“The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1940”

Code: HIS F352L (85480)/LAS F366 (86015)  Dr. Matthew Butler
Semester: SUMMER 2011  Office: Garrison 3.414
Time: MTWThF, 1:00-2:30 (2:15) p.m.  Office hours: TTh 2:30-3:30 p.m.
Venue: GAR 1.126  Phone: (512)-475-7972
Prerequisite: upper division standing  Email: mbutler@mail.utexas.edu

Course description

This 6-week summer option examines the life course of Mexico’s Revolution through both its armed and post-revolutionary phases, from about 1910-1940. During the semester we will focus on several key questions. What kind of revolution (agrarian, political, social, cultural) was the Mexican Revolution? What caused and drove it? What did ordinary people think about the revolution and how far did they shape its course or simply suffer in its wake? Did “many Mexicos” just produce many revolutions, or can broader narratives be discerned? What were the main contours of Mexico’s post-revolutionary regime, and how different were they compared to those of the old regime?

Thematically, the course will cover central topics such as the Porfiriato (1876-1911); the maderista revolution of 1910-1913; the rise and fall of popular movements (zapatismo, villismo) from 1910-1920; the Constitutionalist successes of 1916-1917; and the political and cultural construction of post-revolutionary Mexico by Sonoran (1920-1934) and later cardenista (1934-1940) state-builders, agrarians, schoolteachers, and anticlericals. The course will consist of some brief lectures; group discussions of set readings, primary documents, and folk songs (corridos); and occasional viewings of documentary or theater films made during (or about) the revolutionary years.

To do well in the course, you will need to develop your analytical skills (e.g. concerning different interpretations of the Revolution, not just matters of fact); your compositional skills (by presenting a reasoned, opinionated case on paper); and your communication skills (by contributing to discussions). Since this is a short term, assessment will be in the form of weekly papers, a map quiz, and a longer, final paper.

By the end of the course you will have acquired a broad theoretical sense of what constitutes a social revolution and a detailed knowledge of Mexico’s revolutionary history that will help you to make up your own mind about the $64K questions: did twentieth-century Mexico truly experience a revolution? If so, how “revolutionary” was it?

Flag descriptor supplied by School of UG Studies

“This course carries the Global Cultures Flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.”

Course materials: set texts

Everyone should acquire and read the following texts, which are essential for assignments and for class discussion. These texts have been chosen to provide you with a mixture of
classic and some of the best recent scholarship on the revolution by Mexican, North American, and European historians. I have also tried to suggest books that offer clear contrasts, to help you to situate your own thinking about the Revolution. These books will challenge each other’s claims concerning the character of Mexico’s revolución and help you to form your own opinion about the events of 1910-1940. The list contains reliable introductory overviews and syntheses from prominent U.S., European, and Mexican historians (Bethell, which is good collaborative history); influential case studies focusing on Mexican regions and grassroots revolutions (González y González, Womack); and a wide-ranging anthology summarising some very recent research on post-revolutionary Mexico (Vaughan and Lewis). To vary the reading I have also added two classic novels by Mariano Azuela and Carlos Fuentes, both of which have been re-translated recently. These (as well as González y González) are better reading in the Spanish, so Spanish-speaking students might consider taking that option.

Leslie Bethell (ed.), *Mexico since Independence* (Cambridge: CUP, 1994)

All these books are on-site reserves at the Benson Latin American Collection and have also been ordered for purchase via the CoOp.

Starred title (**): this is already available to everyone via the UT catalog as an **electronic resource** (simply find the item in the catalog, then choose the electronic option and subsequent link to see full text online).

**Additional short readings**

Two short readings for Week One will be provided for you: these are

Theda Skocpol, “France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 18, no. 2 (1976): 175-210

**Primary documents**

Most primary documents under discussion (as well as many others) can be found in Gilbert Joseph and Timothy Henderson (eds.), *The Mexico Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (Durham: Duke, 2002). Copies will be provided.

