History 16: Mexican American History

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Course Description
This course introduces students to the history of the United States and the Mexican-American experience from the Colonial Period to the present. The course will emphasize the role and life experiences of Mexican-Americans in the historical evolution of the political, economic and socio-cultural institution of the United States.

Required Texts
Vicki Ruiz, From Out of the Shadows: Mexican Women in Twentieth-Century America
Rodolfo Acuña, Occupied America: A History of Chicanos

Both course books are available at the bookstore. A few short supplementary readings will be announced throughout the semester.

Attendance
Attendance is mandatory. It counts for 10% of your class grade. The percentage breaks down as follows: 1-2 classes (or less) missed=A; 3-4 classes missed=B; 5 classes missed=C; 6 classes missed=D; 7 or more classes missed=F. If you have an illness or family emergency, please contact me as soon as possible.

Discussions
This course is built around critical thinking and historical problem solving, not rote memorization. My teaching philosophy draws on both Howard Zinn’s concept of “Radical History” and Paulo Freire’s Pedagogy of the Oppressed—my purpose in teaching history is not to convey abstract facts and dates, but to help students understand historical developments for themselves, through critical thinking and analysis. The point is to equip you with the analytical tools you will need as an informed and engaged participant in American economic, cultural, and political life. Therefore, each week the class will engage in a discussion of the week’s reading for the purpose of understanding the “how?” and “why?” of history. You must come prepared to discuss all that week’s reading. Discussion participation counts for 25 percent of your course grade.

Assignments
There will be a short writing assignment each week—1 to 2 paragraphs responding to that week’s reading. I will provide a short list of possible questions for you to respond to, so you’ll have an idea of the main points you should be reading for. I know we’re all busy, so this assignment is intended to help you keep up with the reading and help you read more effectively (get the most out of the readings with the least amount of time spent). The study questions will also help you prepare to discuss the readings in class every week. Reading responses are not due from that week’s presenters.
Exams
We will have midterm and final exams which will cover the reading, films, and lectures. (Hint: this is why attendance is crucial). The exams will be a combination of short identification and essay questions.

Email
I do not accept email from unidentified accounts. Please DO NOT send email from cutiepie, pornstar, darth_maul, or other unidentifiable names (these are actual email addresses I’ve received student email from). Email accounts are free, so keep cutiepie for fun and establish a separate account for all your campus communication. Anyone who has used the internet knows that spam and unsolicited porn are big problems, so if your account isn’t clearly identifiable, many people (including me) will automatically delete your emails.

Cell Phones
CELL PHONES ARE NOT ALLOWED IN CLASS. Period. If you bring a cell phone to class, it should remain turned off, wrapped in bubble wrap and five layers of duct tape at the bottom of your bag. If your cell phone becomes a problem, you will be asked to leave class.

Grades
Grade breakdown and due dates are as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Breakdown</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Presentations</td>
<td>To be determined with instructor</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Responses</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
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<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
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<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
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Semester Schedule

Week 1
Introductions, “What is Radical History?”

Week 2
The Ancestors

Week 3
The Conquest of America
Readings: Acuña, pp. 1-40 (ch. 1); Stannard, “Sex, Race, and Holy War”

First reading response due second class meeting
Week 4
The Conquest Continues: Remember the Alamo
Readings: Acuña, pp. 41-80 (ch. 2 and 3)
Second reading response due second class meeting

Week 5
The Conquest Continues: Arizona and New Mexico
Readings: Acuña, pp. 81-131 (ch. 4 and 5)
Third reading response due second class meeting

Week 6
The Conquest Continues: Alta California
Readings: Acuña, pp. 132-155 (ch. 6)
Fourth reading response due second class meeting

Week 7
The Mexican Revolution and Mexican Migration
Readings: Acuña, pp. 156-186 (ch. 7); Ruiz, “Border Journeys,” pp. 3-32
Fifth reading response due second class meeting

Week 8
Midterm prep and midterm exam

Week 9
Becoming Mexican American
Readings: Acuña, pp. 187-215 (ch. 8); Ruiz, “Confronting America,” pp. 33-50 and “The Flapper and the Chaperone,” pp. 51-71
Sixth reading response due second class meeting

Week 10
The Great Depression
Readings: Acuña, pp. 216-262 (ch. 9); Ruiz, “With Pickets, Baskets, and Ballots,” pp. 72-98
Seventh reading response due second class meeting

Week 11
World War Two
Readings: Acuña, pp. 263-295 (ch. 10)
Eighth reading response due second class meeting

Week 12
Chicano Labor and Civil Rights in the Cold War
Readings: Acuña, pp. 296-327 (ch. 11)
Ninth reading response due second class meeting
Week 13
The Fight in the Fields
Readings: Acuña, pp. 328-385 (ch. 12)
**Tenth reading response due second class meeting**

Week 14
From Mexican American to Chicano: The 1960s

Week 15
The 1970s and Beyond
Readings: Acuña, pp. 386-464 (ch. 13 and 14); Ruiz, “Epilogue,” pp. 147-151
**Eleventh reading response due second class meeting**

Week 16
Final exam prep and final exam