

Course Syllabus

Course Information

POLITICS AND CULTURE OF CONTEMPORARY MEXICO - SEMINAR

Political Science 4331.002; Class number 11457

Fall 2009 Wednesday 2.30 -5.15 p.m. CN 1.102

Professor Contact Information

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Wednesdays, 1.00-2.00 p.m. or by appointment

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

N/A

Course Description

The course will provide a comprehensive introduction to the development and democratic consolidation challenges facing Mexico today, with special emphasis on the implications of the contested presidential elections of July 2nd, 2006, and mid-term elections of July 2009. The course will offer a detailed backdrop to Mexico's post-1980s economic, cultural and political opening, and will evaluate the nature of Mexico's recent democratic transition/consolidation process, with especial emphasis on the PAN administrations of President Fox and Calderon. The course will emphasize on exploring the impact that the tempestuous debates and challenge mounted among the political parties have had in shaping a new suite of reforms. The course will give special attention to how the new political and economic environments impact upon the United States and vice versa.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Students would be able to:

1. Analyze the Mexican political and economic backdrop of the 20th century.
2. Study the intersection between economics and political opening, and the impact of Free Trade Agreement and globalization.
3. Evaluate the profound changes that are underway in Mexico's political and civic cultures.
4. Analyze several major arenas of political life: the three principal branches of federal government (Executive, Legislature and Judiciary); the so-called "Fourth Estate" of the media; and the emergence of the political party system.

5. Examine the Mexico's changing cultures: namely, the bi-national relationship post-September 11, 2001, and the growing transnational family linkages with Mexican and Mexican origin households in the US; the shifting nature of social and community mobilization – including radical groups – and how these impact upon class and political identity and citizenship; and changing gender relations and equity of opportunity for women relative to men.

Required Textbooks and Materials

- Camp, Roderic Ai. 2006 (5th Edition) *Politics in Mexico: The Democratic Consolidation*. Oxford University Press. (Pbk)
- Luis Rubio and Susan Kaufman Purcell. Eds. 2004. *Mexico Under Fox*. Lynne Rienner Pub (pbk)

Suggested Course Materials

- Kevin Middlebrook, Ed. 2004. *Dilemmas of Political Change*. London: San Diego: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of London; Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, University of California (pbk)
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Assignments & Academic Calendar

1) August 26th

Introduction, Course Outline, UTD E-Mail, Required Readings, Grading

2) September 2nd

Introduction. Course Objectives & Introduction

- What is Mexico?
- The ABC of the Geography of Mexico
- Mexico from a Historical Perspective
 - From the Independence to the Revolution
 - Independence
 - Colonial Mexico
 - Reforma
 - Porfiriato
 - Mexican Revolution and its Institutionalization
- Mexico's Twentieth Century Economic Development:
 - Basic principles: Protection versus Free Trade
 - ISI; External-versus- internal oriented growth models
 - The Boom to Bust rollercoaster of the 1980s
 - Economic Opening and Globalization

- **Discussion focus:** Cultural change and economic change in Mexico

Required readings: Camp: p. 25-47, 273-286

Recommended readings: Middlebrook: p. 1-53

3) September 9th

Instructions for Presentations.

Political Opening in Mexico:

- The political structure and chronology
- The rise of opposition parties
- The Mexican democratic transition
- The emergence of a new political geography and its spatial distribution
- The 2000 and 2003 Elections
- The 2006 Elections
- **Discussion Focus:** What is the relationship between economic and political opening; what are differences between the main parties; what are the challenges facing the parties in creating an effective party political culture? Why is party adherence so fickle and loose in Mexico compared with the USA?

Required readings: Camp: p. 202-239; Rubio & Kaufmann: p. 5-34

Recommended readings: Middlebrook: p. 57-81

4) September 16th

Mid-Term Elections 2009 - Guest Speakers: Dr. Monica Rankin & Mr. Alejandro Tirado, ABD.

Power, Culture and Executive Authority in Mexico:

- Centralization
- Presidentialism
- National and Sub-National Executives
- The Rationality of Mexico's Political Culture – then and now
- Decentralization and New Federalism
- The absence of women.....

Discussion Focus: What has led to the “letting go” and loosening of the centralized reins of power, and what has this meant for power holding, and for Mexico's national and subnational political culture? Is the Presidentialist system in Mexico past its “sell-by date”?

Required readings: Camp: 56-75, 176-183, 192-197

Recommended readings: Middlebrook: p. 198-234

5) September 23rd

Presentation outline due this week.

Power and the Legislative Branch. From “Rubber Stamping” to “Cogovernance”

Branches of Government – Comparing the US and Mexican Systems

- The (rising) presence of women.....
- The cultural origins and consequences of no-reelection
- Legislative Reform and Divided Government
- National and Sub-national Trends
- City Councils (*cabildos*)

Discussion Focus: How do Mexican’s perceive their legislatures today and what role do these have in shaping effective co-governance? Why were executive – legislations so poor under Fox, and what chance does the new administration have?