**Films**

We will also make time to view a selection of revolutionary-era films, starting with Fernando de Fuentes’s *El compadre Mendoza* (1933, 85 mins.), the same director’s *Vámonos con*
Pancho Villa (1936, 92 mins.), and Sergei Eisenstein’s ¡Qué viva México! (1931, 85 mins.). Note that these films will overrun slightly so please be punctual on these days. All being well we will finish with Luis Estrada’s Ley de Herodes (1999, 123 mins.), which will be spread over 2 sessions.

Assignments

There is no final exam. Instead there will be the following, cumulative assignments:

(i) **Map quiz** – Short answers on regions, states, geography **(MONDAY WEEK 2)**

(ii) **Short papers** – 4x 1-2 pp. double-spaced essays **(DUE FRIDAYS IN WEEKS 2-5)**

(iii) **Final paper** – 5-6 pp. double-spaced essay **(DUE FRIDAY WEEK 6)**

For the final paper you may choose one of two options: either, answer a standard question; or, if you prefer, select an individual topic for secondary research. Individual essay topics for the final paper must be agreed with me beforehand **(START OF WEEK 5)** and may include such themes as: women in the revolution; organized labor; revolutionary anticlericalism; Church-state relations/the Cristiada; educational crusades; the ejido; state-level revolutions; the 1938 oil expropriation; caciquismo; U.S.-Mexican relations; the myth of the revolution. The aim here is for you to familiarize yourselves with relevant bibliography on your chosen topic, then produce a more detailed paper on an agreed question.

Grading policies

(a) **Weighting of assignments.**

Individual assignments will be weighted as part of the total course credit as below:

- Map quiz (10%)
- Reading papers (x4 @ 15% = collectively, 60%)
- Final paper (30%)

(b) **Grading scale**

At the end of the semester, the accumulated % will be converted into a final letter grade for the course. UT (Fall 2009) has now introduced a plus/minus scale for both semester and final course grades. The grading scale in this course takes advantage of this and will be as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-92%</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89%</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>83-86%</td>
<td>B</td>
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Course Format & Schedule (provisional and subject to review)

Mondays will usually be devoted to reviewing the main theme or reading for the week, with a mixture of discussion (based on short question prompts) and additional mini-lectures to supply background material as needed; on Tuesdays and Wednesdays we will explore more thematic topics based around the other, more targeted, weekly readings, either in a lecture or discussion format; Thursdays will usually will be devoted to studying one or two source materials in English or English/Spanish (20 pp. max.) as a group; Fridays will be for films and/or consolidation, and will also be the day for submitting completed assignments.

Below you will find a week-by-week and day-by-day breakdown of the course, including each general class topic, the readings for each given day, plus any assignments (in bold). Below, the set readings are boxed for easy reference, along with the primary documents that we may use for that week. Again, primary documents will be supplied as hard copies or via Blackboard.

Week One (2-3 June): Overview and Theory

Thursday 2 June: Syllabus and welcome

Friday 3 June: Overview/discussion (Ruiz, Great Rebellion, and Skocpol “A Structural Analysis”)

Assignment: PREPARATION FOR MAP QUIZ (10%), completed Monday 6 June

Week One Readings: Ruiz, The Great Rebellion, pp. 3-8; Skocpol, “A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions,” pp. 175-210

Week One Primary Documents and Sources: Mexico map

Week Two (6-10 June): Dictatorship & Democracy, 1876-1913

Monday 6 June Lecture/discussion (Katz, “The Liberal Republic and the Porfiriato”); followed by Map Quiz
Tuesday 7 June  Porfirian Mexicans (Womack, Zapata, and González y González, San José de Gracia)

Wednesday 8 June  Maderismo and Huertismo

Thursday 9 June  Primary documents session

Friday 10 June  Film: El compadre Mendoza

Assignment: Paper 1 (15%) due Friday 10 June, TOPIC: THEORIES OF REVOLUTION

Week Two Readings: Katz, “The Liberal Republic and the Porfiriato, 1867-1910,” in Bethell, Mexico since Independence, pp. 49-125; Womack, Zapata, pp. 10-66; González y González, San José de Gracia, pp. 31-112

