HIST 336: Latino History

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Office Hours: 9-11, TR; 3:30-4:30, Tues.                     468-2407
Or by appointment


Course Description: This reading and lecture course will survey the history of the Mexican descent community in the United States from the Spanish Colonial period through the near present. Its primary purpose will be to explain the incorporation of the Mexican community as a national minority in the United States, with an emphasis on its subornation to a majority class. During the semester, we will explore labor/economic experiences, racial theory as it pertains to people of Mexican descent, social relations, “border culture,” and the roles Mexican Americans have played in the broader context of American history. Particular emphasis will be placed on the Mexican American experience in the 20th century.

Please understand that this is what historians call a “content/survey” course, which means that it deals with a particular topic—in this case Mexican Americans—within a long and broad period of history. What that means for you is that we may not have the full time to delve as deeply as we would like during class, which is why lecture must be reinforced with reading selections.

Course Requirements: All students are required to complete all exams, readings, assignments, and papers of the course. The assigned readings are designed to give further background and analysis on topics that may or may not be presented in class, as well as provide the student with an understanding into the nature of current Texas historiography. Students who fail to complete or take the reading requirements of the course seriously will greatly hinder their grade.

Attendance is also a vital element in understanding the course material. Lecture material is the portal through which critical topics are discussed and disseminated; a missed lecture is a missed opportunity. But because this is an upper level course and I assume that all students now understand the importance of class attendance, you will be solely responsible for your attendance; if you choose to miss class, you will also be solely responsible for your poor grade. Also, if you are absent from class, do not ask to “borrow” or for me to arrange to get you lecture notes. It is not my responsibility to atone for your absence from class.

Civility in the Classroom: I expect all students to act as responsible adults; any undue disruptions or distractions during class will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.

Please turn off all cell phones and personal electronic devices while in the classroom. Do not check E-mail, text message, play games, or in any other fashion use such devices. If you
are concentrating on your cell phone, you are not listening or getting the full benefit of the class.

Additionally, I do not allow students to use laptops or tablets to record notes. The only exceptions will be for students who have a documented reason for doing so. Studies have shown that electronic devices lessen a student’s ability to assimilate information during a lecture (you may think you can multi-task, but the reality is that very few actually can). The primary reason for such a policy, however, is that my experience has shown that a vast majority of students who open a laptop or computer in class do not use it for class work. Thus, just leave them at home.

When class begins, please put down your newspapers, put away your other course work, and suspend all conversations. Class time must be put to efficient use. If you feel you must finish that newspaper, book, other class work, or talk with your neighbor instead of listening to the lecture, please stay away from class. I really do not care if you think so little of the course that you don’t want to pay attention, but such behavior distracts others who make actually wish to learn something.

Make every attempt to be on time for class. Arriving late disrupts class and demonstrates a lack of seriousness and interest about the course. Please take note of this requirement. It is a particular pet peeve of mind and I have no patience for those who have such a lack of respect that they cannot arrive to class on time. It is basic time management, a skill all should master by the time they are at least twelve years old. I simply will not tolerate it.

Grading Criteria: There will be two (2) 120-point take home exams in the course. You will be given at least ten days to complete your take-home exams and the due dates are contained within your syllabus. On these exams, you will be expected to compose at least two, but possibly three, double-spaced (with proper margins and font), word-processed essays. Length requirements will vary, and margin and format instructions will be included with the examination. You will be able to choose from among at least four essay questions for each exam; I will require everyone to answer at least one of the questions; you will have a choice among the others. The student will be expected to write interpretative essays in which they assess and critique sources from lecture material, supplemental texts, as well as works from the bibliographic list; you will be provided with such a list in class. All sources must be appropriately cited, using the Chicago Manual of Style method. It is a requirement that you use at least three sources to answer each question. Take note—that is the minimum, and if that is all you use then you can expect a minimum grade. Because the exams will be completed outside of class, it is expected that they will be skillfully constructed, well-organized, free of errors, and grammatically correct.
In addition to the three major exams, you will also be required to write three (3) historical response papers over articles/text material. Any reading material required in addition to the text will be distributed in class, or will be placed on reserve in the library. The papers will require a minimum of 750 words and will be due during weeks four, nine and thirteen of the semester. Each of these papers will be worth seventy-five (75) points. You will receive a separate instruction/guide handout that will cover this assignment. Response papers are due in class on the date listed in the syllabus.

Grade Breakdown:

Exams: (2) @ 125 points……………………….250 points
Response: (3) @ 75 points……………………..225 points
Total points……………………………………..475 points

Your grade will be calculated as a percentage of total points possible.

**Plagiarism and Cheating**

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Any student caught in such unethical activity will receive a zero for the assignment. Serious violations, such as stealing an exam or downloading a paper from the Internet, will result in automatic failure of the course. I will also report cheating to your dean as described in university policy A-9.1. Under this policy, students charged with more than one violation during their academic careers will be summoned before the University Committee on Academic Integrity. If the Committee validates the charges, it may place students on probation or suspend them. You may read the policy, including your right to appeal charges of dishonesty, at:

http://www.sfasu.edu/upp/pap/academic_affairs/CHEATING_AND_PLAGIARISM.html

**Special Arrangements:** Any student who, because of a disabling condition, may require some special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make necessary accommodations. Students should present appropriate verification from Disabled Students Services, Dean of Students Office. Any arrangements made are strictly confidential.

**Student Absence for Observation of Religious Holy Days:** A student who is absent from classes for the observation of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence if, not later than the fifteenth (15) day after the first day of the semester, the student had notified the instructor of each scheduled class that the student would be absent for a religious holy day.

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy** (University Policy A-54)
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade average.

Lecture, Reading, and Exam Schedule:

Response Paper Due Dates:

Paper #1: February 14
Paper #2: March 28
Paper #3: April 25

Exams—Distribution and Due date:

#1: Distributed in class on: February 28; due on March 14
#2: Distributed in class May 2: due on May 14 by 4:00 p.m.

Week One: Jan 22-24
Intro to Course/Discussion on Terminology; text reading: 1-5

Week Two: Jan 29-31
The Era of the Spanish Northern Frontier: Chps. 1 and 2

Week Three: Feb. 5-7
Life and Society in Mexico’s Northern Borderlands: 1821-1846: Chp. 3

Week Four: Feb. 12-14
Mexicans become Americans: Life in an Era of War and American Expansion

Week Five: Feb. 19-21
Mexican Americans search for a “place:” Life from the 1850s through 1900: Chp. 4

Week Six: (we will only meet on Tuesday, February 26 this week)
“The Great Migration:” Mexican Revolution and World War I: Chp. 5

Week Seven: March 5-7
A Mexican American diaspora: The 1920s: continue Chp. 5

Week Eight: March 12-14
Mexican Americans Struggle for Rights in the Face of A Depression: Chp. 6
Spring Break: March 18-22

Week Nine: March 26-28
The G.I Experience: Mexican Americans in World War II—At Home and Abroad: pgs. 163-178

Week Ten: April 2-4
The Mexican American Generation: Assimilation or Resistance?: pgs. 178-193

Week Eleven: We will only meet on April 9 this week
The Chicano Movement: Chp. 8

Week Twelve: Apr. 16 (Apr. 18 is Easter Break)
The Chicano Movement (cont.)

Week Thirteen: April 23-25
More Chicano Movement

Week Fourteen: April 30-May 2
Mexican Americans at the End of the 20th Century; Chp. 9

Week Fifteen: May 7-9
The Challenges of the 21st Century: Chp. 10