

HIST 3150: HISTORY AND CULTURE OF MEXICO

Fall Semester 2025

Department of History

In-person lecture format

"Pity poor Mexico,
So far from God,
And so close to the United States."
-Porfirio Díaz

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

HIST*3150 History and Culture of Mexico (LEC: 3) [0.50]

This course will cover the history and culture of Mexico from its pre-Columbian civilizations to the present. Topics may include: Aztec and Mayan civilizations, European discovery and conquest, inquisition, convents, independence, the Mexican revolution, indigenismo, NAFTA accords, and the EZLN/ Zapatista insurgency in Chiapas.

Prerequisite(s): 7.50 credits

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will cover the history and culture of Mexico from its pre-Columbian civilizations to the present. Topics include: Aztec and Mayan civilizations, Cortés and conquest, the Inquisition, rebel nuns, independence, the Mexican-American War and loss of Texas, the Alamo, the great Mexican Revolution including artists like Frida Kahlo, Tina Modotti, and Diego Rivera, *indigenismo*, student revolts and the 1968 Olympics, and modern-day Zapatista indigenous and land reclamation guerrilla movement in Chiapas. This year we will pay particular attention to the history of the Mexico-US border to achieve a more informed understanding of current events.

COURSE OUTCOMES

If a student successfully puts forth the time and effort required, the learning outcomes achieved in this course will be:

- 1) Knowledge of the major people, events, ideas, and historical patterns that have shaped the modern Mexican nation.
- 2) The ability to evaluate and understand stories in the news about events in Mexico.
- 3) Awareness of the lives and experiences of people different from us in place and time, which contributes to one's ability to be an informed global citizen.
- 4) Improvement in the sophistication of your oral and written communication skills.
- 5) Exposure to the discipline of history and the ability to use its research methods.

COURSE READINGS:

William Beezley, *Mexico in World History* [\$48.50]

G. Joseph & T. Henderson, eds., *The Mexico Reader* [\$42.00]

K. McDonough, *Indigenous Science & Technology: Nahuas & the World Around Them* [\$44.00]

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *The Response* [\$0.00; provided to class; out of copyright]

E. O'Brien, *Surgery & Salvation: Roots of Reproductive Injustice in Mexico, 1770–1940* [\$44.00]

ALLOCATION OF GRADES:

Assessment Item	Weight
Close Reading Sheet for McDonough book	10%
Short writing response #1	15%
Short writing response #2	15%
Discussion, Participation, Engagement	20%
Final Research Essay or Unessay Project	25%
Final Exam	15%
Total	100%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Sept 5 Introduction to the Course and Requirements

Sept 8	Meso-American Politics: The Aztec Empire and the Mayan City States
Sept 10	Meso-American Religion: <i>Popul Vuh</i> , <i>Chilam Balam</i> and the prophecies Reading: Beezley, pp. 1-18
Sept 12	<u>Reading/ Discussion:</u> <i>Mexico Reader</i> , pp. 55-91
Sept 15	<u>Discussion:</u> McDonough, <i>Indigenous Science and Technology</i> Do a " <u>Close Reading</u> " exercise
Sept 17	Hernán Cortés, Moctezuma, and the Spanish Conquest <u>Reading:</u> Beezley, pp. 19-24 <u>McDonough Close Reading due</u> in hard copy to me or in Dropbox
Sept 19	<u>Discussion:</u> <i>Mexico Reader</i> , pp. 95-113
Sept 22	Encomienda, Land, Labour and the Silver Mines Reading: Beezley, pp. 27-31 <u>Reading/ Discussion:</u> <i>Mexico Reader</i> , pp. 131-140
Sept 24	Virgins and Devils in the New World; The Spiritual Conquest Beezley, pp. 24-28 <u>Reading/ Discussion:</u> <i>Mexico Reader</i> , pp. 114-130
Sept 26	The Mexican Inquisition <u>Discussion</u> and primary source exercise
Sept 29	Cities and Urban Life
Oct 1	Hierarchies and Status: Race and Gender in Colonial Mexico Mestizaje, Race, Castas Marriage, Shame and Honour: Women and Family Life Beezley, pp. 32-37
Oct 3	The Baroque: Libraries, Science, Art and Intellectual Life Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Carlos Sigüenza y Góngora <u>Reading/ Discussion:</u> <i>Mexico Reader</i> , pp. 141-167
Oct 6	<u>Discussion:</u> Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, <i>La Respuesta</i>
Oct 8	Bourbon Reforms; The Hidalgo Revolt Beezley, pp. 38-44 <u>Reading/ Discussion:</u> <i>Mexico Reader</i> , pp. 169-188

