

The Politics of Mexico

Political Science (POLS) 4337 – 001

CRN: 18298

The University of Texas at El Paso

Fall 2018

MW: 1:30pm - 2:50pm

Liberal Arts Building 204

Instructor: Dr. Gregory S. Schober

Office: Benedict Hall 315

Phone: 915-747-7985

Email: gschober@utep.edu

Office Hours: Monday: 3-5pm

Tuesday: 3-5pm

Wednesday: 3-5pm

(and by appointment)

Class Website: Blackboard through your MY UTEP PORTAL

Course Description

This course examines the Politics of Mexico. We will study the political development of Mexico, with a focus on postrevolutionary and contemporary Mexican politics. We will consider political institutions, culture, and society in Mexico. In addition, we will analyze key domestic policy issues and Mexican foreign relations. We examine issues mostly at the national level, but we also will discuss applications for the state and local levels.

Throughout the course, we will focus on developing answers to the following four questions: (1) To what extent has Mexico experienced political development? (2) What is the state of the political institutions, political culture, and civil society in contemporary Mexico? (3) What are the key domestic policy issues in Mexico, and how has Mexican social policy changed in recent decades? (4) What role does the United States play in Mexican policy and foreign relations?

Learning Objectives

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Evaluate the political development of Mexico in recent decades.
- Identify key government structures and political processes in Mexico.
- Characterize the state of political culture and civil society in Mexico.
- Identify and compare key domestic policy issues in Mexico, including areas of progress and remaining challenges.
- Evaluate the role of the United States, including the civic engagement of its residents and community groups, in Mexican policy and foreign relations.

Also, by the end of the semester, students should make improvements in the following skill areas related to the UTEP Edge initiative:

- Social responsibility
- Leadership
- Communication
- Critical thinking

Required Book (available at the UTEP Bookstore or elsewhere):

- Contemporary Mexican Politics
 - Authors: Emily Edmonds-Poli and David A. Shirk
 - Publisher: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers
 - 3rd Edition
 - 2015
 - **ISBN-13:** 978-1442220263

Course Requirements

- **Midterm Exam:** The midterm exam likely will consist of multiple choice questions and short answer questions, and it will cover material from the course readings, class lectures, and/or class discussions up to the date of the midterm exam. Through this requirement (and in line with the UTEP Edge initiative), students will have opportunities to exercise the following skills: communication and critical thinking (25% of grade).
- **Final Exam:** The final exam likely will consist of multiple choice questions and short answer questions, and it will cover material from the course readings, class lectures, and/or class discussions after the midterm exam. Through this requirement (and in line with the UTEP Edge initiative), students will have opportunities to exercise the following skills: communication and critical thinking (25% of grade).
- **Progress Summary:** Students will be required to submit a short written summary of their progress on the civic engagement research project. Through this requirement (and in line with the UTEP Edge initiative), students will have opportunities to exercise the following skills: communication and critical thinking (10% of grade).
- **Civic Engagement Research Project:** Students will be required to write a research paper on local community organizations and Mexican politics. Through this requirement (and in line with the UTEP Edge initiative), students will have opportunities to exercise the following skills: social responsibility, leadership, communication, and critical thinking (25% of grade).
- **Class Attendance and Participation:** Students will be able to earn participation points each class session by attending and participating in class discussions. Points will be awarded based on the quantity and quality of participation. Through this requirement (and in line with the UTEP Edge initiative), students will have opportunities to exercise the following skills: leadership, communication, and critical thinking (15% of grade).

University Policies

This instructor abides by university policies, such as excused absences and attendance, as stated in the UTEP undergraduate catalog: <http://catalog.utep.edu/undergrad/academic-regulations/curriculum-and-classroom-policies/>. It is the student's responsibility to understand their rights and university policies. In addition to university policies, I add the following policies below.

Attendance Policy

UTEP expects that students will not miss classes without valid excuses. Students will be asked to sign an attendance sheet for each class meeting. It is expected that you do not miss classes, which will result in a penalty to your grade. More specifically, after two unexcused absences, I will begin to deduct points from your attendance and participation grade for each subsequent unexcused absence. Note that the class participation portion of each student's grade is left solely to the discretion of the instructor.

