History 154: History of Mexico

Course Syllabus - Fall 2010

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Meebo Office Hours: M 6:30-7:30am

Skype Office Hours: M 6:30-7:30am - Instructor Skype Contact: echistory

Course Web Site: http://suarezol.org/joomla

Course Introduction

Welcome to History 154! This course surveys the main political, social, economic, and intellectual developments that have shaped Mexico from the pre-Columbian period to the 20th century. The purpose of this course is twofold. First, to assist students in acquiring knowledge about the development of Mexico’s history and the impact this history has had on shaping contemporary life in Mexico. Second, to instruct students in the skills of historical thinking. These skills include a historian’s ability to analyze the content of documentary evidence, understand events in their historical context, and draw tentative conclusions from limited data. To accomplish this, students will be exposed to primary sources, secondary sources, and cultural artifacts through lectures, assigned readings, and multimedia.

The content of this course is organized into four themes. The first theme, The Nature of Historical Knowledge, examines how the past is reconstructed and the sources used by historians to reconstruct the past. The second theme, Gods, Kings and Empires (c. 1200-1521), examines Mesoamerica’s history before the encounter. It identifies the changes that facilitated Spanish expansion into Mexico. The third theme, Restructuring the Nahua World (c. 1521-1800), examines Spain’s attempt to restructure the Native American world in post-conquest Mexico. It analyzes the political, economic and social policies that led to the conflict between Criollos and Peninsulares. The fourth theme, Independence and the Failure of Consensus (c. 1800-1911), examines the causes and events that led to Mexico’s quest for independence. It analyzes the struggle between liberal policies and colonial legacies. It explores the impact Porfirio Diaz’s push for order and progress. Finally, it analyzes the impact and meaning of La Revolución.
This survey course cannot hope to do justice to nearly 2800 years of history in a time span of one semester. Consequently, a selection process has taken place in an attempt to synthesize these 2800 years of history into thirty-two class meetings. In doing so, certain social, economic, political and intellectual developments will be simplified, briefly mentioned, or even omitted during lectures. It is equally important for students to realize that the synthesis provided by the instructor represents only one of many ways to interpret the themes covered in History 154. It is not absolute truth! The information presented in this course, however, does provide a base from which students can launch their own investigations into the past. It is my hope that students will take from this course the basic knowledge and skills necessary to begin forming their own views and interpretations about the history of Mexico.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

After successful completion of History 154:

1. Students will identify and explain major social, economic, political and cultural patterns in a written or oral assignment.

2. Students will accurately identify a primary or secondary source relating to history and apply the appropriate historical methods to explain what the source reveals about its historical context.

3. Students will develop and persuasively argue an historical thesis in a written or oral assignment that effectively uses primary and/or secondary sources.

**Course Objectives**

1. Identify the role of geography in Mexican history.

2. Describe and assess the cultural contributions of various pre-Columbian civilizations of Mexico.

3. Evaluate Spain's impact on Mexican historical development.

4. Analyze the Spanish colonial period in economic, political, religious and social terms.

5. Identify and discuss the causes of the Mexican Independence movement against Spanish rule including major participants and events.

6. Assess the economic and political challenges faced by Mexico during early nationhood.

7. Evaluate Mexican foreign diplomatic relations during the nineteenth century with an emphasis on the role of the United States.

8. Discuss and determine the complex philosophies and politics of the age of the Reform.

9. Analyze the economic, political, and social characteristics of the age of Porfirio Diaz.

10. Analyze the causes, effects, and aftermath of the Mexican Revolution of 1910.
11. Identify and evaluate the major political issues of Modern Mexico from 1910 to the present.

12. Compare and contrast Native America and European cultural contributions in shaping Mexican identity.

Assessment Measures

Student performance in History 154 will be assessed in three ways:

1. *Essay Examinations*: Students will complete two essay exams in which major social, economic, political and cultural patterns will be reconstructed through the analysis and evaluation of historical sources.

2. *Objective Examinations*: Students will complete a series of online objective examinations in which major social, economic, political and cultural patterns will be analyzed and evaluated to determine the accuracy of their presentation.

3. *Seminars*: Students will collaboratively address a variety of historical questions by analyzing primary and secondary sources.

4. *Resource Page*: Students will be introduced to research methodology by constructing a resource page citing scholarly monographs, articles and websites for a given topic within the scope of this course.

Required Books/Materials

All course reading materials will be provided via the course website. Access to internet, PDF file reader, *Microsoft Word* and *Windows Media Player* are necessary for this course. If you do not have Internet access, be sure to use one of the many computer labs available at El Camino College. For example, computers can be accessed at the Library Media Technology Center (LMTC) located at the East Lower Level of Schauerman Library. Call (310) 660-6715 for hours of operation. The programs needed to access the course materials are *Adobe Reader, Microsoft Word* and *Windows Media Player*.