- Oct 10 Short writing assignment #1
- Oct 13 Thanksgiving holiday - no class
- Oct 15 Independence and the Mexican Empire of Iturbide
Beezley, pp. 48-52
Reading/ Discussion: *Mexico Reader*, pp. 189-195
- Oct 17 Caudillismo: Antonio López de Santa Anna and his Leg
Beezley, pp. 48-52
Reading/ Discussion: *Mexico Reader*, pp. 196-205
- Oct 20 Film: The Mexican-American War
- Oct 22 The Mexican-American War
Beezley, pp. 53-63
Reading/ Discussion: *Mexico Reader*, pp. 206-216
- Oct 24 The French Intervention: Empire of Maximilian and Carlota
Beezley, pp. 72-75
Reading/ Discussion: *Mexico Reader*, pp. 263-269
- Oct 27 The Reforma: The Republican Presidency of Benito Juárez
Beezley, pp. 63-71, 75-80
Reading/ Discussion: *Mexico Reader*, pp. 239-251, 270-272
- Oct 29 The Porfiriato from Above: People and Politics
Beezley, pp. 81-88
- Oct 31 The Porfiriato from Below: Life and Death Among the Common Folk
Beezley, pp. 88-98
Reading/ Discussion: *Mexico Reader*, pp. 273-293
- Oct 31 DAY OF THE DEAD – let's learn about it and celebrate!
- Nov 3 Short writing response #2
- Nov 5 Mexican Revolution Part I
Beezley, pp. 98-101
- Nov 7 Film: "The Last Zapatista" (Mexican Revolution)
- Nov 10 Mexican Revolution: Part II
Beezley, pp. 104-109

- Nov 12 The Cosmic Race: Art, Ideas and the Revolution
Beezley, pp. 109-116
Reading/ Discussion: *Mexico Reader*, pp. 15-32
- Nov 14 Individual essay/ unessay consultations in my office (available 10:00 - 4:00)
- Nov 17 Discussion: O'Brien, *Surgery and Salvation*
- Nov 19 The Cárdenas Years
Beezley, pp. 116-117
Reading/ Discussion: *Mexico Reader*, pp. 421-460
- Nov 21 "Refried Elvis" and Comic Books: Pop Culture and Rebellion in the 1950s
Beezley, pp. 117-127
Reading/ Discussion: *Mexico Reader*, pp. 33-40, 461-552, 570-578
ESSAY/ UNESSAY DUE DATE - If you want full marginal comments throughout
- Nov 24 1968: The Olympics and the Massacre of Students at Tlatelolco
Beezley, pp. 127-134
Discussion: *Mexico Reader*, pp. 553-569
ESSAY/ UNESSAY DUE DATE - If you want just a paragraph of comments at end
- Nov 26 *¡Basta Ya!* The Zapatista Rebellion in Chiapas
Beezley, pp. 134-140
- Nov 28 Review of the semester's work
FINAL DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF ESSAY/UNESSAY SEMESTER WORK

ASSIGNMENT DETAILS

SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:

I will give you a long list of questions and ask you to choose one to answer, using ideas and information drawn from the general textbook, class lectures and discussions, the primary source reader, your own outside research etc. As always, strong responses will have a clear opinion and will be able to support it using specific evidence (names, dates, events, ideas, concepts etc). The purpose of these spontaneous writing exercises is for you to gain practice responding to questions in a careful, logical, spontaneous way and for me to be able to gauge the level of understanding achieved. Plus, they're just plain fun!

SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE MAJOR RESEARCH ESSAY:

- **Absolutely no use of GenAI, in any form, for this assignment at all !!**
- Length is 10-12 pages (4500-5000 words), including footnotes but not bibliography
- It must be typed, double-spaced, using 12-point font and 1-inch margins.
- Do not double space between paragraphs. Use 5-space indentations
- Make sure that pages are numbered. Cover page does not count.
- Include a bibliography that lists all sources consulted in alphabetical order.
- Must use footnotes or endnotes (not in-text citations like MLA style)
- Must include specific page numbers from the book/ article in your citations
- Based on at least 10 academic sources, including both books and journal articles. Internet sources (websites) are not allowed unless they have been cleared by me.
- Reference materials (encyclopedias etc), textbooks, and class notes are not acceptable academic research sources.
- You are encouraged to use primary source research at the 3000-level but not required.

**** These are the minimum requirements; meeting these requirements alone does not necessarily constitute “A” level work. It means you have met the basic, minimum requirements.**

Your essay should also have a thesis and be supported by specific and persuasive evidence. You can arrive at a thesis by first asking yourself a “research question” then conducting research to answer the question. After considering your evidence, thinking about what you have read, your answer then becomes your argument/thesis. Please see me if you want any help defining a topic or locating sources. Aim high and have fun!

If you have any questions about style or format, you can consult the online version of the Chicago Manual of Style (also known as Turabian). It can be found by going to the Library's main page (lib.uoguelph.ca) and typing "Chicago Manual of Style online" into the search box. Alternatively, Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (OWL) maintains an excellent site where you can find correct citation formats for all types of sources and shown in all major citation styles.

OR

SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE “UNESSAY”

A fuller description of the Unessay option will be posted separately in Courselink in the Syllabus and Assignments module.

MY OWN COURSE POLICIES

Essays should be written using Turabian/ Chicago citation style. There is an excellent online resource to all the major academic citation styles available online at the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL).

For this course, you may not use ChatGPT or any form of “generative AI” or technology that will write, organize or generate ideas and/or outlines for you. This is a completely AI-free course. Our collective goal is to improve and grow and write and think. I want to engage with your ideas not those of a machine!

If you are struggling with time management or writing trouble, don’t worry. There are no late penalties this semester. Talk to me! I want to help and support you.

Turnitin: I do not use Turnitin for this course or any others. I assume you are here to learn and are working on your own assignments in good faith. I do not want you to feel any undue pressure from software accusations; you are just learning how things work and honest mistakes are part of the learning process. I also object to your intellectual property being gobbled up by that company and made part of their database without your consent or compensation. So, no Turnitin for us!

Reweighting of Course Component Grades: The value of the various components for this course will **not** be reweighted, except in very exceptional cases . Each component of the course is designed to contribute to and assess different aspects of the course's learning objectives, and you are expected to complete all of them.

MANDATORY UNIVERSITY STATEMENTS

Academic Integrity

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an

academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The [Academic Misconduct Policy](#) is outlined in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability. Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to make a booking at least 10 days in advance, and no later than the first business day in November, March or July as appropriate for the semester. Similarly, new or changed accommodations for online quizzes, tests and exams must be approved at least a week ahead of time. For students at the Guelph campus, information can be found on the [SAS website](#).

Accommodation of Religious Obligations

If you are unable to meet an in-course requirement due to religious obligations, please email the course instructor within two weeks of the start of the semester to make alternate arrangements.

See the Academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [Academic Accommodations of Religious Obligations](#).

Copies of Out-of-class Assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Drop Date

Students will have until the last day of classes to drop courses without academic penalty. The deadline to drop two-semester courses will be the last day of classes in the second semester. This applies to all undergraduate students except for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Associate Diploma in Veterinary Technology (conventional and alternative delivery) students. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in the [Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses](#).

Email Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

Health and Wellbeing

The University of Guelph provides a wide range of health and wellbeing services at the [Vaccarino Centre for Student Wellness](#). If you are concerned about your mental health and not sure where to start, connect with a [Student Wellness Navigator](#) who can help develop a plan to manage and support your mental health or check out our [mental wellbeing resources](#). The Student Wellness team are here to help and welcome the opportunity to connect with you.

Illness

Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).

Recording of Materials

Presentations that are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted. Unauthorized distribution of someone's intellectual property (IP) is illegal. **Do not sell, give or post** my course materials to Chegg, or any other entity or site.

Resources

The [Academic Calendars](#) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's

procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [Academic Consideration](#).