Reform to Revolution: Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Mexico

Code: HIS 386L (39735), LAS 386 (40660)  
Semester: Spring 2017  
Time: Mon. 12:00-3:00  
Venue: GAR 2.214  
Prerequisite: graduate standing  
Dr. Matthew Butler  
Office: Garrison 3.414  
Office hours: Mon. 3-5 p.m.  
Phone: (512)-475-7972  
Mail: mbutler@austin.utexas.edu

Course description

This graduate-level seminar focuses on the history of modern Mexico, from roughly the mid-century Reforma to the revolution of 1910-40. We will look particularly closely at the ways in which recent historians have approached and conceptualized the linkages between popular groups and the emerging Mexican state, for instance through their analyses of local religion, peasant politics, ethnicity, and popular liberalism. Pursuing these themes into the twentieth century, we will end by considering the construction of authority in post-revolutionary (1920s-1930s) Mexico. In the first half of the semester—roughly until Spring Break—we will convene as a readings seminar: students will write short weekly responses to the set readings (books and articles) as a basis for class discussion. Each session (Weeks 2-7) we will discuss an assigned reading as a group; most weeks, one volunteer discussant will lead off proceedings by summarizing in the opening 10-15 minutes an historiographical paper (see schedule for details) as a way of grounding the discussion. These essays have been chosen with the aim of familiarizing you with broader historiographical developments or conceptual issues. In the second half of the semester (Weeks 8-15), we will reconvene as a research seminar, and meet on a more individual base to discuss your research and then the writing: a longer research paper is expected by the end of the semester. Students with specific research interests on Mexico, or with relevant research interests touching upon Mexico, may pursue these freely.

Class readings


Other readings—articles, review essays, monographs—will be supplied as necessary. Additional bibliography can be provided on any of the above topics as required.

Course requirements

- Graduate standing
- Reading knowledge of Spanish
**Grading policy**

1. **Book reviews**

5 x 2-3 pp. (double spaced) weekly analyses of the assigned readings. I am asking for critical reviews not merely summaries, in which you discuss and/or critique the arguments, sources, methodology, and claims made or used in the readings. Reviews should end with the formulation of at least 6 questions suitable for discussion in the class. Please submit reviews via the Discussion Board on Blackboard no later than 9 a.m. on the day before the relevant class. I will ordinarily undertake to grade/return reviews within seven days. The review papers are due for submission in weeks 2-6 of the semester.

2. **Final paper**

Students will choose a relevant topic and write an extended research essay (20 pp.) surveying the recent scholarly literature devoted to that topic and making an original contribution based on relevant primary research. The paper will be worth 50% of the course grade; topics to be agreed with me by around mid-term.

*The deadline for the essay will be the last day of semester.*

3. **Presentation**

An additional 10% will depend on class participation and scholarly presentation of the final paper’s findings to the class (15-20 min. presentation, incl. 5 min. Q&A session). Presentations will all be made in the final class meeting.

**Grading summary**

Book reviews (x 5 @ 8% = 40%)
Class participation/presentation (10%)
Final paper (50%)

**Provisional course schedule**

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic for discussion</th>
<th>Deadline/Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>23 Jan.</td>
<td>Introduction, Course Outline, Syllabus</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>30 Jan.</td>
<td><em>Everyone: McNamara, Sons of the sierra</em></td>
<td>Review #1</td>
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<td><em>Discussant(s): Alan Knight, “Peasants into Patriots: Thoughts on the Making of the</em></td>
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| 5 | 13 Feb. | Everyone: Wright-Rios, *Revolutions in Mexican Catholicism*  
**Preliminary meeting to discuss research topics** |
| 6 | 20 Feb. | Everyone: Joseph/Nugent, *Everyday forms of state formation*  
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>6 Mar.</td>
<td>Discussion of research paper proposals</td>
<td>Research paper proposal/bibliog.</td>
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<td><em>SPRING BREAK</em> 13-17 Mar.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>20 Mar.</td>
<td>Individual research meetings</td>
<td>Primary sources</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>27 Mar.</td>
<td>Individual research meetings</td>
<td>Research/writing</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>3 Apr.</td>
<td>Individual research meetings</td>
<td>Research/writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>10 Apr.</td>
<td>Individual research meetings</td>
<td>Research/writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>17 Apr.</td>
<td>Individual research meetings</td>
<td>Research/writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>24 Apr.</td>
<td>Individual research meetings</td>
<td>Full draft</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1 May</td>
<td><strong>Class presentations and close</strong></td>
<td>Final paper due Friday 5 May</td>
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Other syllabus information required by the Provost’s Office:

**Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty drafted by Student Judicial Services (SJS)**
Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information please visit the Student Judicial Services website: [http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs).

**University of Texas Honor Code**
The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

**Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students**
Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, you are responsible for reading your email for university and course-related information and announcements. You are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to your e-mail address. You should check your e-mail regularly and frequently—at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-critical. You can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating your e-mail address at [http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php](http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php).

**Documented Disability Statement**
If you require special accommodations, you must obtain a letter that documents your disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to me at the beginning of the semester so we can discuss the accommodations you need. No later than five business days before an exam, you should remind me of any testing accommodations you will need. For more information, visit [http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/](http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/).

**Religious Holidays**
By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

**Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)**
If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual’s behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit [http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal](http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal).

**Emergency Evacuation Policy**
Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you’re given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.