transnational perspectives. We will examine a variety of readings, images, films, and discussions to develop our understanding of the ideas, processes, and critical moments that have defined more than five hundred years of history. As one of the most culturally diverse and enigmatic countries in the world, the study of the Mexican past sheds light on a number of vitally important developments that shape the modern world.

While debating the causes of change over time, we will keep an eye on how events and individuals have been remembered in Mexico and around the world. This focus on memory and how the past weighs on the present is vital to understanding the multiple uses of the past by various actors in the Mexican present. If memory is satisfied desire, as Carlos Fuentes argues, then how do diverse Mexicans desire to see their past? What does this mean for the future?

***Required Texts***

Azuela, Mariano, *The Underdogs* **ISBN**: 978-0143105275

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Joseph, Gilbert, *Mexico Reader*, **ISBN:**9780822330424

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Clendinnen, Inga, *Ambivalent Conquests: Maya and Spaniard in Yucutan, 1517-1570* **ISBN**: 9780521527316

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Meyer, Michael C., et al., *The Course of Mexican History (10th edition)*, **ISBN:** 0199913811

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*Other readings available on Blackboard*

***Criteria for Evaluation*:**

Critical Review One: 15%

Critical Review Two: 20%

Reading Quizzes: 10%

Participation: 10%

Map Test: 5%

Film Review: 10%

Research Project: 30%

***Explanation of Assignments***

*Critical Reviews*

Critical Reviews of *Ambivalent Conquests* and *The Underdogs* should provide historical context for the work examined (i.e. what were the structural determinants of the events examined), and a central argument that explains your perspective on the book. You should also provide an overall critique of the strong and weak points of the work. The reviews should be between 1,250 and 1,500 words. We will discuss these in class before the due dates.

*Reading Quizzes*

We will have three or four reading quizzes over the semester. These quizzes will not be announced ahead of time. They will be no more than twenty multiple choice/short answer questions designed to gauge your completion of reading assignments. These short exams will never focus on minutiae, but will ascertain whether you have read and reflected on the text.

*Participation*

We will begin each Thursday session with a discussion of current events in Mexico. In order to participate in these discussion, you should have read and pondered at least two major issues/news stories. Draw parallels between current events and the history we are studying. If you are able, I encourage you to read Mexican newspapers in Spanish. Thursday meetings will be also be dedicated to discussions of the readings, films, images, or other sources for the week. You should keep notes while reading and be ready with questions, comments, or criticism of the week’s work. Your participation can come in the form of a question to the class.

*Map Test*

A basic knowledge of Mexican geography is key to understanding the parameters of the possible in a range of historical events and contexts. The limits and advantages of the physical world have placed brackets on the Mexican past. This brief quiz will gauge your progress in studying the states, regions, and major geographical features of Mexican territory.

*Film Review*

You will write a critical review of a Mexican film to be viewed outside of class time. Your response should be between 1,000 and 1,500 words. We will discuss ideas on how to focus your critique during class. A list of films will be posted to Blackboard; if you prefer to examine a film not on the list, you may do so, but please clear it with me first.

*Research Project*

This eight to ten page “white paper” will examine a current event, idea, or conflict (broadly defined) by tracing its history within or beyond Mexico. This paper should be written to inform and persuade the reader and should center on the causal argument. It is up to you to decide how far back the explanation should reach to give the reader the fullest possible explanation. Is history prologue to the present or is it a foreign language detached from current realities? I encourage you to come and speak with me during office hours to brainstorm your ideas for this project.

