

The University of Texas at Tyler
Department of History
HIST 4371—The History of Mexican Americans

COURSE DESCRIPTION

HIST 4371, The History of Mexican Americans, is a junior-level general inquiry into the historical and cultural heritage of Mexican Americans who have lived or are currently living in what is today the United States, from the 18th century to the modern era. Through readings and discussion, this course studies the varied histories of Americans of Mexican descent with a special view toward convergence and congruencies along political and cultural lines. The goal is to have students develop a greater appreciation and understanding of the impact of and the important roles played by Mexican American men and women in the formation and development of American society.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- **Matt S. Meir and Feliciano Ribera, *Mexican Americans/American Mexicans* (1993)**
- **Arnoldo De Leon, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans, 1821-1900* (1983)**
- **Jorge Iber and Samuel Regalado, *Mexican Americans and Sports* (2006)**
- **Narratives (U.S. Latinos and Latinas and World War II) <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/ww2latinos/>**
- **Miscellaneous Assigned Readings (to be provided in class)**

GRADING:

Course work will be evaluated on the basis of content (knowledge of the facts) and quality of analysis. Written work will be evaluated on the quality of critical thinking about the material and clarity of expression.

Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Research Paper	20%
Book Test (De Leon)	10%
Book Review (Iber & Regalado)	10%
Class Participation/Attendance	10%
Culture and Memory Project	10%

Generally speaking, a grade of 90.00% corresponds to a borderline A- & 89.99% to a B+; 80% is the line between a B- & a C+ and so on. It is the professor's policy not to grant INCOMPLETES under any circumstance.

EXAMS:

Two exams—a midterm and a final—will be given during the semester. Exams will be comprised of matching, short identification, and essay. Each test will focus on lectures and assigned readings equally.

RESEARCH PAPER:

Students will complete an 8-10 page paper drawing from the primary sources available in The University of Texas at Austin's Latino Narratives section (<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/ww2latinos/>). Students must draw from the collection of oral interviews and histories available online at The University of Texas at Austin library to answer the questions of what the Second World War meant to the Mexican American community and what problems they encountered during this conflict.

Students must adhere to guidelines described in Chicago/Turabian (handout forthcoming) and turn in their final drafts. Students will be given a reprieve from regularly scheduled class meetings to conduct their research and writing in the weeks leading up to the final due date. There will be a more detailed Research Paper Guide distributed later this semester. The professor will be available for consultation during this process. The research paper is worth 20% of your overall grade.

BOOK TESTS:

Students are required to read two monograph studies dealing with the history of Latinos/as in the United States this semester. In lieu of book reviews/reports for the first book Arnoldo De Leon, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans in Texas*, students will take an essay test dealing with that particular study. On the date of the test students will have been expected to have read the entire book and thus be prepared to write on a series of essay topics dealing with the work. The purpose of these tests is for students to have a grasp of some of the overarching concepts dealing with the Mexican American/Tejano history. **No study guides will be available prior to each exam.**

BOOK REVIEW:

Students are required to read two monograph studies dealing with the history of *Mejicanos* in the United States this semester. For the second book, students will be required to write a 3-4 page review essay on Jorge Iber and Samuel Regalado, *Mexican American and Sports: A Reader on Athletics and Barrio Life* (2006). The essay will analyze and respond to the book in a critical and scholarly review. A detailed description of the essay requirements will be distributed later during the semester. **The essay is worth 10% of student's overall grade** and will be due on. Students who fail to turn in the assigned review will be penalized a letter grade a day (including weekends) until the professor personally receives the assignment (sorry no emailed papers). A more detailed preparation guide will be forthcoming.

CULTURE AND MEMORY COURSE PROJECT:

History of Remembering and Forgetting Latino/a History Project. You and a detective partner (or solo, if you like) will search for *Mejicano/a* places of collective memory (community celebrations, restaurants, parks, community centers, neighborhoods, libraries, historical societies, museums, art galleries, etc.) in the Tyler area (or your hometown if you commute) and compile a 750-word (three page) report of your detective work, a map of the Latino/a sites you visited, and a journal of your discovery which documents your intellectual journey through your investigation (this will be invaluable as you write your report).

Students will present their findings to the rest of the class on the designated dates of April 14 and 16 in a brief 5 to 10-minute presentation.

CLASS DEPARTMENT:

Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from time spent in class, unless otherwise approved by the professor; students are prohibited from engaging in any other forms of distraction (talking, reading the newspaper, etc.). Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result, minimally, in a request to leave class.

WITHDRAWALS:

It is your responsibility to understand The University of Texas at Tyler's procedure for dropping a class. If you stop attending this class but do not follow proper procedure for dropping the class, you will receive a failing grade and will also be financially obligated to pay for the class. Please consult the Registrar's office for deadlines and procedures.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

In my courses all students are responsible for adhering to a certain standard of behavior when it comes to honesty and plagiarism. I expect each individual to adhere to these standards so that every member of the class knows that his or her work is being held to an equal standard. A student who cheats or plagiarizes in **ANY** fashion will receive an "F" for the course. Plagiarism is the misrepresentation of the work of another person as your own. It includes the purchase of papers, failure to acknowledge sources properly in a paper, or failure to place the writing of another author in proper quotation marks. For additional information, see "A student Guide to Conduct and Discipline at the University of Texas at Tyler" (<http://www.uttyler.edu/mainsite/conduct.html>).

