

INTA 8803. CONTEMPORARY MEXICO

Spring 2024

Prof. Alberto Fuentes (alberto.fuentes@inta.gatech.edu)

Overview

This course introduces students to the politics, economy and society of contemporary Mexico. The course is divided into three parts. In the first part, students will learn about Mexico's fascinating politics during the historical period encompassing the Revolution of 1910-1920, the 71-year period of one-party rule under the PRI, and the transition to democracy in the 1990s and 2000s. In the second part of the course, students will explore the four major economic models that competed for dominance during this 100-year period: liberalism, agrarianism, import-substitution industrialization, and neoliberalism. In the third part of the course, students will examine prominent social themes, including migration to the U.S., the drug trade and the North-South divide. This course will prepare students to better understand and evaluate Mexico's political, economic and social achievements and failures, as well as its relations with other major actors, most notably its northern neighbor.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence social behavior, particularly in Mexico
2. Use this knowledge in a practical problem-solving way to analyze and address issues of immediate international concern (Problem-solving in International Affairs)
 - a. Understand relevant political, economic and social concepts and debates
 - b. Assess different approaches and frameworks to interpret and evaluate key questions and problems in contemporary Mexican politics, economy and society
3. Enhance their awareness of the diversity of ethical systems in the world (Cultural and Ethical Awareness)
4. Express their arguments clearly and effectively both in written reports and class discussions (Professional Development)

Readings

Knight, Alan. *The Mexican Revolution: a very short introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

Camín, Héctor Aguilar, and Lorenzo Meyer. *In the Shadow of the Mexican Revolution: Contemporary Mexican History, 1910–1989*. University of Texas Press, 2010

All additional required readings will be available on the class website on Canvas (except for those marked with an asterisk (*), which are available through Georgia Tech's Library website).

Requirements

Assignment	Due date	% Final Grade
Attendance and Participation	Weekly	20%
Short essays (x 2)	February 22, 2024 March 14, 2024	50%
Final Presentation	April 16, 2024	30%

Description of Requirements

1. **Attendance and Participation.** You are required to attend class and participate in discussions and other activities. You will be graded on both the quantity and quality of your contributions. Attendance and participation will account for 20% of your final grade.
2. **Short essays.** At the end of Parts I (Mexican Politics) and II (Mexican Economy) of the course, you will receive a prompt for a short essay (6 double-space pages, 12-point font, 1-inch margins). You will have 72 hours to complete the essay. The two essays will account for 50% of the final grade (25% each).
3. **Final Presentation.** At the end of the course, you will prepare a 25 – 30-minute presentation assessing the current MORENA government. Detailed instructions will be provided on March 28, 2024. The presentation will account for 30% of the final grade.

Grading Scale

Final grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	65-69%
F	0-64%

Policy for Late Assignments

Late assignments are strongly discouraged and will incur penalties except in the event of an illness or emergency (documentation will be requested). Any major scheduling conflicts – including those that arise due to participation in “approved Institute activities” – should be discussed with the professor at least two weeks before the assignment due date. For assignments turned in less than 24 hours late, the penalty will be a deduction of 20% off the assignment grade. The professor will not accept assignments turned in over 24 hours late.

Feedback and contact with the faculty

1. **Office Hours.** The professor will meet with students during office hours to answer any questions or concerns. To schedule a meeting, you should email the professor to make the necessary arrangements.
2. **Email Policy.** Email is the best way to contact the professor. You should expect responses within a 24-hour period. In every email, please include the course number in the subject line (i.e. INTA 3020).

Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities

The professor will work with Office of Disability Services so that all students have an equal opportunity for success. Information is available at: <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>

Academic integrity and Honor Code

While students are encouraged to work together and collaborate with each other, you should clearly differentiate your work from that of others, including peers and bibliographical sources. Complete and accurate representation of all direct quotations and paraphrased material is required. Plagiarizing or cheating will be addressed in accordance with the Georgia Tech Honor Code. For information, please visit:

<http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/>

<http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>

READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

PART I: Politics

Week 1. Introduction. Overview of the Course / The Porfiriato: Seeds of Revolution (1880s – 1910s)

- *Required readings*
 - Knight, Chapters 1 -2
 - Camín, Héctor Aguilar, and Lorenzo Meyer. *In the Shadow of the Mexican Revolution: Contemporary Mexican History, 1910–1989*. University of Texas Press, 2010 (read Chapter 1)
 - *MacLachlan, Colin M., and William H. Beezley. *Mexico's Crucial Century, 1810-1910 : An Introduction*. University of Nebraska Press, 2010 (read chapters 5 – 8)
 - *Ezrow, Natasha M., and Erica Frantz. *Dictators and Dictatorships: Understanding Authoritarian Regimes and Their Leaders*. Continuum, 2011 (read Chapter 1)
 - Creelman, J. “President Diaz, Hero of the Americas,” in *The Mexico Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (ed. Joseph and Henderson). Duke University Press: 2001.

Week 2. The Revolution (1910s – 1920s)

- *Required readings*
 - Knight, Chapters 3 – 6
 - Camin and Meyer, Chapter 2 and 3

Week 3. The Sonorans and Cardenismo (1934-1940)

- *Required readings*
 - Knight, Chapter 7
 - Anguiano, A. “Cardenas and the Masses,” in *The Mexico Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (ed. Joseph and Henderson). Duke University Press: 2001.
 - Camin and Meyer, Chapter 4

Week 4. The Miracle Years: Consolidation of the regime (1940 – 1968)

- *Required readings*
 - Excerpt from “Vargas Llosa: Mexico is the perfect dictatorship,” *El Pais*, September 31, 1990.
 - Needler, M. “The Political Development of Mexico,” *The American Political Science Review*, 55 (2), 1961: 308-312.
 - Vaughan, Mary Kay. “Mexico, 1940–1968 and Beyond: Perfect Dictatorship? Dictablanda? or PRI State Hegemony?” *Latin American Research Review* 53(1), 2018: 167–176.
 - Camin and Meyer, Chapter 5
- *Suggested readings*
 - Handelman, H. “The Politics of Labor Protest in Mexico: Two Case Studies,” *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, 18 (3), 1976: 267 – 294.

Week 5. Regime exhaustion (1970s- 1980s) and Political Liberalization (1980s – 1990s_

- *Required readings*
 - Wilson, E. “Keys to Understanding Mexico: Challenges for the Ruling PRI,” *Heritage Studies on Mexico*, 1987.
 - Hernandez Chavez, A. “Mexican Presidentialism: A Historical and Institutional Overview,” *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, 10(1), 1994: 217 – 225.
 - Schneider, B. “Why is Mexican Business so organized?” *Latin American Research Review*, 37(1), 2002: 77 – 118.
 - Camin and Meyer, Chapter 6
- *Suggested readings*
 - Randal Sheppard. *A Persistent Revolution: History, Nationalism, and Politics in Mexico Since 1968*. University of New Mexico Press, 2016 (read chapter 3)

Week 6. Political Liberalization (1980s – 1990s) and Democratic Emergence and Alternation (2000 – 2018)

- *Required readings*
 - Shin, Doh Chull. "On the Third Wave of Democratization: A Synthesis and Evaluation of Recent Theory and Research." *World Politics*, 47(1), 1994 (read pp. 135 – 154 and 161 – 164)
 - Cornelius, W. “Mexico’s Delayed Democratization,” *Foreign Policy*, 95, 1994: 53- 71.
 - *Eisenstadt, T. *Courting Democracy in Mexico: Party Strategies and Electoral Institutions*. Cambridge University Press, 2013 (read Chapters 1 – 3 and 5 – 7)
 - *Edmonds-Poli, E. and David Shirk. *Contemporary Mexican Politics*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012. (read pp. 1 – 21 in Chapter 4) Serra, Gilles. 2014. “The 2012 Elections in Mexico: Return of the Dominant Party.” *Electoral Studies* 34 (June): 349–353.
- *Suggested readings*
 - Klesner, J. “Electoral Competition and the New Party System in Mexico.” *Latin American Politics and Society*, v. 47(2), 2005: 103 – 142.