***Meetings and Readings***

\*\*\*\* *The readings listed for each week should be completed before Tuesday’s meeting.*

*\*\*\*\* The instructor reserves the right to make minor adjustments in the syllabus.*

21 August : Introduction to the Course, Syllabus discussion, Map Sheets

**Week One: Foundations: *The Americans, The Africans, and The Western Europeans: Cultural Collision and Reconfiguration***

**Reading:** Meyer, et. al, *The Course of Mexican History* (hereafter *CMH*), pp. 3-29; and Joseph, et. al., *The Mexico Reader* (hereafter MR), pp. 1-27; Nader, “The Spain That Encountered Mexico” (Blackboard)

26 August

28 August

**Week Two**:

**Reading:** *CMH*, pp. 30-72; and *MR*, pp. 28-94; Shroeder, “The Mexico that Spain Encountered”

2 September

4 September Current Events, Discussion of MR

**Week Three**

Reading: *MR,* 95-159; *CMH,* 75-137

9 September: **Map Test,**

11 September: Discussion of MR, Current Events

**Week Four**

**Reading:** *CMH:* pp. 140-167; Clendinnen, Chapters 1-5; Patch, “Indian Resistance to Colonialism” (Blackboard)

16 September

18 September, Current Events, Discuss Clendinnen

**Week Five**

**Reading:** Finish Clendinnen; Cope “Race and Class in Colonial Mexico City, 1521-1660” (Blackboard)

23 September

25 September: Discuss Cope

**Week Six**

**Reading:** *CMH,* pp. 171-201; Lavrin, “Women in Colonial Mexico,”; *MR* 171-95.

30 September: **Critical Review of Clendinnen Due**; Electronic Submission by midnight

2 October Current Events; Discuss Lavrin

**Week Seven: The Center Cannot Hold: Revolution, Independence, and Empire**

**Reading:** *CMH,* pp*.*204-37; *MR,* 160-205

7 October

9 October Current Events; Discuss *MR*

**Week Eight**

**Reading:** *CMH,* pp. 241-279; Archer, “Fashioning a New Nation” (Blackboard); Zoraida Vázquez, “War and Peace with the United States” (Blackboard)

14 October

16 October: Current Events; Discuss Zoraida Vazquez

**Week Nine**

**Reading:** *CMH,* pp. 283-319; *MR,* 220-72

21 October

23 October: Current Events; Discuss *MR*

**Week Ten**

**Reading:** *CMR,* pp. 323-56; Buffington and French, “The Culture of Modernity” (Blackboard), Krauze, “Porfirio Diaz”

28 October

30 October: Current Events, Discuss Buffington and French; and Krauze

**Week Eleven**

**Week Eleven: Porfirato, Disintegration, and Revolution**

**Reading:** *CRM,* pp. 361-396; Hart, “The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1920” (Blackboard) Begin Azuela, *The Underdogs.*

4 November **Film Review Due**

6 November: Current Events, Discuss Azuela

**Week Twelve**

**Reading:** *CMH,* pp. 397-443; Finish Azuela, *The Underdogs; MR,* 398-444.

11 November

13 November: Current Events; Discuss Azuela

**Week Thirteen**

**Reading:** CMH, pp. 445-68; Delpar, “Mexican Culture: 1920-45” (Blackboard); *MR* 461-99.

18 November: **Critical Review of Azuela due electronically by midnight**

20 November

**Week Fourteen**

**Reading:** *CMH***,** pp. 473-506; Rubenstein, “Mass Media and Popular Culture in the Post-Revolutionary Era” (Blackboard)

25 November

27 November (No Meeting, Thanksgiving Break)

**Week Fifteen**

**Reading:** *CMH***,** 507-78; Pilcher, “A Tale of Two Tacos” (Blackboard)

1 December

3 December

**Research Project Due: 10 December, by 5 p.m. in my office 323 University Hall**

**Important Dates:**

**9 September: Map Quiz**

**30 September: Critical Review of Clendinnen**

**4 November: Film Review**

**18 November: Critical Review of Azuela**

**10 December: Research Project Due**

**Class Policies**

**General Tips for Success in this Course**

As an upper division course, Mexican History has a moderate amount of reading. Strive to envelope yourself in the ideas and concepts that drive the presentation of the information in each author’s work. Ask yourself these questions: why is the author focusing on these events, ideas, or individuals? What are the factors most important to the narrative—i.e. what causes change?