MAKEUP EXAM POLICY:

Tests may not be taken early. Students must arrange work schedules, job interviews, and vacation/travel plans (even those last minute travel deals which always come up, especially in a spring semester) in order to take the exams on the scheduled dates. There are no make-ups unless you have some kind of documented medical emergency, in which case all make-ups will be given at the end of the semester at the same time as designated by the professor. No excuses will be accepted more than 48 hours after the scheduled test date. Make-up exams will be given only to students who in my opinion have a legitimate excuse, such as a severe illness, or absence due to a University-sponsored activity. The burden of supplying sufficient documentary proof rests upon the student. Students who have "last-minute" travel plans and might need to take an exam early will be referred to this portion of the syllabus.

Make-up tests are given at the end of the semester along with your final exam. Students will be allowed only one makeup exam on that date. Due to material restrictions the number of choices for the identifications and essay questions will be limited; thus, the makeup exam/quiz will be composed of an entirely different format covering the same material. It is the student's responsibility to prepare for such a test. No study guides will be provided.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation for their disabilities. I will make every reasonable accommodation to assist students with disabilities. It is the responsibility of the student to let me know of the disability for accommodation to his/her needs. If you have a disability, including a learning disability, for which you request an accommodation, please contact Ida MacDonald in the Disability Support Services office so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with Federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide documentation for his/her disability to the Disability Support Services counselor. For more information, call or visit the Student Services Center located in the University Center, Room 111. The telephone number is 566-7079 (TDD 565-5579).

CLASS PARTICIPATION COMPONENT:

Ten percent of your grade will be based on a subjective class participation component. I will occasionally call on students to answer questions or to explore themes related to the individual topics. From time to time, the instructor will pose questions to the class, but feel free to initiate your own comments and ask questions related to course material, and respond to the questions and comments made by others.

Since participation in class is expected, I will keep track of who shares in discussion, who attempts to dominate discussion, and who says next to nothing. Obviously, since you have to attend class to contribute to the class, there will be a strong emphasis on attendance for the class participation component.

NOTE TAKING:

You are expected to take notes during lectures, discussions, and, if applicable, videos. Please do not try to follow along with me in your textbook—I do not lecture directly from your book and you will end up missing key points in the lecture and the point(s) I am trying to make. If you miss a class, check with your fellow students to see if someone will lend you their notes. The professor does not provide lecture notes for any student(s).

CLASSROOM POLICY AND EXPECTATIONS:

Students are required to do the assigned reading and come to class prepared to ask questions or participate in discussion of course material if desired. Students unwilling to participate in lecture and class discussion formats should not enroll in the course. Class discussion is the essential mode of instruction in this course. Students are expected to participate actively in discussion and to respect the ideas of all participants.

Students are expected to complete written assignments on time. Late assignments will be penalized a letter grade a day. Assignments turned in after the beginning of class will be designated as late. A penalty of a letter grade a day (including weekends) will accrue until the professor personally receives the assignment. Please take note of pre-existing medical conditions, computer/printer difficulties, job conflicts, and travel plans, etc. when viewing the course requirements. **There will be no exceptions to the late penalty.**

LECTURE POLICIES:

Questions during lecture: Often I will ask the class if there are any questions on the material we are covering, and you should feel free to ask whatever you want during that time. During lecture, you are encouraged to raise questions on the material at any point. Should you have additional questions that are not pertinent to the rest of the class or if you feel uncomfortable asking them during class, please come by my office hours.

Questions after Class: I encourage students to use office hours or to set appointments to discuss course material or any other university-related matter. Please do not hesitate to visit me during my office hours, even if you do not have specific questions. Professors have office hours for the benefit of their students, but sometimes students' schedules conflict with those times. Feel free set up appointments or to email me or leave clear phone messages as well with any questions or concerns.

REPORTING OF GRADES:

No grades will be given out by phone or email, as this can potentially violate student confidentiality. All grades will be posted via the university password protected **CAMPUSCONNECT**.

THE WRITING CENTER:

Located in BUS 202, the UT-Tyler Writing Center provides professional writing tutoring for all students in all disciplines. If you wish to use the Writing Center, you should plan for a minimum of two hour-long tutorials per assignment: the first to provide an initial consultation and drafting plan, and the second to follow up. Be prepared to take an active role in your learning, as you will be asked to discuss your work during your tutorial. While Writing Center tutors are happy to provide constructive criticism and teach effective writing techniques, under no circumstances will they fix, repair, or operate on your paper. Appointments: 903-565-5995. www.uttyler.edu/writingcenter.

WHAT I EXPECT FROM YOU:

1. Please try not to be late to class. We have a limited time in the classroom, so cannot afford any distractions. If there is a reason why you must be late, try to be quiet as you come in.
2. Take all exams and quizzes on the scheduled dates. All make-ups are left for the end of the semester and are subject to professor's approval. Visit office hours if you need help or have additional questions.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM ME:

1. My lectures will be well-prepared and organized.
2. I will see that your papers and exams are graded promptly and I will remain accessible throughout the semester and hold office hours regularly.

