“History…is not merely something to be read. And it does not refer merely, or even principally, to the past. On the contrary, the great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways, and history is literally present in all that we do. It could scarcely be otherwise, since it is to history that we owe our frames of reference, our identities, and our aspirations.”


**Course Description**

This course explores the shifting meanings, expectations, and possibilities of political and social change in Mexico since the early 20th century. Through the lens of revolutionary ideas and social movements, we will consider: 1) the extent to which key political ruptures generated meaningful change for people on the ground; 2) the role that violence played as a catalyst for political change and as a source of political critique; 3) the ways in which competing visions of modernity became the impetus for cultural and social projects; 4) the shifting understandings of race and the role of Indigenous people in Mexican society; 5) how environmental pressures and criminal organizations are shaping the present political landscape.

Lectures will provide overviews of key developments in Mexico, and assigned texts will draw from newspaper sources, scholarly books and articles, primary source materials, and films. Topics of discussion will include: Indigenous and student movements; the queer experience of revolutionary fighting; experiences of border crossing; environmental degradation; and drug trafficking.

**Please note: this course will be hybrid. Starting week 2, we will meet on Mondays in person and Wednesdays on Zoom**

**Objectives**

Over the course of the quarter, students will develop and demonstrate the ability to: place current events within the context of modern Mexican history; critically analyze primary source materials; structure clear and effective arguments about scholarly debates; synthesize lectures and assigned readings during classroom discussions; and research academic knowledge and present it to a wider audience.

**Teaching Goals**

My goal as an instructor is to facilitate your development as critical thinkers. In the context of the course, I want to help you access a deeper knowledge and appreciation of Mexico and the challenges and promises of social change. I aim to foster a classroom environment that is inclusive and open to broad but respectful debate, free of discrimination.
Assigned Readings

There are two required books for this class, which are available for purchase at the University Bookstore. These books will be held on reserve in the UW library and two copies of each will be available at the Leadership Without Borders Husky Lending Library. All other required readings will be available on the Canvas course site.


Course Website

Syllabus and assignments are subject to change, so students should regularly check the “modules” section of the Canvas course site for the most up-to-date information on weekly meetings, due dates, and readings. Students will also use Canvas to post their written assignments and complete quizzes.

Expectations of Classroom Conduct

- Please bring a pen and loose paper to every in-person class. We will often do in-class reading reflections which you will submit at the end of class.
- Bring a copy of the assigned reading to class. This is essential to our class discussions and to your participation grade.
- In our discussions, we will not ask anyone of a particular or perceived race, gender identity or expression, citizenship status, national origin, or sexual orientation, marital status, disability, or veteran status to speak for the experience of their group (i.e. we won’t tokenize our classmates).

Grading Breakdown

30% Quizzes
15% Participation
20% News analysis paper
30% Final Project
5% Peer review

Assignments:

Participation (15%): While this seems like “only” fifteen percent of your grade, showing up is an extraordinarily important part of this and all courses. It is important to know that “showing up” means listening to lectures and participating in discussions, reading the assigned texts carefully, and actively engaging in course conversations. Additionally, this also means completing “in-class” written assignments.

Quizzes (30%): Short quizzes will be posted to Canvas every Thursday morning (weeks 2-9). These quizzes are designed to test your comprehension of the course material (lectures and readings). They will include a combination of multiple choice questions
and short essays. You will have 2 hours to complete the quiz once you open it; quizzes will close @ 11:59 pm on Fridays.

**Missed quizzes**: Individual quizzes cannot be made up. However, I have a policy that should help if you unable to take the quiz during the allotted time frame. First, all students will have their lowest quiz score dropped. You will see this automatically reflected week to week in your grade calculated on Canvas. To accommodate those who may have missed a quiz due to illness, I will also post one makeup quiz during week 10.

**Critical News Analysis (20%): due on Sunday, Feb. 6 @ 11:59pm**

In this 4-pg (double-spaced, 12-pt font) paper, you will explore a particular issue that is currently (last year) being covered in news on Mexico. Coverage can be in any language that you can read comfortably. Your paper should answer the following questions: How is this issue covered? Is it covered differently by different outlets? If, so, why? In answering these questions, be attentive to how the news is produced. Think, for example, about authorship, publication/media company, and where the information comes from (i.e. what sources does the journalist use?). Did the journalist report it as a correspondent in Mexico or did the newspaper print it from a news wire service? Does it matter? In sum, your response should be analytical (i.e. do not simply summarize what you read).

