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[Illinois State University \(http://www.ilstu.edu\)](http://www.ilstu.edu)

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[\(http://www.ilstu.edu/~mbecker\)](http://www.ilstu.edu/~mbecker)

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# Mexican History

## (History 263)

**Note:** This is a static document. Any changes to the readings or assignments will be posted to the [Weekly Schedule \(schedule.html\)](#) page.

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| Spring 1998, Illinois State University

Schroeder 211, MWF 10:00–10:50

Office: Schroeder 332–I

<http://www.ilstu.edu/class/hist263> (<http://www.ilstu.edu/class/hist263>) | Marc Becker

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Office Hours: MWF 11:00–12:30, or by appt.

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## Description

This course surveys the history of Mexico from the earliest human inhabitation to the present. It will present different interpretations of the major themes and developments in Mexican history. A goal is to understand Mexico from the perspective of the Mexicans rather than from the point of view of the United States. It is important to understand, however, that Mexico is not a singular homogenous entity; there are "many Mexicos." In particular, this course will emphasize the creation of Mexican identities, the role which Indigenous

peoples have played in that creation, and how that role has changed over time. How have Indians been turned into Mexicans, and how have Mexicans been turned in to Indians?

### **Requirements**

You are expected and required to attend every class session, and you are responsible for the material covered in the lectures, readings and films, and for any announcements made in class. Unexcused absences will negatively affect your grade. If you have a disability or any conflicts which may affect your class performance, please bring this to my attention immediately so that we can make arrangements for this to be a positive learning experience for you.

I reserve the right to modify the syllabus and assignments for this class as necessary in order to improve the quality and value of the class. If you have suggestions for improving the class, please bring these to my attention.

### **Readings**

There are five required books for this class in addition to other readings at the reserve desk in Milner library and on the Internet. You may either purchase the books at campus bookstores or read them at the reserve desk in Milner Library. Read the assignments before class so that you are prepared to carry on an intelligent discussion of the material in class. Lectures will complement the readings and assume the base level of knowledge which they present, so it is critically important that you keep up with the readings.

- Bonfil Batalla, Guillermo. *Mexico Profundo: Reclaiming a Civilization*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996.
- Meyer, Michael C. and William L. Sherman. *The Course of Mexican History*. 5 th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Raat, W. Dirk and William H Beezley. *Twentieth-Century Mexico*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986.
- Traven, B. *The Rebellion of the Hanged*. Chicago: Elephant Paperbacks, Ivan R. Dee, Publisher, 1994.
- Vasconcelos, Jose. *The Cosmic Race/La raza c osmica*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.

### **Internet**

This course makes use of a web site (<http://www.ilstu.edu/class/hist263>) and Netforum discussion group on the Internet to extend the scope of the class beyond that of the immediate classroom setting. Class schedule updates, lecture outlines, additional information on assignments, and other information related to the class will be posted to the web site. The Netforum discussion group is designed for the posting of announcements, a forum to ask questions, continue class discussions, complain about the weather, etc. In addition, I plan to post a question every week which I encourage you to discuss. This will count toward your class participation grade (see below). You are expected and encouraged to make active use of these resources. ISU provides students with free email accounts and access to computer terminals in labs around campus. Let me know at the beginning of the semester if access to these resources will be a problem for you.

## Assignments and grades

Course grades will be based on the following assignments. Study guides for each of the exams and more detailed information on the written assignments will be posted to the web page. Use the Netforum discussion group to discuss these assignments with your classmates in a relaxed and informal virtual discussion session.

| Midterm exam (February 13)

Essay (March 27)

Final project (May 1)

Final exam (May 5)

Class participation | 20%

20

30

20

\_10

\_ 100%

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**Essay :** A three-page essay comparing the depictions of Indians in B. Traven's *The Rebellion of the Hanged* and Jos e Vasconcelos' *The Cosmic Race* is due on March 27. You may also want to bring some insights from Guillermo Bonfil Batalla's *M exico Profundo* into the essay. The essay is to be typed, double spaced, include citations, and follow good essay form. Later I will give you a more elaborate description of the questions you should address in this paper.

