

# MEXICAN POLITICS

## POLS 258-01

Fall 2013  
Tues/Thur, 11:00am-12:15pm  
McGannon Hall #121

Professor- J.D. Bowen  
Office- McGannon Hall #149  
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Phone: 314.977.4239

Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 12:30-2:00, or by appointment.

\*I am in my office almost every day, but it is easier to catch me in the morning.

### **Course description and objectives:**

Welcome! I designed this course to introduce students to the history, politics, culture, economics, and societies of Mexico. Through reading, writing, and class discussions we will explore some of the complicated political issues facing contemporary Mexico.

Mexico has a rich history, and that is where we will begin. We will not only discuss various issues from Mexico's long history, but we will learn about them through the voices of those people who made history happen: men and women, young and old, rich and poor, soldiers and rebels, peasants and presidents.

The story of modern Mexico is the story of various struggles for social justice and democracy (and the struggle to define what those two terms mean). We will devote the second half of the semester to discussing these issues in a more contemporary context. We will finish the semester by looking at how Mexican politics spills beyond Mexico's borders as we analyze the experience of Mexican immigrants in the United States and US-Mexico relations more generally.

My goal is that this course helps us look beyond the stereotypes of Mexico and Mexicans that are prominent in contemporary US culture and political debates. Only by understanding our neighbors can we constructively engage one another in building a prosperous, peaceful, and just continent.

Welcome, again. I hope you enjoy the course!

## **Required texts:**

All required texts are available for purchase at the Saint Louis University Bookstore in the Busch Student Center. I have also placed the required books on 3-hour reserve at Pius XII Memorial Library.

The required books for the course are:

Camp, Roderic. 2014. *Politics in Mexico: Democratic Consolidation or Decline?*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Joseph, Gilbert and Henderson, Timothy, eds. 2002. *The Mexico Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Weintraub, Sidney. 2010. *Unequal Partners: The United States and Mexico*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

## **Course requirements and grading:**

*Mid-term exam (30% of final grade):*

\*The exam will be given in class on October 17<sup>th</sup>.

*2 short papers (15% each = 30% of final grade):*

\*The purpose of these short (4-6 page) papers is for you to explore some issue from the readings or class discussions in greater depth. You may use these papers to further explore an issue that we cover in the course or you can pick an issue/person/event that we have not covered but that you consider important. These papers should be analytical in nature (that is, they should not be just a summary of the readings and discussion). *At least one of these papers must be turned in by October 31st. The second must be turned in by December 3rd.* I encourage you to write these papers as we cover issues in the course that are of particular interest to you and not wait until the due date to write them and turn them in.

\*If students have a specific research topic they are interested in, you may write a longer researcher paper of approximately 15 pages, due on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. This paper will count for both short papers, and will be worth 30% of the final grade. Students wishing to pursue this option should consult with the professor early in the semester.

*Final exam (30% of final grade):*

\*The exam will be given on Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup> from 12:00-1:50pm.

*Class participation (10% of final grade):*

\*Your attendance and active participation are vital to the success of this course. Different students participate in different ways. At a minimum, students should come to class on time having read and thought about the assigned readings for that class. I expect that all students will make a contribution to class discussions through comments, questions, criticisms, and analysis of the assigned readings. In assigning grades, quality of participation will take precedence over

quantity of participation (hence, the student who participates frequently but without giving much thought to his/her comments/questions is not at an advantage compared to the student who offers occasional but insightful analysis and questions).

Final letter grades will be assigned that correspond to the following numeric scale:

A	93-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D	60-70
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	73-76	F	below 60
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72		

**Attendance and participation:**

I do not consider class time to be a time simply to review the assigned readings. We will cover materials during class that are not in the readings (and we will not cover every single point from the readings in class). Class attendance is, therefore, imperative. If you must miss class for an approved reason (e.g.; illness, death or medical emergency in the immediate family, University-sponsored activities), please let me know via email as soon as possible. You are responsible for all materials covered in class, whether you are physically present or not. Make-up exams will be given only under the most extraordinary of circumstances. Late papers will be penalized 5 points per day.

**Classroom courtesy:**

Out of respect for all of those in class, all cell phones, pagers, and any other noisemaking devices must be turned OFF during the entire class period and during exams. Laptop computers may be used in class provided they do not make noise that disturbs those around you. I reserve the right to ask you to turn off and put away your computer if it is creating a disruption.

**Students with disabilities:**

Students with disabilities that may impact their classroom performance should contact the Disabilities Coordinator, 977-8885, DuBourg, Room 36. I am happy to make accommodations for students with disabilities, consistent with all laws and University policies.

**Academic integrity:**

I expect all students to be honest in their academic work. The University reserves the right to penalize any student whose academic conduct at any time is, in its judgment, detrimental to the University. Such conduct shall include cases of plagiarism, collusion, cheating, giving or receiving or offering or soliciting information in examinations, or the use of previously prepared material in examinations or quizzes. Violations will be reported and will be investigated and

adjudicated according to the Policy on Academic Honesty of the College of Arts & Sciences. If the charges are found to be true, the student may be liable for academic or disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion from the University. I encourage you to view official University policy on matters of academic integrity at: <http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml>

### **Course schedule:**

August 27- Introduction and syllabus

August 29- Images of *lo mexicano* (All readings from *Mexico Reader*)

- \*Vasconcelos, "The Cosmic Race," pp. 15-19.
- \*Bonfil Batalla, "The Problem of National Culture," pp. 28-32.
- \*Guillermoprieto, "Mexico City, 1992," pp. 41-52.

