

**Contemporary Mexican Culture  
ANTH 3361/SOCI 3361**

**Fall 2017  
Mondays/Wednesdays 1:30-2:50 pm  
Liberal Arts Building 222**

**Office Hours:  
Mondays/Wednesdays 10:30-11:30 am (UTEP Library, First Floor—by coffee shop)  
Wednesdays 4:30-5:30pm (CIBS building, 1514 Hawthorne Street)  
Or by appointment**

**Instructor: Iván Sandoval-Cervantes    Email: [isandovalc@utep.edu](mailto:isandovalc@utep.edu)**

**Course Description**

With more than 100 million inhabitants across its 750,000 square miles of territory, Mexico is a vast and diverse country. Mexico's diversity makes it hard to speak of "one Mexico," as the multiple, and sometimes contradicting, histories and struggles of Mexican peoples show. This course analyzes Mexico's contemporary cultural diversity by looking at recent historical events through the lenses of racial, ethnic, sexual, class, and youth identities; in particular, in this course we will study how these identities intersect and impact political events and social movements in Mexico since the 1950s. Taking the state's appropriation of the Mexican Revolution as a starting point, students will engage with readings on Mexico's racial identities and *mestizaje* policies; Mexico's youth and countercultural movements in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as its relation to the Cold War. Students will also discuss Mexico's "modernization" attempts, and the increasing demands for sexual orientation and gender equality. Students will also read about recent social movements, like those connected to the Teachers' Union uprising in the southern state of Oaxaca and Guerrero.

**Required Texts (according to schedule readings):**

Zolov, Eric. 1999. *Refried Elvis: The Rise of the Mexican Counterculture*. University of California Press, Berkeley.

Levi, Heather. 2008. *The World of Lucha Libre: Secrets, Revelations, and Mexican National Identity*. Durham, Duke University Press.

Readings that are not part of these books will be available on Blackboard.

**Assignments and Grading:**

**Readings:** Students are expected to read all of the required readings for the days assigned to each of the readings. You can find the readings on Blackboard.

**In-class Participation/Attendance (30%):** Students are expected to attend and arrive on time to every class meeting. Students are also expected to complete and turn in in-class written

assignments, and to participate in group discussions. Students are also expected to participate in meaningful and respectful discussion by asking questions and engaging with the material.

**Written reactions (30%):** Students must submit reactions to the readings every day when the class meets through Blackboard. The first reaction is due on Monday of week 3 and the last reaction is due on Wednesday of week 14. Reactions should be uploaded before class to be counted towards the grade. Reactions are not summaries of the readings but rather your own thoughts and feelings about the article. Reactions should be two or three sentences long, well-written, and should address the topic of the article in question. Students may miss up to TWO reactions, but afterwards each missing reaction mean a two point subtraction from the total of the possible grade.

**Movie reactions (20%):** Students must submit written reactions to two of the following films watched in class: *Los Olvidados*; *Santo Luzbel*; *Canoa*; *A Placed Called Chiapas*; *Amores Perros*. Alternatively, students can also substitute ONE movie reaction from a film watched in class for one of the following films—that the students will have to find on their own: *Un Mundo Maravilloso*; *Callejón de los Milagros*; *Sexo, pudor y lágrimas*; *Cómo Agua para Chocolate*; etc... Students can also consult with me about a particular film they would like to “review.” Reactions should be handed-in during class no later than one-week after the movie was watched in class. Movie reactions should use authors and concepts discussed in class. Format: Times New Roman 12pts, 2 pages, double-space. The reaction has to be well organized and well-written.

**Final Research Paper (20%):** Final research paper: Pick an event/topic that has happened/appeared in the media after 2000 [Possible topics are: Autodefensas (community organized defense groups), teacher’s movements, social movements for gender equality, the “Mexican Spring,” etc.]. Use the relevant literature to analyze it. Format: Times New Roman 12pts, 10 pages, double-space, and citations. Please come to my office hours to discuss your topic, or email me. The paper has to be written as an academic essay; it must include introduction, body, conclusion, and references. Specific information will be provided during the semester.

**Extra-Credit Options:** Extra-credit options will be available throughout the course and will be discussed in a timely way.

**Classroom Etiquette:** Students should observe the appropriate behavior for an academic atmosphere. This means that students must arrive on time, and be respectful of other students around them. Cell phones should be turned off, or in silence mode, and they should be put away. If there is a serious need to be attentive to your phone, such as a family emergency, please let me know before the class starts. Laptop use is discouraged but if you need to use your laptop to take notes please let me know; you will be asked to sit in first rows of the classroom. During class discussions you must be respectful of others’ opinions and participation. This means that you should not interrupt others. Please be aware that not complying with the classroom etiquette might affect your grade.