Here are specific situations of absence and whether or not excuses will be accepted as valid or not:

- Valid university excuses include religious holy days, officially recognized university activities (with Dean of Students letter), and military leave. Students must follow the required documentation procedure for each valid university excuse.
- The instructor reserves the right to accept, or not, excuses related to medical issues. Naturally, it is not usually feasible to document in advance any time lost due to illness. The exception is planned surgeries and appointments (not normal check-ups). Any class time missed will not be excused without medical or other valid documentation. Documentation from Mexico is permissible. Students with severe medical problems that result in missing a majority of the semester may want to consider a complete withdrawal from the university for medical purposes.
- Absences due to conflicts with work, child care, etc. that make it impossible for you to regularly attend this class are not permitted. If you know you will have scheduling conflicts with this class, then you should make other arrangements or postpone this class until a future semester.
- According to UTEP Curriculum and Classroom Policies, "When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor can drop the student from the class with a grade of W before the course drop deadline and with a grade of F after the course drop deadline."
- Missed exams due to family hardship or family medical problems may not be accepted by the instructor as valid excuses. For example, helping family members move, picking up at the airport, driving family members to medical appointments when you know they conflict with class, and other such activities, will not be permitted as valid excuses. Emergencies such as deaths in the family must be documented, unfortunately.
- Missing any course assessments and work due to vacations and pre-booked travel arrangements are not valid excuses.

Final Exam Policy

The date of the final exam is listed below in the Schedule of Classes. The final exam is considered over when the instructor is no longer in the room (all other students present have completed the exam), so do not be late. The exam must be taken on this day unless you have a valid university accepted excuse.

Midterm Exam Policy

The date of the midterm exam is listed below in the Schedule of Classes. No make-up midterm exam will occur without a student having provided to the instructor valid documentation explaining or excusing the absence. The instructor has the discretion to decide if a make-up is allowable outside the university excused absences. If you miss an exam due to an emergency or illness, you must notify me (and confirm with me that I have received your notification attempt) as soon as possible to arrange a make-up exam. A make-up exam may be of a different format than the original exam.

Progress Summary

In this short written summary, you will have the opportunity to answer questions regarding your progress on the civic engagement research project. Further details and instructions will be provided in class (about 500-750 words, worth 10% of overall grade). Late papers will be penalized one full letter grade for each class day they are late. **Printed copy of your paper is due at the start of class on the due date for the progress summary (listed below in the Schedule of Classes).**

Civic Engagement Research Project

Students are required to write a research paper (minimum 10 pages - maximum 15 pages) on current community organizations in El Paso and Mexican politics. Select three community organizations in El Paso: one organization that provides resources (e.g., food, housing, etc.) for impoverished families, one organization that provides health services, and one organization that provides immigration services. What are the names and goals of the three organizations that you selected, and what specific services does each organization offer? Of the three selected organizations, which organization do you think is most effective at reaching its goals, and why? Do you think that community organizations on the United States side of the U.S.-Mexico border region affect Mexican politics at any level (municipal, state, and/or national level)? Why or why not? For this last question, your explanation should consider each of the three types of organizations described above (assistance for impoverished families, health services, and immigration services). In your paper, you must refer to, and cite, the official websites of the three selected organizations and at least two scholarly sources (for a minimum total of five sources). Students will have an opportunity to share and discuss their project with other class members during a class session. To receive credit for completing the research paper, you must submit a printed copy of your research paper to the instructor by the start of class on the due date (the due date for the research paper is listed below in the Schedule of Classes). Further details and instructions will be provided in class.

Other Course Policies and Expectations

- Debate and discussion are important in the critical evaluation of politics. It is expected that students will treat the instructor and other students with respect, including refraining from disparaging remarks, personal insults, derogatory comments, and other unprofessional behavior, in person or electronically. Any problem related to disruptive or threatening behavior may result in immediate and follow-up responses by the instructor and/or relevant UTEP offices, including (but not limited to) the student being asked to leave the class and the student being dropped from the course.
- At the discretion of the instructor, a student can be dropped from a course because of excessive absences or lack of effort. A grade of “W” will be assigned before the course drop deadline and a grade of “F” after the course drop deadline. A grade of “F” received due to disciplinary action imposed by the University overrides a grade of “W” received through a student-initiated or faculty drop. Students will be notified of their drop through their UTEP e-mail account. Students may also be administratively withdrawn from a course during the semester for other reasons, with the concurrence of the instructor and department chair, or dean. Approved requests will be forwarded to the Registration and Records Office for processing. Students are responsible for checking their class schedules in Goldmine and for checking their official UTEP preferred e-mail accounts to determine if they have been dropped from a class.
- Outside work and other non-class related activities are not permitted in our classroom.
- Cell phone/smart phone/PDA usage is not permitted during exams or at other times when it might pose a class disruption. Laptops, tablets, or other electronic devices used for note-taking are permissible, but students using such must not engage in any activities that disrupt other students.

Email Protocol

When emailing me, please put the course and section number in the subject line. In the body of your email, clearly state your question. At the end of your email, be sure to put your first and last name. Please do not email me about information you can obtain from the syllabus. I generally do not answer substantive material from lectures or readings via email, as it is not an effective means of communicating. If there is class material you are confused about, please come see me during my office hours.

Academic Integrity and Dishonesty

As stated in the UTEP undergraduate catalog, “Any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Academic dishonesty includes, and is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the *Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP)*, and available in the Office of Student Life and on the homepage of the Office of Student Life at www.utep.edu/dos, can result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation, to a

failing grade on the work in question, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or dismissal, among others.”