Student Grade Record

The course grade will be based on two essay examinations and three objective examinations. All examinations are graded on the 100% scale. Please keep all materials returned and record the scores below.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Midterm Essay Exam (30%):</th>
<th>Final Essay Exam (30%):</th>
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<tr>
<td>Objective Exams (15%):</td>
<td>Seminars (15%):</td>
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<td>90-100% A</td>
<td>70-79% C</td>
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<td>80-89% B</td>
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Should I be enrolled in this Course?

History 154 is a college level history course. Consequently, it requires that students possess sound reading and writing skills. Students who are carrying an excessive load of classes this semester, who are working an excessive number of hours, or who have not completed the recommended preparation eligibility of English 1A, are asked to carefully consider if they should be enrolled in this course.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory in this class! Be sure to explore El Camino College's online course offerings if you do not enjoy being in a classroom setting. Students are responsible for signing the attendance roster. If a student is unable to attend class, it is his/her responsibility to notify the instructor through an e-mail message. Take a moment to familiarize yourself with the following statement on attendance taken from the El Camino College 2007-2008 Catalog (p. 11): Regular attendance is expected of every student. A student may be dropped from the class when the number of hours absent exceeds the number of units assigned to the course. Please drop this course immediately if you cannot commit to three hours of class time a week and the required time necessary to prepare for this course outside of the classroom. If a student stops attending class, then it is their responsibility to drop the course. Failure to do so will result in an F issued for the course grade.

Rules of Conduct

The instructor will not tolerate disruptive behavior in class. Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to: coming to class unprepared, arriving late to class, striking up a conversation with your neighbor during class, taking naps during class, failing to take notes during class, leaving class early, not coming to class, and forgetting to turn off cell phones and pagers before coming into class. Dishonesty, plagiarism, and cheating will result in immediate dismissal from this course. Please drop this course immediately if you cannot follow the rules of conduct cited above.

How to Succeed in this Course

What makes a successful college student? Successful college students accept personal responsibility, are self-motivated, and have mastered self-management. This course will call upon students to adopt and apply these principles by asking them to:

1. Study consistently throughout the semester
2. Stay on top of reading assignments.
3. Take detailed notes.
4. Review their notes regularly.
5. Have assignments ready in advance
6. Work on writing skills.
7. Attend class regularly.
8. Visit the instructor during office hours.

American with Disabilities Act

El Camino College is committed to providing educational accommodations for students with disabilities upon the timely request by the student to the instructor. A student with a disability, who would like to request an academic accommodation, is responsible for identifying herself/himself to
the instructor and to the Special Resources Center. To make arrangements for academic accommodations, contact the Special Resources Center.

Also, please inform the instructor if you need course adaptations or accommodation in the classroom because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with your instructor, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated.

**Proposed Themes and Readings**

The instructor reserves the right to alter or deviate from the proposed themes and reading schedule. Students will be notified in advance should changes be made. The most current schedule will always be available on the instructor's web page.

**The Nature of Historical Knowledge**

Required reading:

- Suarez, *The Nature of Historical Knowledge*
- Hernán Cortés, *Letters to the King of Spain* (1520)
- American Historical Association: *Why Study History?* (Internet Site: http://www.historians.org/PUBS/Free/WhyStudyHistory.htm)

**Reconstructing the Native American Past**

Required reading:

- Suarez, *Reconstructing the Native American Past*
- *The Codex Mendoza* (selection)
- "The Aztec Migrations of the Nahuatl Chronicles: Myth or History?" Michael E. Smith. *Ethnohistory* Vol. 31, No. 3 (Summer, 1984) - JSTOR

**Mesoamerican Periodization**

Required reading:

- Suarez, *Mesosamerican Periodization*
The Codex Mendoza

Required reading:

- Suarez, *Codex Mendoza* and *The Question of Human Sacrifice*

One god, One King, One Law

Required reading:

- Suarez, *Chapter 4: One God, One Law, One King*

Encomienda and Encomanderos

Required reading:

- Suarez, *Encomienda and Encomanderos*

The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico

Required reading:

- Suarez, *The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico*
"Burying the White Gods: New Perspectives on the Conquest of Mexico."

Women and Society in Colonial Mexico

Required reading:

- Suarez, *Women and Society in Colonial Mexico*


The Criollo-Peninsular Controversy

Required reading:

- Suarez, *The Criollo-Peninsular Controversy*


El Grito de Dolores

Required reading:

- Suarez, *El Grito de Dolores*

- Additional readings to be announced

The Constitution of 1857

Required reading:

- Suarez, *The Constitution of 1857*

- Additional readings to be announced

Porfiriato: Order and Progress at a Cost

Required reading:

- Suarez, *Porfiriato: Order and Progress at a Cost*


**La Revolución**

Required reading:

- Suarez, *La Revolución*


- "Railroad, Oil and Other Foreign Interests in the Mexican Revolution, 1911-1914." John Skirius. *Journal of Latin American Studies*. Vol. 35, No. 1 (Feb., 2003), JSTOR

**From La Revolución to the Modern State**

Required reading:

- Suarez, *From La Revolución to the Modern State*

- Additional readings to be announced