We all come across unfamiliar terms: use this as an opportunity to dig deeper. Look-up new words with sites like [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com). Don’t be intimidated by unfamiliar Spanish terms—make them part of your vocabulary.

When places are mentioned, zoom-in on them with free programs like *Google Earth*. Many of us have traveled in Mexico; but even the best-traveled and studied individuals with find themselves in unfamiliar territory when learning more about such a large and diverse country.

**Most importantly**, take notes from your reading. I use a ruler and underline ideas, terms, or events that are central to the narrative. Challenge yourself to look into these; you will be much better able to contribute your thoughts to class discussions on current and past events in Mexico.

**UTA Required Information**

**UTA CORE CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES:**

The state of Texas requires specific objectives for general education "core" courses.  The state objectives for “general ed” courses require that students learn critical thinking and communication (written, oral, visual) skills; teamwork skills; quantitative reasoning; personal responsibility (ethics) and social responsibility (civics).  In this course, we are responsible for covering all objectives except quantitative reasoning and teamwork.

* **Critical Thinking Skills:** to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.*Must be addressed in all core curriculum courses.*
* **Communication Skills**: to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.*Must be addressed in all core curriculum courses.*
* **Empirical and Quantitative Skills**: to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions. *Must be addressed in all core courses that satisfy the following requirements:*
  + Mathematics
  + Life and Physical Sciences
  + Social and Behavioral Sciences
  + Component Area Option of Mathematics and Logic
* **Teamwork**: to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal. *Must be addressed in all core courses that satisfy the following requirements:* 
  + Life and Physical Sciences
  + Creative Arts
  + Communication
* **Personal Responsibility**: to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making. *Must be addressed in all core courses that satisfy the following requirements:*
  + Communication
  + Language, Philosophy and Culture
  + American History
  + Government/Political Science
* **Social Responsibility**: to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national and global communities. *Must be addressed in all core courses that satisfy the following requirements:* 
  + Language, Philosophy and Culture
  + Creative Arts
  + American History
  + Government/Political Science
  + Social and Behavioral Sciences

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**:

During this course, students will learn how to:

* identify key events, peoples, individuals, terms, periods, and chronology of the history of Mexico; distinguish between historical fact and historical interpretation; and connect historical events in chronological chain(s) of cause and effect
* develop critical thinking skills by discussing the living nature of history, using historical evidence to critique competing interpretations of the same historical events, explaining the nature of historical controversies
* synthesize diverse historical information and evidence related to broad themes of Mexican History and present this information in coherent, well-articulated, and well-substantiated analytical discussions and other written assignments
* develop the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision making by examining the motivations and actions of key figures in Mexican History
* develop an understanding of civic and social responsibility by examining interactions within and between regional, national, and global communities in Mexican History

**FACULTY EXPECTATIONS:** I expect that students will:

* not cheat, plagiarize, collude or commit other acts of academic dishonesty
* participate fully by attending class regularly and being prepared for discussions and other assignments.  Being prepared means doing your reading assignment or other class prep *before* the class session
* do college-level work in all written assignments.  You will receive specific and detailed instructions for all assessments within this course, follow them.  Proofread for grammar and prose (turning in sloppy work with many grammatical errors is not college level - if you have problems with writing on a college level, utilize the services of the Writing Center)
* turn in work on time
* show respect to your instructor and your fellow students in all interactions
* ask for help when needed

Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels.

**EXPECTATIONS FOR OUT-OF-CLASS STUDY**: A general rule of thumb is this: for every credit hour earned, a student should spend 3 hours per week working outside of class. Hence, a 3-credit course might have a minimum expectation of 9 hours of reading, study, etc. Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional ***6-9*** hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.

**DROP POLICY:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance**. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://wweb.uta.edu/ses/fao>).

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT:** The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability.

Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

Instructors may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents’ Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University.

**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES:** UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources).

**ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**STUDENT FEEDBACK SURVEY:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**FINAL REVIEW WEEK:**  A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week ***unless specified in the class syllabus*.** During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.