

COLONIAL MEXICO AND THE SPANISH SOUTHWEST HIST 4180

FALL 2025/ T, Th 3:30-4:50, CLASSROOM WH 115

Rex Galindo, David

Office hours: Tuesday 5 pm - 6 pm; Thursday 5 pm - 6 pm **WH 243** (HISTORY DEPT.)

Zoom Office Hours: By appointment.

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Please write to me if you have any questions or concerns. I will reply as soon as possible, typically within 48 hours. I will not respond to emails during weekends.

Description

In this course, we will examine the history of colonial Mexico, including what is now known as the Spanish U.S. Southwest. We will begin by exploring pre-Columbian indigenous groups and end with a study of the Mexican wars of independence in the early nineteenth century. Our focus will be on the Spanish conquest, early explorations and settlements, and the often-violent interactions between Indigenous peoples, Europeans, Africans, and their descendants. We will also pay special attention to gender and race relations, including exploitative labor practices.

Learning Outcomes

In this course, we will explore the arrival of Native Americans, Europeans, Africans, and Asians in North America and how their encounters, often violent, shaped new societies. Covering the period from the first settlements in North America about a thousand years ago to the era of national independence, the course examines how interactions among these groups created and evolved unique cultures and societies in what is known as New Spain (colonial Mexico and the Spanish US Southwest). Topics such as immigration, exploration, conquest, colonization, daily life, adaptation, oppression, and resistance will be discussed.

We will explore the shared experiences of dispossession, success, violence, slavery, colonialism, and oppression among Indigenous peoples, Afro-Mexicans, and mixed-race communities. Ultimately, we will examine the emancipation processes in Mexico.

The course heavily depends on how scholars have interpreted historical phenomena (secondary sources) and the accounts of the protagonists (primary sources).

Grading

1. In-class Reaction papers. (15%)

I'll ask you to write four responses to the two book reading assignments. I'll bring a few questions, and you'll have 20 minutes to answer them. I will ask for citations from the books, so please bring them to class. I'll collect your answers right after you've finished them.

12% (4 * 3.5%) of your final grade will depend on your in-class reaction papers to the readings.

2. In-class book analysis ON THE WHOLE BOOK (10%)

I will ask you to write a book analysis at the end of the semester. Please check the schedule. You will have 30 minutes to complete the analysis. Please include citations from the book; bring it to class. I will collect your answers immediately after you finish.

3. Final Essay. (30%)

An essay will account for an additional 30% of your final grade. You will submit both an early draft and a final version. For these, see **Writing Requirements** below—research proposal 5% and Final essay 25%.

4. Exams. (30%)

Mid-term: Week 10 (30% of the final grade)

5. Class participation. (15%)

First, I do not plan to speak for more than half of any session. Learning is a two-way process focused on sharing information. Therefore, discussion will be the core of the learning experience. That means you should read and come prepared before class. We will all engage in learning by reading and discussing the material. Not doing the reading is like cheating yourself and your classmates. Likewise, you are expected to attend class. Missing classes will disrupt the flow of the session and hinder the learning process. It will also impact your participation grade.

Writing requirements

Please choose a topic that relates to a specific subject of personal interest within the course framework. My only requirement is that you discuss the topic with me beforehand. The subject can be a person's life, a community, a particular issue, a social group, an event, or anything else, as long as you can find reputable sources to support it.

The **research proposal** should include a bibliography, a hypothesis, objectives, and key questions. The proposal is due by **WEEK 6**.

In your final version, I will ask you to submit a **1,500 to 2,000-word discussion** (excluding bibliography and notes) of the topic you select. **This essay will be due in WEEK 16.**

Aim to make each essay a small piece of perfection. Please don't wait until the night before it's due to write it. Give yourself time to set it aside for a day after writing, then review it. Doing so will help you notice problems and mistakes clearly, and you'll likely see obvious ways to improve.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) refers to software systems and platforms that produce new content, such as text, images, audio, or video, using generative models. These models

recognize patterns from large datasets, allowing them to generate data in response to specific prompts, which can often resemble content created by humans.

Under the UNT Honor Code, using GenAI content without proper credit or replacing your own work with GenAI undermines the learning process and violates UNT's academic integrity policy. Therefore, submitting class work created with GenAI tools without attribution or relying on them to complete assignments breaches academic integrity and will be handled according to university policy.

Grading balance (%)

In-class responses on readings	25
Final Essay	30
Mid-term Exam	30
Class participation	15

Each assignment is worth up to 100 points. The final course grade will also be based on a maximum of 100 points according to the percentage list.

Grading Scale (90+ = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C, 60-69 = D, Under 60 = F)

Accessibility

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website (<http://www.unt.edu/oda>). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences

According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

Other basic norms

Office hours offer you an opportunity to ask for clarification or find support with understanding class material. So, visit me! I encourage you to connect with me for support. Additional office hours, in person and virtually, may be offered as the semester concludes. You well know that we want you to be successful.

