

History 475-001
The Mexican Revolution
Dr. Chad Black
Spring 2008

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The Mexican Revolution is one of a handful of monumental social, political, and cultural movements that shaped the 20th Century. Along with the Russian, Chinese, and Cuban revolutions, the Mexican Revolution has generated a massive volume of writing, film, art, literature, and music. Perhaps not surprisingly, historians disagree about nearly every aspect of the revolution, from when it began to whether or not it even was a revolution. The purpose of this course is to study in depth the Mexican Revolution and its evolving place in historical literatures. Following an overview of the events of the Revolution, we will trace the work of those who wrote, produced films on, or studied the history of the Mexican Revolution from the vantage point of when they produced their work, suggesting that their (and our) understanding of the revolution is dependent not only on sources from archives, but also the context in which work is produced. In that sense, this is a course about Mexico and the Mexican Revolution. But, just as importantly, it is a course about the narrativization of historical subjects.

This course is intended for students willing to learn how to think, read, and write historically as well as historiographically. As such, it is exceptionally important for all students to do the reading and come to class prepared for discussion. In addition to being an advanced history class, History 475 is a writing-intensive course according to the Undergraduate Catalogue. Quality writing is extremely important to your grade. Students who are not history or Latin American Studies majors may need to do extra work to keep up. I am most interested in your success, so please take advantage of my office hours and my email address as the semester progresses if you are having any problems. I am available for help needed to make this semester a rewarding one.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. An understanding of the background, process, internal dynamics, leadership, and outcome of the Mexican Revolutionary period.
2. An understanding of the relationship between the United States and the revolutionary events taking place in Mexico.
3. An understanding of the shifting historiography of the Mexican revolutionary period and how historians' preoccupations have changed over time.
4. An ability to use and evaluate primary and secondary historical sources.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Reading.** Each week's assigned readings should be completed before class.
2. **In-Class Exam #1. (20%)** Exam 1, scheduled for 8 February, will cover the Porfiriato and the balance of the revolutionary period. The exam will consist of a

combination of identifications and essay. Exams are open book/open note, so bring everything you've got.

3. Pershing Papers Writing Assignment. (20%) This assignment will be based on a cache of primary source documents posted to Blackboard. Each student will be required to write a narrative of the Pershing Expedition and the search for Villa based on these documents, and due in class on 7 March.

4. In-Class Essay #2. (20%) This essay will center on *The Death of Artemio Cruz*. Bring blue books, Fuentes, and your notes.

5. Final Paper. (25%) The final paper will consist of a critical article review. Each student will choose a topic related to the Mexican Revolution and four peer-reviewed articles that treat that topic. On 31 March, we won't have class so that I can have a brief meeting with each student to clear their topic and the articles. I will post an approved list of articles on Blackboard in February, as well as specific instructions on how to write an historiographic critical article review.

6. Participation. (10%) The final bit of your grade comes from participation—by coming to class prepared and participating in discussions.

REQUIRED READINGS

These books are available for purchase at the UT bookstore (and, of course, elsewhere):

Azuela, Mariano. *The Underdogs: A Novel of the Mexican Revolution* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002 [1915]).

Bliss, Katherine Elaine. *Compromised Positions: Prostitution, Public Health, and Gender Politics in Revolutionary Mexico City* (Penn State University Press, 2002).

Fuentes, Carlos. *The Death of Artemio Cruz*. (NY: Noonday Press, 1991).

Gonzales, Michael. *The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1940*. (Albuquerque: UNM Press, 2002).

Womack, John. *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution* (NY: Vintage, 1970).

Zolov, Erick. *Refried Elvis: The Rise of the Mexican Counterculture*. (Berkeley: UC Press, 1999).

All other readings will be posted to Blackboard.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

Please Note: If any special accommodations are needed to complete the course requirements, please come see me at the beginning of the semester.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism occurs when someone knowingly or unknowingly presents another person's words or ideas as his or her own. Any work turned in for this class must meet University standards for academic honesty. Any students unsure about how to apply these rules are urged to consult with me *prior* to turning in any written work.

Deadlines: Assignments that are due in class must be turned in at the start of class. If you anticipate problems, please contact me before the assignment is due, not after!

Office Hours: Students are strongly encouraged to speak with me outside of class. I am available during office hours on a first-come, first-served basis. If you cannot come during office hours, please contact me via email or phone to schedule an appointment.

Syllabus Changes: I reserve the right to change anything on this syllabus. But don't worry, I will always let you know if I do.

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: WELCOME TO THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION!