**Final project :** Every student is required to write a research paper on a topic related to Mexican history. The paper must be 10 to 15 pages long, use a minimum of six scholarly sources, be typed, double spaced, and include citations and a bibliography. I allow a variety of creative alternatives to research projects for this assignment (such as short stories, teaching units, web pages, etc.), but the specific requirements for these *must* be worked out individually with me. This project will be developed in a series of stages. You **MUST** meet every one of these deadlines. Failure to do so will result in no credit for the entire assignment.

- January 28: Library exercise due (worth 15% of the grade for the project)
- February 27: Project proposal (also worth 15% of the grade for the project)
- April 10: First (rough) draft of the project, which must include citations and bibliography
- May 1: Final project due

I will give you more information on this assignment in class and on the web page.

**Class participation :** Every student is expected to be an active and engaged participant in this class. The participation grade can come either from class discussions or from intelligent and critical postings to the Netforum discussion group on the web page.

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## Class Schedule

(Please consult the [Weekly Schedule \(schedule.html\)](http://schedule.html) for updates to this syllabus.)

January 12–16 Introduction & Geography

**Read:** Bonfil Batalla, Introduction and Ch. 1 ("A Land of Millenarian Civilization")

January 19 No Class (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)

January 21–23 Mayas & Aztecs

**Read:** Meyer/Sherman, Part I ("Pre-Columbian Mexico")  
Bonfil Batalla, Ch. 2 ("The Indian Recognized")

January 26 Introduction to library resources (meet in Milner 164D)

January 28 **Library exercise due**

January 28–30 Cortes & Conquest

**Read:** Meyer/Sherman, Part II ("The Spanish Conquerors")  
Bonfil Batalla, Ch. 3 ("De-Indianizing That Which Is Indian")

February 2–6 Colonial Period

**Read:** Meyer/Sherman, Part III ("The Colony of New Spain")  
Bonfil Batalla, Ch. 4 ("The Problem of National Culture") and Ch. 5 ("The Colonial Order")

February 9 Independence

February 11 Midterm Review

February 13 **Midterm Exam**

**Read:** Meyer/Sherman, Part IV ("Reform and Reaction: The Move to Independence")  
Bonfil Batalla, Ch. 6 ("Forging a Nation")

February 16–20 Foreign Interventions

**Read:** Meyer/Sherman, Part V ("The Trails of Nationhood, 1824–55")  
Start reading B. Traven, *The Rebellion of the Hanged*

February 23–27 Liberals and Conservatives

February 27 **Final project proposals due**

**Read:** Meyer/Sherman, Part VI ("Liberals and Conservatives Search for Something Better, 1855–76")  
"The Writing of a Historical Essay or Research Paper" (Internet)

March 2–6 Porfiriato

March 4 Discuss Traven, *The Rebellion of the Hanged*

**Read:** Meyer/Sherman, Part VII ("The Modernization of Mexico, 1876–1910")  
Finish B. Traven, *The Rebellion of the Hanged*  
Raat/Beezley, Part I ("Mexico in the Twentieth Century")

March 9–13 Spring Break (no class)

March 16 Mexican Revolution

March 18 Discuss 1917 Constitution

March 20 Discuss Vasconcelos, *The Cosmic Race*

**Read:** Meyer/Sherman, Part VIII ("The Revolution: The Military Phase, 1910–20")  
1917 Constitution (Reserve desk)

Vasconcelos, *The Cosmic Race*

Bonfil Batalla, Ch. 7 ("Our [Revolutionized] Modern Times")

Raat/Beezley, Part II ("The Great Rebellion, 1900–1923")

March 23–27 *Indigenismo* & Cardenas

March 27 **Essay Due**

**Read:** Meyer/Sherman, Part IX ("The Revolution: The Constructive Phrase, 1920–40")

Raat/Beezley, Part III ("Mexico Under Calles and Cardenas")

March 30 – April 3 Urban Cultures

April 6–10 Student & Women

April 10 **Final project drafts due**

**Read:** Meyer/Sherman, Part X ("The Revolution Shifts Gears: Mexico Since 1940")

April 13–17 Chicanos & Immigration

**Read:** Raat/Beezley, Part IV ("Mexico Since Cardenas")

April 20–24 NAFTA & Economics

Discuss Bonfil Batalla, *Mexico Profundo*

**Read:** Finish Bonfil Batalla, *Mexico Profundo*

April 27–29 Zapatistas

May 1 Final Review; **Final Projects Due**

**Read:** Zapatistas (on the Internet)

**Final Exam :** Tuesday, May 5, 7:50 a.m.