UNT strives to offer you a high-quality education and a supportive environment, so you learn and grow. As a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student. To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can be successful at UNT, go to unt.edu/success and explore unt.edu/wellness. To get all your enrollment and student financial-related questions answered, go to scrappysays.unt.edu.

Every student in this class should have the right to learn and engage in an environment of respect and courtesy from others. We will discuss our classroom's habits of engagement. I also encourage you to review UNT's student code of conduct so that we can all start with the same baseline civility understanding (Code of Student Conduct) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012>).

Attendance: You should attend every class as part of the learning process.

Dean of Students

If serious illness or injury, death or illness in the family, mental health matters, economic instability, pregnancy and/or parenting, legal matters, etc. are interfering in your academic success, you may want to speak with someone at the Dean of Students' office.

<http://deanofstudents.unt.edu>

Textbooks

They are available at the bookstore on campus and through various book websites. Please, purchase hard copies:

- Álvarez Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, *The Narrative of Cabeza de Vaca*, Rolena Adorno and Patrick Pautz (editors and translators), U of Nebraska P, 2003.
- Martin Nesvig, *Promiscuous Power: An Unorthodox History of New Spain*, U of Texas P, 2018.
- William B. Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide, and Rebellion in Colonial Mexican Villages*, Stanford UP, 1979.

Other Readings

I will upload the other readings to Canvas.

This is an upper-division course, so you should read all the materials assigned for each week, including books, book chapters, articles, and primary sources.

Class Schedule

WEEK 1

Aug. 19: INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE.

Aug. 21: SOME MEXICAN AND U.S. SOUTHWESTERN GEOGRAPHY

WEEK 2

Aug. 26: NAHUAS AND MAYAS

Read for discussion: *The Mexico Reader*, Part 2: Ancient Civilizations, pp. 61-68; 81-85.

Aug. 28: PRE-CONQUEST ATLANTIC

Read for discussion: THORNTON, John K. *A Cultural History of the Atlantic World*. Cambridge University Press, 2012. Ch. 1: "The Formation of the Atlantic World, 1250–1600."

WEEK 3

Sept. 2: CONQUEST AND SPANISH LAW

Read for discussion: Palacios Rubios' *Requerimiento*.

Sept. 4: THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO

Read for discussion: Townsend, Camilla. "Burying the White Gods: New Perspectives on the Conquest of Mexico." *The American Historical Review* 108, no. 3 (Jun. 2003): 659-87.

WEEK 4 THE REACHES OF THE EMPIRE

Sept. 9: PROMISCUOUS POWER 1

Discussion: Nesvig, *Promiscuous Power*, Introduction, Ch. 1, 2, & 3.

In-class reaction paper #1 (20 minutes)

Sept. 11: PROMISCUOUS POWER 2

Discussion: Nesvig, *Promiscuous Power*, Ch. 4, 5, & 6, Conclusions.

In-class reaction paper #2 (20 minutes)

WEEK 5

Sept. 16: COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION

Sept. 18: PRIMARY SOURCES ON THE SPANISH ADMINISTRATION. THE COUNCIL OF THE INDIES. THE ARCHIVES OF THE INDIES.

Read for discussion: <https://pares.culturaydeporte.gob.es/inicio.html>

WEEK 6

Sept. 23: PALEOGRAPHY: READING DOCUMENTS

Read for discussion: TBA.

Sept. 25: SIXTEENTH-CENTURY MEXICAN SOCIETY

Read for discussion: Robert C. Schwaller, "The Importance of Mestizos and Mulatos as Bilingual Intermediaries in Sixteenth-Century New Spain."

RESEARCH PROPOSALS DUE. UPLOAD THEM TO TURNITIN

WEEK 7 ENCOUNTERS ON THE FRONTIERS

Read the whole book, *The Narrative of Cabeza de Vaca*, Rolena Adorno and Patrick Pautz, by Sept 30.

Sept. 30: CABEZA DE VACA I

Read for discussion: *The Narrative of Cabeza de Vaca*, pp. 178, 44-110.

In-class book analysis ON THE WHOLE BOOK (30 minutes)

Oct. 2: CABEZA DE VACA II

Read for discussion: *The Narrative of Cabeza de Vaca*, pp. 110-176.

WEEK 8

Oct. 7: INDIGENOUS LABOR

Read for discussion: José Cuello, *The Persistence of Indian Slavery and Encomienda in the Northeast of Colonial Mexico, 1577-1723*

Oct. 9: AFRICAN SLAVERY

Read for discussion: Tatiana Seijas, Pablo Miguel Sierra Silva, “The Persistence of the slave market in seventeenth-century Central Mexico”

WEEK 9

Oct. 14: THE TRANSATLANTIC TRADE IN NUMBERS: NEW SPAIN

Read for discussion: www.slavevoyages.org.