09 JAN Welcome
11 JAN Defining Our Terms

Readings:

1. Alan Knight, "Weapons and Arches in the Mexican Revolutionary Landscape," pp 24-66 in Joseph and Nugent, eds., *Everyday Forms of State Formation: Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994).
 2. Definitions of Revolution—posted to Blackboard.
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WEEK 2: THE PORFIRIATO, 1850-1910

14 JAN Porfirian Mexico
16 JAN The Opposition
18 JAN Popular Protest

Readings:

1. Michael Gonzales, *The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1940*, pp 1-59.
 2. PLM, "The Mexican Manifesto," 1911—posted to Blackboard.
 3. Ricardo Flores Magon, "Land and Liberty" –Blackboard.
 4. James Creelman, "President Diaz, Hero of the Americas" –Blackboard.
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WEEK 3: REVOLUTION! 1910-1912

21 JAN – MLK DAY, NO CLASS!
23 JAN The Madero Revolution
25 JAN The Madero Regime

Readings:

1. Michael Gonzales, *The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1940*, pp. 60-91.
 2. Francisco Madero, "The Plan of San Luis de Potosí," 1910—Blackboard.
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WEEK 4: COUNTERREVOLUTION! 1913-1914

28 JAN "Ten Tragic Days"
30 JAN War in North and South
01 FEB Discussion

Readings:

1. Michael Gonzales, *The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1940*, pp. 92-132.
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WEEK 5: ENDURING REVOLUTION! 1915-1917

04 FEB Aguascaliente
06 FEB Perpetual War
08 FEB **IN CLASS Exam #1** – Bring Blue Books.

Readings:

1. Michael Gonzales, *The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1940*, pp. 133-181.
 2. Primary sources on Villa and Zapata—on Blackboard.
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WEEK 6: CONSOLIDATING REVOLUTION! 1917-1930

11 FEB From Caranza to Obregón
13 FEB From Obregón to Cardenas
15 FEB Discussion

Readings:

1. Michael Gonzales, *The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1940*, pp. 182-270.
 2. The Mexican Constitution of 1917.
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WEEK 7: THIS REVOLUTION WILL BE PHOTOGRAPHED – MEDIA, IMAGE, POPULAR CULTURE

18 FEB "Que Viva Mexico"
20 FEB Finish film, Photos of the Revolution
22 FEB Discussion, + Los Corridos

Readings:

1. Mariano Azuela, *The Underdogs*, whole book.
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WEEK 8: THE US IN MEXICO

25 FEB Wilson, Mexico, and World War I
27 FEB Discussion: The Zimmerman Telegraph
29 FEB Discussion: Veracruz Documents

Readings:

1. Veracruz and Zimmerman Primary Documents posted on Blackboard.
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WEEK 9: THE US IN MEXICO

- 03 MAR The Border in the Revolution
05 MAR Discussion: The Pershing Expedition
07 MAR Begin Viva Zapata! **PERSHING NARRATIVE DUE.**

Readings:

1. The Pershing Documents posted on Blackboard.
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WEEK 10: THE MANY LIVES OF EMILIANO ZAPATA

- 10 MAR Viva Zapata!
12 MAR Discussion of Womack
14 MAR – SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS!

Readings:

1. John Womack, *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution*, whole book.
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WEEK 11:

17-21 MAR – SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS!

WEEK 12: MEXICO, MEET CUBA

- 24 MAR Revolutionary Projections
26 MAR Discussion of *The Death of Artemio Cruz*
28 MAR **IN-CLASS ESSAY ON FUENTES.**

Readings:

1. Fuentes, *The Death of Artemio Cruz*, whole book.
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WEEK 13: LA NOCHE DE TLATELOCO: WHITHER REVOLUTION

- 31 MAR No class—Student/Professor meetings on Final Paper.
02 APR 1968
04 APR Discussion

Readings:

1. Elena Poniatowska, “The Student Movement of 1968.”
 2. Primary sources on 1968 posted to Blackboard—The US and the Tlateloco Massacre, National Security Archive Briefing book.
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WEEK 14: THE CULTURAL TURN: ROCK & ROLL, REVISIONISM, REVOLUTION

- 07 APR Culture and Power
09 APR Revolutionary Meanings

11 APR Discussion

Readings:

1. Eric Zolov, *Refried Elvis*, whole book.
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WEEK 15: GENDER AND THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION

14 APR Gender and Historical Analysis

16 APR Women and Revolution

18 APR Discussion

Readings:

1. Katehrene Bliss, *Compromised Positions*, whole book.
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WEEK 16: THINGS FALL APART

21 APR The PRI in the 1980s

23 APR Neoliberalism and Zapata's Ghost

25 APR Discussion

Readings:

1. NONE!

Final Paper: Due between 10:15 and 12:15, Friday 2 May.