Week Two Primary Documents and Sources: Arnold and Frost, “Porfirio Díaz visits Yucatán”; Cabrera, “The Restoration of the Ejido”; Creelman, “President Díaz, Hero of the Americas”

Week Three (13-17 June):  La bola: Popular Revolutions, 1910-1920

Monday 13 June  Lecture/discussion (Womack, “The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1920”)

Tuesday 14 June  Zapatismo (Womack, Zapata)

Wednesday 15 June  Villismo (Azuela, The Underdogs)

Thursday 16 June  Primary documents session (excerpts provided)

Friday 17 June  Film: Vámonos con Pancho Villa

Assignment: Paper 2 due Friday 17 June (15%), TOPIC: THE UNDERDOGS


Week Three Primary Documents and Sources: Zapata, “Plan of Ayala”; Lewis, “Pedro Martínez”; Reed, “Pancho Villa”
Week Four (20-24 June): Constitutionalism and Reconstruction, 1913-1924

Monday 20 June: Constitutionalism
Tuesday 21 June: Lecture/discussion (Meyer, “Revolution and Reconstruction in the 1920s”)
Wednesday 22 June: Mexico’s Cultural Renaissance (Rochfort, “The Sickle, the Serpent,” López, “The Noche Mexicana”)
Thursday 23 June: Primary documents session (excerpts provided)
Friday 24 June: Film: ¡Qué viva México!

Assignment: Paper 3 due Friday 24 June, TOPIC: CULTURAL POLITICS


Week Five (27 June-1 July): Counterrevolution & Consolidation: 1926-1934

Monday 27 June Callismo (Bliss, “Health of the Nation”)
Wednesday 29 June Cristeros (González y González, San José de Gracia)
Thursday 30 June Primary documents session (excerpts provided)
Friday 1 July Film: La ley de Herodes (beginning)

Assignment: Paper 4 due Friday 1 July, TOPIC: RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE & IDENTITY

Idea of Mexico: Catholics in the Revolution,” all found in Vaughan and Lewis, Eagle and the Virgin, pp. 137-156, pp. 196-218, pp. 281-296 respectively


Week Six (4-8 July): Cárdenas and Revolutionary “Redemption,” 1934-1940

Monday 4 July Film: La ley de Herodes (close)

Tuesday 5 July Lecture/Discussion (Knight, “The Rise and Fall of Cardenismo”)

Wednesday 6 July Primary documents session (excerpts provided)

Thursday 7 July Final meeting. Aftermaths (Womack, Zapata; González y González, San José de Gracia; Fuentes, Artemio Cruz)

Assignment: Final Paper due Thursday 7 July, TOPIC: CARDENISMO & THE EJIDO


Week Six Primary Documents and Sources: Benítez, “The Agrarian Reform in Laguna”; Daniels, “The Oil Expropriation”

Classroom Policies

Attendance. You are allowed up to three unexcused absences. Each additional unexcused absence will carry a 5% penalty, applied to the course grade. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility at the end of class to ensure that you are marked as “present” for that day. For medical absences to be excused, a doctor’s statement/evidence is usually required. If you miss class, consult with me about catch-up procedures/materials for that day.
Late work. Please bring completed assignments to class on the due day. For work submitted late, and without demonstrably good cause, there will be a penalty of one letter grade per day, up to a maximum of three days & including weekends. Work submitted more than three days late will be given a grade of zero. I do not accept work by email attachment, except by agreement.

Extensions will be granted only by agreement; they are exceptional, not guaranteed.

Email. I will try to answer reasonable email queries within a couple of days. Please check your email for course announcements.

Plagiarism. Plagiarism will result in an official report to the registrar and/or automatic failure of the course (see UT policy below).

Other required syllabus information:

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.

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.

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/ssl/.

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.

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:
  o 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.
  o If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
  o In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors.
  o 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.