Your discussion of the news coverage should include at least three separate articles/videos. At least one article should be from establishment media (e.g. CNN, Washington Post, New York Times, BBC). You may include sources from social media, personal blogs, and visual sources as well (e.g. a meme, cartoon, or video clip), but it is not required. More information (including grading rubrics) can be found on the Canvas assignment page.

If you read Spanish, I recommend that you challenge yourself to consult Mexican news. Some of the best news sources include the online sites SinEmbargo, Animal Político, and Pie de Página. If you are interested in local issues, I can suggest regional news sources as well. For news in English, I recommend consulting the Dallas Morning News (particularly articles by Alfredo Corchado), the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, Pro Pública, and The Guardian.

**Peer Review and mini presentation 5%: due week 10**

In the final week of the course, you will present one of your visual sources in a small breakout group of four students. Consider this mini presentation a short preview (5 minutes max) of your final project that you provide through the close analysis of one visual source. As a breakout group, you will collectively evaluate each other’s presentations and submit the grades to the instructor at the end of class.

**Final Project 30%: due on Tuesday, March 15 at 11:59pm.**

The final project asks you to present a visual history of a social or political movement in Mexico. The movement can be of your choosing and can include anything from a religious organization that takes on social issues, a community mobilizing for environmental justice, or a political group. Your presentation should consider the following questions: 1) How does this organization/movement fit within or emerge from Mexico’s broader social and political history? 2) What are the organizations’
goals, challenges, strengths, and weaknesses? 3) How do the visual materials available shape our understanding of this movement? Your findings should be based in research (cite at least three scholarly sources), but presented in an accessible, visual manner. You must be attention to the origin, authorship, and (potentially) multiple uses and/or interpretations of your visual sources. I recommend presenting your project as either a webpage, a video presentation, or a PowerPoint/Google Slides presentation with audio narration of no more than fifteen minutes. If you are interested in learning a program like Omeka or ArcGis, you may also present your project in that format: https://guides.lib.uw.edu/research/gis/resources.

This course uses the JSIS Standard Grading Scheme, which converts percentage grades into 4.0 grades:

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2.7 or higher is required for graduate students to earn "S" in "S/NS" grading
2.0 or higher is required for undergraduate students to earn "S" in "S/NS" grading
Below 0.7 = 0.0

**Late Assignments**

Late assignments will be docked 1% every day after a 24-hour grace period. In case of medical or family emergencies, please notify the instructor before the due date if possible.

**COVID**

Do not come to class if you are sick. Just don’t. I will accommodate students who need to make up in-class assignments due to illness. I will also at times offer discussion and participation assignments that can be completed outside of class meeting times.

**A Quick Note about Academic Integrity**

The University takes academic integrity very seriously. Behaving with integrity is part of our responsibility to our shared learning community. If you’re uncertain about if something is academic misconduct, ask me. I am willing to discuss questions you might have. Acts of academic misconduct may include but are not limited to:

- Cheating (working collaboratively on quizzes/exams and discussion submissions, sharing answers and previewing quizzes/exams)
- Plagiarism (representing the work of others as your own without giving appropriate credit to the original author(s))
- Unauthorized collaboration (working with each other on assignments)

Concerns about these or other behaviors prohibited by the Student Conduct Code will be referred for investigation and adjudication by the Office of Scholarly Integrity. Students found to have engaged in academic misconduct may receive a zero on the assignment (or other possible outcomes).

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is defined as the use of creations, ideas or words of publicly available work without formally acknowledging the author or source through appropriate use of quotation marks, references, and the like. Plagiarizing is presenting someone else’s work as one’s own original work or thought. This constitutes plagiarism whether it is intentional or unintentional. The University of Washington takes plagiarism very seriously. Plagiarism may lead to disciplinary action by the University against the student who submitted the work. Any student who is uncertain whether his or her use of the work of others constitutes plagiarism should consult the course instructor for guidance before formally submitting the course work involved. (Sources: UW Graduate School Style Manual; UW Bothell Catalog; UW Student Conduct Code)

http://depts.washington.edu/grading/issue1/honesty.htm
Weekly Schedule

Week 1: Revolutionary Upheaval

Mon. Jan. 3: Introduction to the Course and Mexico (class meets on Zoom)

Wed. Jan. 5: Queer and Indigenous Experiences of War (class meets on Zoom)
  - Gabriela Cano, “Unconcealable Realities of Desire,” in *Sex and Revolution*
  - “Pedro Martinez” and “Juan the Chamula” (primary source documents from *The Mexico Reader*)

