

Course Syllabus

Course Information

POLITICS AND CULTURE OF CONTEMPORARY MEXICO - SEMINAR

Political Science 4331.501; Class number 83797

Fall 2017 Wednesday 7.00 -9.45 p.m. GR 3.606

Professor Contact Information

Rodolfo Hernandez Guerrero

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Student Services Building (SSB) 3.615

Wednesdays, 5.00-6.00 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 2000 and 2012. 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 structure of authority and power, and political and cultural identity. The course will explore how the impact of tempestuous debates and challenges, including organized crime and narco-traffic, has shaped a new suite of reforms and cultural changes. 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); and the consolidation 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.
6. Study the impact of drug traffic in the U.S.-Mexico relationship.

Required Textbooks and Materials

- Camp, Roderic Ai. 2014 (6th Edition). *Politics in Mexico: Democratic Consolidation or Decline?* Oxford University Press.
- Edmonds-Poli, Emily and Shirk, David A. 2016 (3rd Edition). *Contemporary Mexican Politics*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Suggested Course Materials

- New York Times
- The Washington Post
- La Jornada
- Reforma
- Los Angeles Times

Assignments & Academic Calendar

1) August 23rd

Introduction

- **Course Outline**
- **UT Dallas E-Mail**
- **Required Readings**
- **Media and news**
- **Grading**

2) August 30th

Course Objectives & Introduction

- What is Mexico?
- The ABC of the Geography of Mexico
- Mexico from a Historical Perspective
 - From the Independence to the Institutionalization of the Revolution
 - Independence
 - Colonial Mexico
 - Reforma
 - Porfiriato
 - Mexican Revolution and its Institutionalization
- **Discussion focus:** Historical roots of the Mexican political system.

Required readings: Camp: p. 25-49, Edmonds: p. 7-67

Recommended readings: Newspapers

3) September 6th

Instructions for Presentations.

Political Opening in Mexico:

- The political structure and chronology.
- The rise of opposition parties.
- NAFTA and democracy.
- The Mexican democratic transition.
- **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. 220-262; Edmonds: p. 69-96

Recommended readings: Newspapers

4) September 13th

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

5) September 20th

Power, Culture and Authority in Mexico:

- Centralization
- Presidentialism
- National and Sub-National Executives
- The Rationality of Mexico's Political Culture – then and now
- What does democracy mean for Mexicans?

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: 59-81, Edmonds: p. 141-155

Recommended readings: Newspapers

6) September 27th

Presentations of Outlines – Group's Feedback.

The Structure of Decision - Making

- Checks and balances
 - Executive
 - Congress

- Judiciary
- Decentralization and New Federalism

Discussion Focus: How do Mexicans perceive their legislatures today and what role do these have in shaping effective co-governance? How do Mexicans perceive the judicial branch and what role does it have in shaping effective fairness in Mexico? What options do Mexicans have to continue designing a transparent and inclusive structure of decisions?

Required readings: Camp: p. 189-219, Edmonds: p. 99-115

Recommended readings: Newspapers

7) October 4th

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

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?

Required readings: Camp: p. 82-142, Edmonds: p. 157-179

Recommended readings: Newspapers

8) October 11th

Mid-Term Examination

9) October 18st

Mexico's Political Economy: NAFTA and Beyond

Guest Speaker: Dr. Monica Brussolo: Fifteen Years of Social Inequality in Mexico: A Sub-National Kuznets Analysis

- NAFTA and its passage
- Inequality and wealth distribution
- Economy and democracy

Discussion Focus: How has Mexico fared since NAFTA 1994? What are the principal changes in the structure and future of equality in Mexico? Is labor

migration winding up or winding down? What is the future of NAFTA, migration and Mexican development?

Required readings: Camp: 295-307; Edmonds: p. 183-225

Recommended readings: Newspapers.

10) October 25th

Mexico's Democratic Consolidation and the Future: U.S. – Mexico

Guest Speaker: Dr. Agustin Palao Mendizabal: Mexico's Credit Guarantees Program: Nature and Implementation

- Mexican democracy and capitalism
- U.S. – Mexico relations
 - National security
 - Economic and people linkages.
- The future

Discussion Focus: What is the future of Mexican democracy in the context of the U.S. – Mexico linkages? What is the future of the U.S. in the context of U.S. – Mexico linkages?

Required readings: Camp: p. 263-294, 307-323; Edmonds: p. 249-289

Recommended readings: Newspapers.

11) November 1st

Presentations

12) November 8th

Presentations

13) November 15th

Presentations

14) November 22nd

Fall Break: no class.

15) November 29th

Presentations

Conclusions of the course

Required readings: Camp: 1-24, Edmonds: 291-297

Recommended readings: Newspapers

16) December 6th

Final Examination.

Grading Policy

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

Comet Creed

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:

"As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do."

UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus.

Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.