September 3- Indians and Spaniards (All readings from *Mexico Reader*)

- \*Clendinnen, "The Cost of Courage in Aztec Society," pp. 61-78.
- \*Díaz del Castillo, "The Spaniards Entry into Tenochtitlán," pp. 97-104.
- \*Anonymous, "The Battles of Tenochtitlán and Tlatelolco," pp. 109-113.

September 5- Imposing (and Maintaining) Spanish Rule (All readings from *Mexico Reader*)

- \*Zorita, "Why the Indians are Dying," pp. 122-130.
- \*Florescano, "The Colonial Latifundio," pp. 131-140.
- \*Fernández de Lizardi, "The Itching Parrot, the Priest, and the Subdelegate," pp. 160-167.

September 10- The Struggle for (and Against) Independence (All readings from *Mexico Reader*)

- \*Alamán, "The Siege of Guanajuato," pp. 171-188.
- \*Calderón, "Women and War in Mexico," pp. 196-205.
- \*Morales, "War and Finance, Mexican Style," pp. 217-219.

September 12- Independent Mexico (All readings from *Mexico Reader*)

- \**El Tiempo*, "A Conservative Profession of Faith," pp. 220-225.
- \*Otero, "Considerations Relating to the Political and Social Situation," pp. 226-238.
- \*Junta of Conservative Notables, "Offer of the Crown to Maximilian," pp. 263-264.
- \*Empress Carlotta, "A Letter from Mexico," pp. 265-269.

September 17- Constructing Modern Mexico: The *Porfiriato* (All readings from *Mexico Reader*)

- \*Juárez, "The Triumph of the Republic," pp. 270-272.

- \*Arnold and Tabor, "Porfirio Díaz Visits Yucatán," pp. 273-278.
- \*Traven, "Scenes from a Lumber Camp," pp. 279-284.
- \*Creelman, "President Díaz, Hero of the Americas," pp. 285-291.
- \*Anonymous, "Gift of the Skeletons," pp. 292-293.

September 19- Revolution! (All readings from *Mexico Reader*)

- \*Magón, "Land and Liberty," pp. 335-338.
- \*Zapata, "Plan of Ayala," pp. 339-343.
- \*Cabrera, "The Restoration of the *ejido*," pp. 344-350.
- \*Guzmán, "Zapatistas in the Palace," pp. 351-356.
- \*Jenkins, "Mexico Has Been Turned into a Hell," pp. 357-363.
- \*Reed, "Pancho Villa," pp. 364-371.

September 24- Constructing Revolutionary Mexico (All readings from *Mexico Reader*)

- \*Pozas, "Juan the Chamula," pp. 387-397.
- \* "The Constitution of 1917: Articles 27 and 123," pp. 398-402.
- \*Calles, "Mexico Must Become a Nation of Institutions and Laws," pp. 421-425.
- \*Daniels, "The Oil Expropriation," pp. 452-455.
- \*Amgioano, "Cárdenas and the Masses," pp. 456-460.

September 26- The New Mexico Meets the Old Mexico (All readings from *Mexico Reader*)

- \*Cosío, "Mexico's Crisis," pp. 470-481.
- \*Sackett, "The Two Faces of Acapulco During the Golden Age," pp. 500-510.
- \*González, "The Dark Deeds of 'El Negro' Durazo," pp. 512-519.
- \*Castellanos, "Modesta Gómez," pp. 545-552.

October 1- Mexico, 1968

- \**Mexico Reader*, Poniatowska, "The Student Movement of 1968," 555-569.

October 3- NO CLASS

October 8- New alternatives (All readings from *Mexico Reader*)

- \*Anonymous, "Letters to Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas," pp. 591-597.
- \* Zapatista Army of National Liberation, "EZLN Demands at the Dialogue Table," pp. 638-645.
- \*Subcomandante Marcos, "The Long Journey from Despair to Hope," pp. 646-654.
- \*Peres Tsu, "A Tzotzil Chronicle," pp. 665-669.

October 10- The moment of democracy?

\**Mexico Reader*, Cornelius, "Mexicans Would Not Be Bought, Coerced," pp. 684-686.

October 15- Review for Midterm

October 17- **MIDTERM EXAM**

\*\*\*\*\*FALL BREAK\*\*\*\*\*

October 24- Democracy and political culture

\*Camp, Ch. 3-4

October 29- Political leadership in democratic Mexico

\*Camp, Ch. 5

October 31- Interests groups and political representation

\*Camp, Ch. 6

November 5- The evolution of political institutions

\*Camp, Ch. 7-8

November 7- Political economy of modern Mexico

\*Camp, Ch. 10

November 12- Political economy of US-Mexico relations

\*Camp, Ch. 9

\*Weintraub, Ch. 1

November 14- Doing business in Mexico and the US.

\*Weintraub, Ch. 2-3

November 19- Drugs and guns

\*Weintraub, Ch. 4

November 21- Energy politics

\*Weintraub, Ch. 5

November 26- The changing politics of the border

\*Weintraub, Ch. 6-7

December 3- Where do we go from here? People, policy, and politics.

\**Mexico Reader*, Hellman, "Pedro P., Coyote," pp. 717-727.

December 5- Review for final

December 12- FINAL EXAM (12:00-1:50pm)

**\*NOTE: THIS IS NOT OUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED CLASS TIME.**