MEXICAN AMERICAN CULTURE

This course seeks to develop a student’s understanding of Mexican American/Chicano culture in the United States. We will begin with the anthropological debate over the concept of Mexican American culture. After situating the role of anthropology in the study of Mexican-origin groups an overview of Mexican American history and culture will follow. We will then examine other structural topics that have shaped the Mexican American experience, including: segregation, immigration, globalization, agribusiness, and U.S.-Mexico relations.

Topics

**January**

13 M Introduction
15 W I. A Debate Over Mexican American Culture and the Chicano Movement
17 F
20 M Holiday, Martin Luther King Jr. Day
22 W Film: Chicano Civil Rights, Vol. 1 (overview)
24 F
27 M Film: Chicano Civil Rights, Vol. 3 (schools)

29 W II. The History of the Mexican American Southwest
   Indigenous Peoples

31 F

**February**

3 M Spanish Period
5 W
7 F
10 M
12 W Film: The Missions of Texas
14 F
17 M Mexican Period
19 W
21 F
24 M Anglo American Period: Mexican American War to the U.S. Civil War

26 W
28 F Citizenship and Segregation

**March**

3 M
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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Reading Day!</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>10-14</td>
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<td>Spring Break</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>III. Immigration and U.S.-Mexico Relations: Mexican Revolution to Today</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>Film: Zapata (prof.)</td>
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<td>Film Zapata</td>
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<td>Film: A Frozen Revolution (DVD8877, Benson)</td>
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<td>IV. Agricultural Workers and Globalization</td>
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<td>Paper due</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>Film: Borderline Cases: Environmental Matters (Bens. 9588)</td>
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<td>May</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Final Exam: 7-10</td>
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**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Required Readings**

There will be a series of articles available in a class reader. In addition, you will be expected to read parts of the following books: Menchaca *Naturalizing Mexican Immigrants: A Texas History*, Lopez *The Farmworkers’ Journey*, and Vigil *From Indians to Mexicans*. The books are available at the University Co-op (Guadalupe St.) and the course reader is available at Speedway (Dobie Mall 2025, Guadalupe St., Suite 140, 478-3334).
Exams

There will be one in-class midterm on March 7 and a final exam May 7 (essays, multiple choice). Only a doctor’s letter or a death in the immediate family will be acceptable excuses for a make-up exam.

Grading

Midterm - 40%, final - 50%, and a 7 pages review essay - 10% (typed essay or book report). Attendance is required and excessive absences will affect your grade. Students who have a perfect attendance record will receive a 4 point credit.

Office Hours

Office hours will be held on Monday 1:00 to 3:00 at SAC, room 5.158, and by appointment.

Mexican American Culture
Reading Assignments

Code:
(T) Text
(R) Speedway Reader

I. A Debate Over Mexican American Culture and the Chicano Movement


Read chapter: Introduction, Chapter 9 - Breakup and Transformation of the Social Order.
II. The History of the Mexican American Southwest


III. Immigration and U.S. Mexico Relations


IV. Agricultural Workers and Globalization


V. Social Value and Cultural Citizenship

Social Science & Behavioral Requirements, Cultural Diversity Flag:

Critical Thinking Skills. This course seeks to help students understand that the United States is a pluralistic society. Using the Mexican American experience in the United States we explore their history and culture and their contributions in shaping U.S. society. The purpose of the class is also to teach students critical thinking skills, and to explore methods and theories used in the field of anthropology.

Communication Skills: Students are given the opportunity to further develop their communication skills by writing a seven page paper. This allows students to critically explore one of the themes discussed in class and, and to develop an interpretive commentary. The mid-term and final exams are also designed to help students develop their analytical skills giving them the opportunity to write essays where they can summarize, and assess issues discussed in class.

Class discussion is also encouraged in this course, as a means of helping students develop their oral skills. The professor on a regular basis asks students to comment on issues under consideration.

Empirical and Qualitative Skills: Ethnographic methods are examined in this course, focusing on the historical tradition within anthropology. This is a method that examines the present (ethnographically), by exploring how the past (i.e., U.S. history) has shaped current society. As part of this section the role of the discipline of anthropology in examined in relation to the theories that were advanced by anthropologists concerning the study of Mexican American culture. By exploring this intellectual tradition, the course seeks to teach students how intellectual thought is shaped and how it changes through the process of critique and the formation of schools of thought.

Social Responsibility: This course explores the cultural history of the American Southwest by focusing on the Mexican American experience within U.S. institutions. Its purpose is to examine how systems of stratification develop and change over time. Topics that explore structural issues include: legislative civil rights history, segregation, citizenship, immigration, globalization, and agribusiness.

Furthermore, in order to better understand how ethnic stratification develops in the U.S, this course explores the global causes of immigration to the U.S.