NOTE:

- **Please do not bring a tape recorder to class unless you can provide some documentation for a disability.**
- **Feel free to e-mail me in regard to anything related to the class, the topic, or professional requests.**
- **This syllabus is subject to change at the professor's discretion. All changes will be provided verbally in class.**

WARNING: Even though this is a U.S. history class, the use of the Spanish language and Spanish terminology will be used with great frequency. Students need to be cognizant of this fact. It is understood that remaining in this class constitutes an agreed to abide by the terms outlined in this syllabus and an acceptance of the requirements outlined in this document.

Schedule of Lectures and Readings (subject to change)

Date **Lecture#** **Lecture Topic**

Week One: Course Introduction and the Road to the Civil War

Jan. 13 01 Course Introduction/The Spanish Origins
Jan. 25 02 Under Three Nations: Spain, Mexico, and Texas

Assigned Reading: **Meier and Ribera, Mexican Americans/American Mexicans, pgs., 1-26**

Week Two: The First “Mexicans” in the United States

Jan. 20 03 *The Tejanos and Californios*
Jan. 22 04 Anglo Saxons and Mexicans

Assigned Reading: **Meier and Ribera, Mexican Americans/American Mexicans, pgs., 27-39, 40-52**

Week Three: Race and Manifest Destiny

Jan. 27 05 Race, Expansion, and the Mexican War
Feb. 29 06 Life in the Southwest—The First Mexican Americans

Assigned Reading: **Meier and Ribera, Mexican Americans/American Mexicans, pgs., 53-68, 69-78**

Week Four: The Turn of the Century

Feb. 03 07 Mexican Americans at the turn of the Century
Feb. 05 08 Mexican Americans at the turn of the Century, cont.

Assigned Reading: **Meier and Ribera, Mexican Americans/American Mexicans, pgs., 78-86, 87-102,**

Week Five: The Immigration IncurSION: A Different View

Feb. 10 09 The Mexican Revolution
Feb. 12 10 The Immigration Generation

Assigned Reading: **Meier and Ribera, Mexican Americans/American Mexicans, pgs., 103-117, 118-130**

Week Six: Dual Law Enforcement

Feb. 17 Video: *Border Bandits*
Feb. 19 Video: *Border Bandits*

Week Seven: The Influx

Feb. 24 11 *Mexico Lindo: The Mexican American Community to the 1930s*
Feb. 26 12 Labor

Assigned Reading: **Meier and Ribera, Mexican Americans/American Mexicans, pgs., 131-146**

Week Eight: Midterm Week

Mar. 03 **Book Test: DeLeon, *They Called Them Greasers***

Mar. 05 **Midterm Exam**

Week Nine: No Class Scheduled—Spring Break Week

Week Ten: The Politics of Ethnicity

Mar. 17 13 *Mejicanos* and the Second World War

Mar. 19 14 War on the Homefront

Assigned Reading: Meier and Ribera, *Mexican Americans/American Mexicans*, pgs., 147-158, 159-171

Week Eleven: Changes

Mar. 24 15 Postwar America

Mar. 26 16 Acculturation and Adaptation

Assigned Reading: Meier and Ribera, *Mexican Americans/American Mexicans*, pgs., 172-184, 185-197

Assigned Reading: Katie O'Reilly, "Texas History 101: The Bracero Program,"

Week Twelve: A Culture in the United States

Mar. 31 17 The Rights Revolution

Apr. 02 18 The Rights Revolution cont.

Assigned Reading: Meier and Ribera, *Mexican Americans/American Mexicans*, pgs., 198-217, 218-232

Week Thirteen: A *Mejicano/a* Culture

Apr. 07 19 The Various Meanings of Latino/a Music—From *Corridos* to *Norteno*

Apr. 09 20 *Fiestas, Costumbres, y Pachangas: Mexican American Celebrations in America*

Book Review Due: Iber and Regalado, *Mexican Americans and Sports*

Assigned Reading: Meier and Ribera, *Mexican Americans/American Mexicans*, pgs., 118-131, 169-199

Assigned Reading: Swartz, "Once Upon a Time in Laredo," pgs., 92-109

Assigned Reading: Coloff, "Laredo Debutantes on Parade," pgs., 118-125, 177-179

Week Fourteen: Presentation Week

Apr. 14 **Presentation Day—TBA**

Apr. 16 **Presentation Day—TBA**

Week Fifteen: The Twenty First Century

Apr. 21 21 Mexican Americans and the Remaking of American Politics

Apr. 23 22 The Immigration Struggle

Assigned Reading: Meier and Ribera, Mexican Americans/American Mexicans, pgs., 249-273

Assigned Reading: George Sanders, "The Great Divider," pgs., 100-107, 136-140

Assigned Reading: Michael Ennis, "North Toward Home," pgs., 78-84.

Week Sixteen: Research Week

Apr. 28-30 No Class Meetings

Final Examination: Tuesday May 5, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.