Required readings: Camp: p. 183-189

Recommended readings: Middlebrook: p. 133-167

6) September 30th

The Judiciary; the Criminal Justice System; and Human Rights in Mexico

Traditional weaknesses in Mexico’s system of judicial and human rights

- Justice from a Comparative Perspective
- The Courts
- Policing and Criminal Justice
- “Summary” justice

Discussion Focus: In what ways is there greater transparency and credibility in the judicial process today; Are the judicial institutions sufficiently robust and has corruption become less endemic; and how far is the culture of cynicism declining among the Mexican people?

Required readings: Camp: p. 189-192

Recommended readings: Middlebrook: p. 168-197

Mid-Term Examination

7) October 7th

**Politics, Identity, Conflict and Social Change in Mexico. The Grassroots Fight Back?
Mexico’s first and last Twentieth Century Revolutions**

- Changing patterns of social mobilization and Revolution
- Early C20 Revolutionary Origins
- Corporatism
- Patron-clientelism

- Social Movements
- Citizenship and Civic Culture
- Late C20 Revolutionary activism – EZLN and Chiapas

Guest Speaker: Dr. Octavio Javier Esqueda.

Discussion Focus: Why was it possible that, unlike any other country in the world, revolutions and rebellions in Mexico should have both heralded and closed out the Twentieth Century? Is AMLO's challenge and mobilization of the masses prospering or is his time passed? A man on a horse...

Required readings: Camp: p. 136-157, 161-168; Rubio & Kaufman: p. 65-86

Recommended readings: Middlebrook: p. 403-465

8) October 14th

Overview. The Changing Landscape of Political Culture in Mexico

International comparisons in civic culture

- The Hewlett Database
 - Political culture in the US
 - Political Culture in Mexico
 - Values and beliefs in democracy

Presidential Elections in July 2006

- Identification of the political landscape
- Democratic transition or democratic consolidation

Discussion Focus: How fast are beliefs in democracy changing in Mexico, and what factors are driving those changes?

Required readings: Camp: p. 1-20, 79-102

Recommended readings: Middlebrook: p. 108-129

9) October 21st

Guest Speakers: Dr. Ma. Elena Labastida & Mr. Alejandro Tirado (ADB).

Mexico's Economic System and Functioning: NAFTA and Beyond

- NAFTA and its passage
- The Impacts of NAFTA – WIFM & WIFTA
- The Key Issues?

Discussion Focus: How has Mexico fared since NAFTA 1994? What are the principal changes in the structure and future of employment, wages and labor conditions in Mexico? Is labor migration winding up or winding down? What is the future of NAFTA, migration and Mexican development?

Required readings: Camp: 259-268; Rubio & Kaufman: p. 35-64

Recommended readings: Middlebrook: p. 237-285.

10) October 28th

Presentations

11) November 4th

Special project. The dimensions and practice of Mexican political culture in North Texas.

12) November 11th

Presentations

13) November 18th

Presentations

14) November 25th

Conflict Model Exercise

Conflict and Negotiation – Dr Hernández will provide readings

- The nature of conflict and negotiation
- Understanding conflict
- Structure of negotiation
- Culture, race, gender, and style
- Structure of negotiation
- Organizing your team
- Agenda control
- Negotiation
- Third party intervention/the role of mediation

Readings for the negotiation model will be provided in-class.

Required readings: TBA

15) December 2nd

Final Examination.

Grading Policy

There will be FOUR principal forms of assessment: 25% class participation and attendance, 25% mid-term examination, 25% for a final group presentation, and 25% final examination.

Course & Instructor Policies

There will be assigned readings for each session. These you will be expected to have read *in advance* of class.

There will be **no make-up exams or assessment**. Cheating will not be tolerated. Any students suspected of academic dishonesty will be subject to the University of Texas System's disciplinary proceedings.

Technical Support

If you experience any problems with your UTD account you may send an email to: assist@utdallas.edu or call the UTD Computer Helpdesk at 972-883-2911.

Field Trip Policies

Off-campus Instruction and Course Activities

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm. Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. Below is a description of any travel and/or risk-related activity associated with this course.

Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD printed publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Series 50000, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391) and online at <http://www.utdallas.edu/judicialaffairs/UTDJudicialAffairs-HOPV.html>

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic Dishonesty, any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted materials, including music and software. Copying, displaying, reproducing, or distributing copyrighted works may infringe the copyright owner's rights and such infringement is subject to appropriate disciplinary action as well as criminal penalties provided by federal law. Usage of such material is only appropriate when that usage constitutes "fair use" under the Copyright Act. As a UT Dallas student, you are required to follow the institution's copyright policy (Policy Memorandum 84-I.3-46). For more information about the fair use exemption, see <http://www.utsystem.edu/ogc/intellectualproperty/copypol2.htm>

Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork

to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:

The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22

PO Box 830688

Richardson, Texas 75083-0688

(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

disabilityservice@utdallas.edu

If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with the Coordinator of Disability Services. The Coordinator is available to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, it is very important that you be registered with Disability Services to notify them of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. Disability Services can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.