Students with Different Abilities

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, 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. CASS’ staff are the only individuals who can validate, and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities. The student is responsible for presenting to the instructor any CASS accommodation letters and instructions before arrangements need to be made for exams or other needs.

Other Resources for Students

- UTEP Writing Center
 - Library Building, Room 227
 - (915) 747-5112
 - <http://uwc.utep.edu/>
- UTEP Career Center
 - 103 W Union Building
 - 915-747-5640
 - <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/careers/>
- UTEP Counseling and Psychological Services
 - Union West, Room 202
 - 915-747-5302
 - After Hours Crisis Line: 915-747-5302
 - <http://sa.utep.edu/counsel/>
- University Police Department
 - 915-747-5611
 - <https://www.utep.edu/police/>
- UTEP Student Health Center
 - 915-747-5624
 - <https://www.utep.edu/chs/shc/>
- Center Against Sexual and Family Violence
 - 580 Giles Road
 - 915-593-7300
 - 24/7 Crisis Hope Line: 1-800-727-0511
- UTEP Student Food Bank (Student Engagement and Leadership Center)
 - Union West, Room 106
 - 915-747-5670
- UTEP Student Support Services for Challenges with Finances (FHAR)

- Academic Advising Center
- 915-747-5290
- If you would like to access other resources, please contact me and I will do my best to help you search for additional resources.

Schedule of Classes

Mon	8/27	Introduction to the Course
Wed	8/29	No Class
Mon	9/3	No Class (Labor Day)
Wed	9/5	History of Mexico and Postrevolutionary Mexican Politics, 1940-1968 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 3 (all)
Mon	9/10	Mexican Democratization, 1968-2000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 4 (first half)
Wed	9/12	Mexican Democratization (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 4 (second half)
Mon	9/17	Civic Engagement Research Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Description and Discussion of the Research Paper and the Progress Summary ● No assigned reading
Wed	9/19	Contemporary Mexican Politics, 2000-present <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 5 (all)
Mon	9/24	Government Structure and Processes in Mexico <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 6 (first half)
Wed	9/26	Government Structure and Processes in Mexico (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 6 (second half)
Mon	10/1	Political Parties and Elections in Mexico <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 7 (first half) ● Review Session
Wed	10/3	Political Parties and Elections in Mexico (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 7 (second half)
Mon	10/8	Midterm Exam
Wed	10/10	The Study of Political Attitudes and Behavior in Mexico <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No assigned reading

Mon	10/15	Professional Development Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No assigned reading
Wed	10/17	Mexican Political Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 8 (first half)
Mon	10/22	Mexican Political Culture (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 8 (second half) Progress Summary Due (submit printed copy to the instructor at the start of class)
Wed	10/24	Mexican Civil Society <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 9 (all)
Mon	10/29	Mexico's Political Economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 10 (first half)
Wed	10/31	Mexico's Political Economy (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 10 (second half)
Mon	11/5	Poverty, Inequality, and Social Welfare Policy in Mexico <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 11 (all)
Wed	11/7	Poverty, Inequality, and Social Welfare Policy in Mexico (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "A Model from Mexico for the World" by The World Bank (available online at www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2014/11/19/un-modelo-de-mexico-para-el-mundo) "Mexico's Targeted and Conditional Transfers: Between Oportunidades and Rights" by Pablo Yanes (available online at http://environmentportal.in/files/Mexicos%20targeted.pdf)
Mon	11/12	Public and Private Access to Local Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Do Migrants Improve Their Hometowns? Remittances and Access to Public Services in Mexico, 1995-2000" by Claire L. Adida and Desha M. Girod (<i>Comparative Political Studies</i>, Volume 44, Number 3, available through UTEP Library website)
Wed	11/14	The Rule of Law in Mexico <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 12 (all)
Mon	11/19	Political Participation in Mexico <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journal Article: "Who Participates? Determinants of Political Action in Mexico" by Joseph L. Klesner (<i>Latin American</i>

		<i>Politics and Society</i> , 2009, Volume 51, Number 2, available through UTEP Library website)
Wed	11/21	U.S.-Mexico Relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 14 (first half)
Mon	11/26	U.S.-Mexico Relations (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edmonds-Poli and Shirk, Ch. 14 (second half)
Wed	11/28	Civic Engagement Research Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection Session • Civic Engagement Research Paper Due (submit printed copy to the instructor at the start of class)
Mon	12/3	Immigration and Mexican-American Perspectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journal Article: “Weighing the Costs and Benefits of Mexican Immigration: The Mexican-American Perspective” by Tomás R. Jiménez (<i>Social Science Quarterly</i>, 2007, Volume 88, Issue 3, available through the UTEP Library website)
Wed	12/5	Review Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Lecture
Wed	12/12	Final Exam: 4pm-6:45pm