**If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations,** please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit

the CASS website at [www.sa.utep.edu/cass](http://www.sa.utep.edu/cass). *CASS' Staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.*

**Academic Integrity:** Students are expected to hold the highest standard of academic integrity. This means that you must write all of your papers and other assignments yourself, and cite sources appropriately, not doing so is a serious matter and any such activity will be reported to the University. If you have any questions about what plagiarism is please consult the following webpage:

<http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/>

I reserve the right to modify the syllabus as needed during the semester. I will notify you of these changes through email.

### **Scheduled Readings:**

#### **Week 1:**

**Monday:** No required reading

**Wednesday:** (1) Knight, Alan. 1994. Popular Culture and the Revolutionary State in Mexico, 1910-1940. *Hispanic American Historical Review* 74(3): 393-444.

(2) Watch: Los Olvidados (Luis Buñuel, 1950)

#### **Week 2:**

**Monday: No Class/Labor Day!**

**Wednesday:** (1) Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities* [Excerpts]

(2) Vasconcelos, Jose. *The Cosmic Race* [Excerpts]

#### **Week 3:**

**Monday:** (1) Poole, Deborah. 2011. Mestizaje, Distinction, and Cultural Presence: The View from Oaxaca. In *Histories of Race and Racism*, edited by Laura Gotkowitz, pp. 179-203. Durham, Duke University Press.

(2) Vaughn, Bobby. 2013. Mexico Negro: From the Shadows of Nationalist Mestizaje to New Possibilities in Afro-Mexican Identity. *Journal of Pan African Studies* 6(1): 227-240.

(3) Watch: Being Black in Latin America (Mexico/Peru).

**Wednesday:** (1) Stephen, Lynn. 2002. Chapter 2: Government Construction and Reappropriation of Emiliano Zapata, pp. 33-82. In *Zapata Lives! Histories and Cultural Politics in Southern Mexico*. Berkeley, University of California Press.

#### **Week 4:**

**Monday:** Coffey, Mary K. 2002. Muralism and the People: Culture, Popular Citizenship, and Government in Post-Revolutionary Mexico. *The Communication Review* 5:7-38.

**Wednesday:** In-class: Watch: Santo Luzbel (Miguel Sabido, 1997) in class.

### **Week 5:**

**Monday:** Zolov, Eric. 1999. Introduction; and Chapter 1: Rebeldismo in the Revolutionary Family. In *Refried Elvis: The Rise of the Mexican Counterculture*.

**Wednesday:** (1) Zolov, Eric. 1999. Chapter 2: Containing the Rock Gesture; and Chapter 3: La Onda. In *Refried Elvis: The Rise of the Mexican Counterculture*.

### **Week 6:**

**Monday:** (1) Zolov, Eric. 1999. Chapter 4: La Onda in the Wake of Tlatelolco. In *Refried Elvis: The Rise of the Mexican Counterculture*.

(2) Dawson, Alexander S. 2015. Salvador Roquet, María Sabina, and the Trouble with the Jipis. *Hispanic American Historical Review* 95(1): 103-133.

**Wednesday:** In-class: Watch: *Canoa* (Felipe Cazals, 1976)

### **Week 7:**

**Monday:** Zolov, Eric. 1999. Chapter 5: La Onda Chicana; and Chapter 6: The Avándaro Rock Festival. In *Refried Elvis: The Rise of the Mexican Counterculture*.

**Wednesday:** Zolov, Eric. 1999. Chapter 7: A Critique of the “Obvious Imperialist”; and Conclusion. In *Refried Elvis: The Rise of the Mexican Counterculture*.

### **Week 8:**

**Monday:** (1) Excerpts from: Poniatowska, Elena. 1995. *Nothing, Nobody: The Voices of the Mexico City Earthquake*. Philadelphia, Temple University Press.

**Wednesday:** (1) Marcos, Sylvia. 1999. Twenty-Five Years of Mexican Feminism. *Women’s Studies International Forum* 22(4):431-433.

(2) Lamas, Marta; and Sharon Bissell. 2000. Abortion and Politics in Mexico: ‘Context is All.’ *Reproductive Health Matters* 8(16):10-23.

### **Week 9:**

**Monday:** (1) Braff, Lara. 2015. The Legislative Lacuna on Assisted Reproduction: Reimagining the Modern Mexican State. *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology* 20(1):156-173.

(2) Singer, Elyse Ona. 2016. From Reproductive Rights to Responsibilization: Fashioning Liberal Subjects in Mexico City’s New Public Sector Abortion Program. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*. Online Version 1-19

**Wednesday:** (1) Domínguez-Ruvalcaba, Héctor. 2009. From Fags to Gays: Political Adaptations and Cultural Translations in the Mexican Gay Liberation Movement. In *Mexico Reading the United States*, edited by Linda Egan and Mary K. Long, pp. 116-134. Nashville, Vanderbilt University Press.