Week 7. Democratic Consolidation or Retrenchment? Lopez Obrador and MORENA (2018 – Present)

- *Required readings*
 - Ellner, S. “López Obrador: Third Time’s the Charm?” *NACLA Report on the Americas* 50(2), 2018: 119-123
 - “Mexico under AMLO,” *Strategic Comments*, 24(6), 2018: iii-iv.
 - Sheridan, M. “AMLO is Mexico’s strongest president in decades. Some say he’s too strong,” *The Washington Post*, November 29, 2019.
 - Krauze, E. “Mexico’s Ruinous Messiah,” *New York Review of Books*, July 2, 2000.
- *Short Essay #1*

PART II. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Week 8. Economic Liberalism (1900s) and Agrarianism (1910s – 1940)

- *Required readings*
 - Riguzzi, P. “From Globalisation to Revolution? The Porfirian Political Economy: An Essay on Issues and Interpretations,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 41(2), 2009: 347-368.
 - Traven, B. “Scenes from a Lumber Camp,” in *The Mexico Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (ed. Joseph and Henderson). Duke University Press: 2001.
 - Kuchar, P. "Liberalism in Mexican Economic Thought, Past and Present." *Econ Journal Watch*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2016
 - Review: MacLachlan, Colin M., and William H. Beezley. *Mexico's Crucial Century, 1810-1910 : An Introduction*. University of Nebraska Press, 2010 (read chapters 5 – 8)

Week 9. Import-Substitution Industrialization and “Desarrollo Estabilizador” (1940 – 1980)

- *Required readings*
 - *Hamilton, N. *The Limits of State Autonomy*. Princeton University Press: 1982 (read Chapter 4).
 - Camin and Meyer, Chapter 4
- *Suggested readings*
 - Womack, John. *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution*. New York: Vintage Books, 1970.

Week 10. Neoliberalism (1980-Present)

- *Required readings*
 - *Bennett, Douglas C., and Kenneth E. Sharpe. *Transnational Corporations Versus the State: The Political Economy of the Mexican Auto Industry*. Princeton University Press, 2014. (skim pp. 14 – 27, read pp. 27 – 36)
 - *Haber, Stephen H. *Mexico Since 1980*. Cambridge University Press, 2008. (read pp. 37 – 65 and Chapter 3)
 - *Gallagher, Kevin P., and Lyuba Zarsky. *The Enclave Economy: Foreign Investment and Sustainable Development in Mexico's Silicon Valley*, MIT Press, 2007. (read Chapter 2)
- *Suggested readings*
 - Moreno-Brid, Juan Carlos, and Jaime Ros. *Development and growth in the Mexican economy: A historical perspective*. Oxford University Press, 2009 (read Chapter 5)
 - Snyder, Richard. *Politics after Neoliberalism: Reregulation in Mexico*, Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- *Short Essay #2*

Week 11. SPRING BREAK

Week 12. Final Presentation Prep

PART III. SOCIETY

Week 13. Immigration and the Drug Trade

- *Required readings*
 - *Andreas, P. *Border Games: Policing the US-Mexico Divide*. Cornell University Press: 2000 (read Ch. 1 – 5)

Week 14. Subnational Divergence: The North-South Divide

- *Required readings*
 - Martin, Patricia M. “Comparative topographies of neoliberalism in Mexico.” *Environment and Planning A* 37 (2), 2005: 203-220.
 - Zapatista Army of National Liberation. “EZLN Demands at the Dialogue Table,” in *The Mexico Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (ed. Joseph and Henderson). Duke University Press: 2001.
 - Tsu, M. “A Tzotzil Chronicle of the Zapatista Uprising,” in *The Mexico Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (ed. Joseph and Henderson). Duke University Press: 2001.
- *Final Presentation*