Week 2: Race and the Invention of a National Identity

Mon. Jan 10: In class viewing of *The Lost Reels of Pancho Villa*
  - Varner, *La Raza Cosmética*, introduction

Wed. Jan. 12: Mestizaje and Indigenismo (Zoom)
  - Varner, *La Raza Cosmética*, chapter 1

Week 3: The Consolidation of the One-Party State

Mon. Jan. 17: MLK Day—No Class

Wed. Jan. 19: Guest lecture by Dr. Natasha Varner
  - Varner, *La Raza Cosmética*, chapters 2 and 3

Week 4: Struggles over Land and Universities

Mon. Jan. 24: Jaramillistas and Peasant Struggles for Land
  - Varner, *La Raza Cosmética*, chapter 4

Wed. Jan. 26: 1968 and Student Movements
  - Varner, *La Raza Cosmética*, chapter 5

Week 5: Racialized Violence of the 1970s

Mon. Jan. 31: Gender, Race, and Carework in Mexico City
  - Watch: *Roma* (Netflix)
Wed. Feb. 2: How the War on Drugs Justified a War on the Left


**Critical news analysis due on Friday, Feb. 4 @ 11:59pm**

**Week 6: From Democratic Opening to Debt Crisis**

Mon. Feb. 7: The Political Uses of Neoliberalism—From de la Madrid to AMLO


Wed. Feb. 9: *Oaxaca Resurgent: Indigeneity, Development, and Inequality in Twentieth-century Mexico*, with Indigenous scholars Shane Dillingham and Shannon Speed @ 12:30-2:00pm on Zoom


**Week 7: Border Politics**

Mon. Feb. 14: Zapatistas, Food, and NAFTA

Listen to *Anything for Selena*: Episodes #1 (“Selena and Me”) and #3 (“Birth of a Symbol”), https://www.wbur.org/podcasts/anythingforselena

Wed. Feb. 16: Mexico’s Imprint on U.S. Culture

Listen to *Anything for Selena*: #5 (“Tejano Tension”) and Episode #6 (“Spanglish”), https://www.wbur.org/podcasts/anythingforselena

**Week 8: Climate Crisis and Migration**

Feb. 21: Presidents’ Day—No Class

Listen to *Anything for Selena*, Episode #8 (“Selena and Race”), https://www.wbur.org/podcasts/anythingforselena


Feb. 23: Migrant Caravans and Mexico’s Southern Border
Jason De León, *Land of Open Graves* (pgs TBD, check Canvas)

**Week 9: Organized Crime, Conservation, and Extraction**

Mon. Feb. 28: “Failed States” and the Failed War on Drugs

Jason De León, *Land of Open Graves* (pgs TBD)

Wed. Mar. 2: Guest lecture

Jason De León, *Land of Open Graves* (pgs TBD)

**Week 10: Social Movements for the 21st Century**

Mar. 7: LGBTQ Rights and the Fight Against Violence

Jason De León, *Land of Open Graves* (pgs TBD, check Canvas)

Mar. 9: Environment Justice: The Case of the Tren Maya and Beer-Bottling Plant

Jason De León, *Land of Open Graves* (pgs TBD, check Canvas)

**Final Paper due Tuesday, March 15 at 11:59pm**
Campus Resources

Equal Opportunity:

The University of Washington reaffirms its policy of equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, or status as a disabled veteran or Vietnam-era veteran in accordance with University of Washington policy and applicable federal and state statutes and regulations.

Access & Accommodations:

Your experience in this class is important to me. It is the policy and practice of the University of Washington to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have already established accommodations with Disability Resources for Students (DRS), please activate your accommodations via myDRS so we can discuss how they will be implemented in this course.

If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to: mental health, attention-related, learning vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), contact DRS directly to set up an Access Plan. DRS facilitates the interactive process that establishes reasonable accommodations. Contact DRS at disability.uw.edu.

Religious Accommodations:

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW’s policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at Religious Accommodations Policy (https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/). Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the Religious Accommodations Request form (https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/).

Writing Centers on Campus:

For additional help with writing assignments, consult the JSIS/Political Science Writing Center (http://depts.washington.edu/pswrite/), located in Gowen 105, during its daily hours. In the evenings, CLUE runs a writing center in the Mary Gates Hall Gateway Center from 7 p.m. – midnight, Sundays through Thursdays.