(2) Mirandé, Alfredo. 2013. Transgender Identity and Acceptance in a Global Era: The Muxes of Juchitán. *Masculinities in a Global Era*, pp. 247-263, edited by Joseph Gelfer. New York, Springer.

**Week 10:**

**Monday:** (1) Chapters 1 and 2 from Heather Levi's *The World of Lucha Libre*.

**Wednesday:** (1) Chapters 3 and 4 from Heather Levi's *The World of Lucha Libre*.

**Week 11:**

**Monday:** (1) Chapters 5 and 6, and Conclusion from Heather Levi's *The World of Lucha Libre*.

(2) In-class: Watch: Tales of Masked Men

**Wednesday:** (1) Wright, Melissa. 2001. Feminine Villains, Masculine Heroes, and the Reproduction of Ciudad Juarez. *Social Text* 69 19(4):93-113.

(2) Castellanos, Bianet (2010) Chapter 4: Civilizing Bodies: Learning to Labor in Cancun, pp. 77-109. In *A Return to Servitude: Maya Migration and the Tourist Trade in Cancún*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

**Week 12:**

**Monday:** (1) In Class: Watch: A Place Called Chiapas (Nettie Wild, 1998)

**Wednesday:** (1) Esteva, Gustavo. 2010. The Oaxaca Commune and Mexico's Coming Insurrection. *Antipode* 42(4):978-993.

(2) Magaña, Maurice. 2016. Spaces of Resistance, Everyday Activism, and Belonging: Youth Reimagining and Reconfiguring the City in Oaxaca, Mexico. *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*. (Online Version).

**Week 13:**

**Monday:** (1) Reed-Sandoval, Amy. 2016. Ayotzinapa: An Attack against Latin American Philosophy. In *Decolonizing the Westernized University from Within and Without*, edited by Ramon Grosfoguel, Roberto D. Hernandez, and Ernesto Rosen Velasquez. New York, Lexington Press.

(2) Blanco Ramírez, Gerardo; and Amy Scott Metcalfe. 2017. Hashtivism as public discourse: Exploring online student activism in response to state violence and forced disappearances in Mexico. *Research in Education* 97(1):56-75.

**Wednesday:** (1) Edberg, Mark. 2009. Chapter 2. Investigating Narcocorridos and Their Meaning in the U.S.-Mexico Border Context, pp.25-46. In *El Narcotraficante: Narcocorridos and the Construction of a Cultural Persona in the U.S.-Mexico Border*. Austin, University of Texas Press.

(2) Asensio, Susana. The Nortec Edge: Border Traditions and “Electronica” in Tijuana. In *Rockin’ Las Americas: The Global Politics of Rock in Latin/o America*, pp. 312-331, edited by Deborah Pacini Hernández, Héctor Fernández L’hoeste, and Eric Zolov. Pittsburg, University of Pittsburg Press.

(3) In-class: Being watching: Amores Perros

**Week 14:**

**Monday:** (1) Red, Magdalena. 2014. Who are the “Emos” Anyway? Youth Violence in Mexico City and the Myth of the Revolution. *Journal of Popular Music Studies* 26(1):101-120

(2) Cunin, Elizabeth. 2013. Blackness and *Mestizaje*: Afro-Caribbean Music in Chetumal, Mexico. *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies* 9(1):1-22.

**Wednesday: Class Cancelled!**

**Week 15:**

**Monday:** (1) Guzik, Keith. 2016. Prohesion. In *Making Things Stick: Surveillance Technologies and Mexico’s War on Crime*. Berkeley, University of California Press.

(2) Heyman, Josiah McC; and Howard Campbell. 2007. Corruption in the US Borderlands with Mexico: The “Purity” of Society and the “Perversity” of Borders. In *Corruption and the Secret of Law: A Legal Anthropological Perspective*, edited by Monique Nuijten and Gerhard Anders, pp. 191-217. Burlington, Ashgate Publishing Company.

**Wednesday:** (1) Pilcher, Jeffrey. 2015. Tamales or Timbales: Cuisine and the Formation of Mexican National Identity, 1821-1911. *The Americas* 53(2):193-216.

(2) Brulotte, Ronda L.; and Alvin Starkman. Caldo De Piedra and Claiming Pre-Hispanic Cuisine as Cultural Heritage. In *Edible Identities: Food as Cultural Heritage*, edited by Ronda L. Brulotte and Alvin Starkman, pp. 109-124. New York, Routledge.