INTA 3020: Contemporary Mexico
Summer 2007

Instructor: Dr. Michelle Dion, mdion@gatech.edu

Course description and objectives
This course will examine the socio-economic and political development of Mexico in the 20th Century. The course will also explore Mexican identity and culture. Students will combine class readings with site visits to museums, businesses, and social organizations around Monterrey, Mexico. At the end of this course, students will have a basic understanding of Mexico’s recent social, economic and political history and demonstrate an ability to accurately interpret the local and cultural meaning of social and political events.

Course readings
Readings will include the following two books and additional articles to be distributed in class as a coursepack to be photocopied by students.
• Mexican Politics by Roderic Camp
• No Happy Ending by Paco Ignacio Taibo II

Course requirements and evaluation
Student performance in the course will be evaluated on the basis of several written assignments, two exams, and active participation in class and in site visits outside of class.

Group weblog assignments (8% of final grade each, 32% of total): The class will produce a weblog about Mexico during the summer program. Students in the class will be divided into five groups. Groups will have the opportunity during class Friday to plan their article for the coming week. The articles should discuss a topic or issue of import to Mexico, and may reflect upon course material or site visits. The articles should fall under one of the following five categories and no category can be repeated by each group more than once: politics, economics, history, culture/sports, or local (Monterrey).

Each group will be required to post one article (500 words maximum, with at least two links to web-based articles or content) per week, for a total of four articles. Original photos may be posted with articles. All articles must be posted by 11:00 p.m. the due date indicated below. The entire group will receive the same grade for the article and late articles will be penalized 10%. Articles submitted more than 24 hours late will not receive credit.

Group 1 due dates: June 3, June 8, June 14, and June 22
Group 2 due dates: June 4, June 10, June 18, and June 24
Group 3 due dates: June 5, June 11, June 19, and June 25
Group 4 due dates: June 6, June 12, June 20, and June 26
Group 5 due dates: June 7, June 13, June 21, and June 27

Individual weblog assignments (5% of final grade each, 15% total): During the summer semester, students are expected to post three shorter articles or photo essays to the class weblog on a topic of their own choosing. These posts can either be in the form of a
short essay (150-200 words, with at least one web-based link) or a photo essay (three original photos with captions describing each photo and how they are related).

During the first class, students will sign up for the day of their posts. Posts will be due by 11:00 p.m. and late posts will be penalized 10%. No late posts will be accepted after 24 hours.

*In-class news or current event presentation (5% of final grade):*
Each week, one or two students from each group will give a short (5 minute) presentation to the class on a news item or topic that they would like to suggest for a group weblog article that week. The presentation can be informal but should include mention of why the news or article is of interest and how the group could approach writing a short article on the news or topic.

*Analytical essay on No Happy Ending by Paco Ignacio Taibo II (10% of final grade):*
Students will be expected to write a short analytical essay in response to *No Happy Ending*. The paper should identify one important theme or thread in the novel (e.g., crime, corruption, attitudes toward politicians, etc.) and discuss examples from the book of how the author develops or illustrates this theme. The paper should *not* be a simple summary of the plot.

*Attendance and participation (8% of final grade):*
This class is governed by the attendance rules of Tec de Monterrey. As such, students are expected attend class regularly and arrive on time. Students are also expected to show respect for one another during class discussions. These requirements also apply to required class activities scheduled outside of class time. Students are always expected to represent Georgia Tech and Tec de Monterrey in a professional manner.

*Mid-term in-class exam (15% of final grade) and final in-class exam (15% of final grade):*
Students will complete two in-class written exams over course material. Students who have not missed any classes and have completed all other assignments on time may be exempted from parts of the final exam.

**Topical Outline**

**The Mexican Political System**
- Origins of the Mexican political system
- Characteristics of the Mexican political system: presidentialism, state party, and corporativism.
- Political power and federalism.
- The political system and the Opposition.
- Crisis in the Mexican political system in 1988: Democratic transition.

**The Economy**
- General overview of Mexico’s economic development in the 20th century.
- Crisis and economic reform: the eighties
- Social and economic impact of adjustment and economic reform.
- Challenges for the Mexican economy

**Income and Population**
• Demographics and population development.
• Wealth, poverty and Income distribution
• Perspectives for social development in Mexico
• Emigration

Culture and Society
• Mexico at the movies and in music and art

Tuesday, 5/29/2007
Introduction to course and each other. Explanation of syllabus. Introduction to weblogs and course requirements. Sign up for groups, presentation dates, and individual post dates.

Wednesday, 5/30/2007
The conquest, colonialism, 19th century politics, and the Mexican Revolution

Thursday, 5/31/2007
Cárdenismo and the rise of the PRI

REQUIRED: EMAIL RYAN YOUR BIO (COMPLETE WITH HYPERTEXT LINKS) AND PHOTO FOR BLOG.

Friday, 6/1/2007
Student presentations. Working group meetings.

Corporatism and organized labor under the PRI

Tuesday, 6/5/2007
Corporatism and the peasantry under the PRI

Wednesday, 6/6/2007
ISI and “stabilizing development” of the 1950s-1960s
REQUIRED: Visit to MARCO

Thursday, 6/7/2007
The organization of business under the PRI
Friday, 6/8/2007
Student presentations. Working group meetings.

Monday, 6/11/2007
Views of Mexican ‘identity’ and ‘culture’

Tuesday, 6/12/2007
The student movement of 1968
- Octavio Paz. “Olymics and Tlatelolco.” In *The Labyrinth of Solitude and the Other Mexico*.
REQUIRED: Visit to Mexican History Museum

Wednesday, 6/13/2007
Mid-term exam

Thursday, 6/14/2007
Student presentations. Working group meetings.

Class in Guanajuato
- Movie on bus: *Ley de Herodes*

Monday, 6/18/2007
The 1970s: Deepening ISI and political liberalization

Tuesday, 6/19/2007
Cracks in the façade: The 1982 debt crisis and the 1985 earthquake

Wednesday, 6/20/2007
Political and economic liberalization in the 1980s and 1990s
Thursday, 6/21/2007
Consequences of liberalization: macroeconomic growth, crisis, informality, and poverty
REQUIRED: Visit to Multimedios Television y Radio

Friday, 6/22/2007
Student presentations. Working group meetings.

Monday, 6/25/2007
Insecurity, drugs, and crime

Tuesday, 6/26/2007
The 2000 elections and the administration of Vicente Fox

Wednesday, 6/27/2007
The 2006 elections and the administration of Felipe Calderon

Thursday, 6/28/2007
Review for final exam

Friday, 6/29/2007
Final exam