Oct. 16: INDIGENOUS WOMEN

Read for discussion: Dana Velasco Murillo, “Laboring Above Ground: Indigenous Women in New Spain’s Silver Mining District, Zacatecas, Mexico, 1620–1770.” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 2013, 93 (1): 3–32. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1215/00182168-1902778>.

WEEK 10

Oct. 21: AFRICAN WOMEN

Read for discussion: Pablo Miguel Sierra Silva, “María de Terranova: A West African Woman and the Quest for Freedom in Colonial Mexico”

Oct. 23: MID-TERM EXAM

WEEK 11

Oct. 28: SOCIETY IN THE 18TH CENTURY

Read for discussion: Ilona Katzew. “Casta Painting: Identity and Social Stratification in Colonial Mexico.” https://acmrs.asu.edu/sites/default/files/2020-01/v1_Laberinto_Casta.pdf.

Oct. 30: BOURBON REFORMS

Read for discussion: Pamela Voekel, “Peeing on the Palace: Bodily Resistance to Bourbon Reforms in Mexico City”

WEEK 12 DISPELLING MISCONCEPTIONS IN COMMUNITY LIFE

Nov. 4: DRINKING

Read for discussion: Taylor, Introduction, Chapters 1 & 2

In-class reaction paper #3 (20 minutes)

Nov. 6: HOMICIDE

Read for discussion: Taylor, Chapter 3
In-class reaction paper #4 (20 minutes)

WEEK 13

Nov. 11: REBELLION

Read for discussion: Taylor, Chapter 4 & Conclusions

Nov. 13: **Read for discussion:** Virginia Guedea, “The Process of Mexican Independence,” *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 105, No. 1 (Feb., 2000), pp. 116-130.

WEEK 14

Nov. 18:

Read for discussion: José María Morelos’ Constitution and Agustín de Iturbide’s Plan of Iguala.

Nov. 20: I will be at a conference.

Individual work on Final papers.

WEEK 15 THANKSGIVING: November 24-28, 2025.

WEEK 16

Dec. 2: Students work on their papers. Individual meetings via Zoom.

Dec. 4: Students work on their papers. Individual meetings via Zoom.

FINAL PAPER DUE

Getting Help

Technical Assistance

At UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UIT Help Desk: [UIT Student Help Desk site](http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm) (<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>)

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940-565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130

Walk-In Availability: 8 am-9 pm

Telephone Availability:

- Sunday: noon-midnight
- Monday-Thursday: 8 am-midnight
- Friday: 8 am-8 pm
- Saturday: 9 am-5 pm

Laptop Checkout: 8 am-7 pm

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328)
(<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328>)

Student Support Services

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- [Student Health and Wellness Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center>)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- [UNT Care Team](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care>)
- [UNT Psychiatric Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry>)
- [Individual Counseling](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling>)

Other student support services offered by UNT include

- [Registrar](https://registrar.unt.edu/registration) (<https://registrar.unt.edu/registration>)
- [Financial Aid](https://financialaid.unt.edu/) (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)
- [Student Legal Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>)
- [Career Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>)
- [Multicultural Center](https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center) (<https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center>)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- [Pride Alliance](https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance) (<https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance>)
- [UNT Food Pantry](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry>)

Academic Support Services

- [Academic Resource Center](https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources) (<https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources>)
- [Academic Success Center](https://success.unt.edu/asc) (<https://success.unt.edu/asc>)
- [UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu/) (<https://library.unt.edu/>)
- [Writing Lab](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/) (<http://writingcenter.unt.edu/>)
- [MathLab](https://math.unt.edu/mathlab) (<https://math.unt.edu/mathlab>)

Course Evaluation

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is the student evaluation system for UNT and allows students the ability to confidentially provide constructive feedback to their instructor and department to improve the quality of student experiences in the course.

UNT Policies

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for

student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Visit UNT's [Code of Student Conduct](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>) to learn more.

Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail [Eagle Connect](https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect) (<https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect>).

Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14, and 15 of the long semester to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the [SPOT website](http://spot.unt.edu/) (<http://spot.unt.edu/>) or email spot@unt.edu.

Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT's Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565- 2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at oeo@unt.edu or at (940) 565 2759.

Use of Student Work

A student owns the copyright for all work (e.g. software, photographs, reports, presentations, and email postings) he or she creates within a class and the University is not entitled to use any student work without the student's permission unless all of the following criteria are met:

- The work is used only once.
- The work is not used in its entirety.
- Use of the work does not affect any potential profits from the work.
- The student is not identified.
- The work is identified as student work.

If the use of the work does not meet all of the above criteria, then the University office or department using the work must obtain the student's written permission.

Download the UNT System Permission, Waiver and Release Form

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to the UNT Learning Management System (LMS) for contingency plans for covering course materials.