

**San Jose State University • Fall 2014**  
**MAS 10A: Mexican Americans and the Development of US History**  
(Pre-Columbian Civilizations to the 1860s)

CL 226

**Professor Jesús Covarrubias**

Office: TBA

Phone: 408-924-5880

Email: [Jesus.Covarrubias@sjsu.edu](mailto:Jesus.Covarrubias@sjsu.edu)

Website: [www.sjsu.edu/people/jesus.covarrubias](http://www.sjsu.edu/people/jesus.covarrubias)

Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays, 8:00AM-9:00AM

**Professor Juan A. Gamboa Jr.**

Office: TBA

Phone: 408-924-5880

Email: [Juan.Gamboa@sjsu.edu](mailto:Juan.Gamboa@sjsu.edu)

Website: [www.sjsu.edu/people/juan.gamboa](http://www.sjsu.edu/people/juan.gamboa)

Office Hours: Mondays 8-9am, 1:30-2:30pm

**Graduate Mentor:**

TBA

**Course Overview**

In this course, we will be studying Mexican American history from pre-Columbian times to the aftermath of the US Civil War. With racial and geographical ties that long predate the nation's founding, Mexican Americans have had an important historical presence in the US and have played a dynamic role in shaping what it means to be "American." In fact, Mexican Americans currently constitute nearly 10% of the US population, and a full 35% of the state of California. Nevertheless, they are commonly perceived to be only recent arrivals to this country and their contributions often have been minimized, if acknowledged at all.

Rather than focus exclusively on the "who," "what" and "when" of history, together we will focus on the many "why"s and "how"s: Why did the past unfold as it did? Why does focusing on Mexican American culture challenge any assumptions we may have about early US history? How do the forces of race, class and gender shape this era of US history?

**GE/SJSU Studies Category**

This course satisfies lower division GE requirements in American Institutions (US1, US2, US3) and Social Science (D2 and D3).

- SLO 1: Students will be able describe the principal events, developments, ideas, politics, and international relations in all the territories now in the United States from the beginnings of this society until the present. While considering these topics, students should be asked to analyze certain subtopics
- SLO 2: Students will be able to explain how political decisions are made, their consequences for individuals and society, and how individuals and groups may affect the decision-making process. As students analyze the meaning and content of the democratic process as it has evolved in the United States and California, at a minimum, they should be able to describe: the foundations of the political system; the links between the people and government; and the operations of California government.

- SLO 3: Students should also be able to: identify the tools of political action and collective decision-making at the local, state, national, and global level; and articulate the values and assumptions that inform their civic engagement.
- SLO 1 (D2/D3): Students will be able to place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts.
- SLO 2 (D2/D3): Students will be able to identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, national, transnational, and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them.
- SLO 3 (D2/D3): Students will be able to evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues.
- SLO 4 (D2): Students will be able to compare and contrast two or more ethnic groups, cultures, regions, nations, or social systems.
- SLO5 (D3): Students will be able to apply multidisciplinary material to a topic relevant to policy and social action at the local, national, and/or international levels.

### Required Textbooks

The following three textbooks are available for purchase at the Spartan Bookstore and will be on reserve at the library:

1. David Carrasco, Religions of Mesoamerica (Waveland Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2013)
2. Martha Menchaca, Recovering History, Constructing Race (University of Texas Press, 2006)
3. Rodolfo Acuña, Occupied America: A History of Chicanos (Pearson, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2014)

### Course Promises

This course will enable you to:

- Develop an understanding of the diverse cultural experiences in US history.
- Explain how Mexican American culture influenced—and was influenced by—changing conceptions of race, gender, conquest and nation building.
- Expand your critical thinking skills through careful reading of scholarly texts.
- Sharpen your verbal and written communication skills through a variety of assignments.

### Course Expectations

**Attend class and be attentive.** Attendance is required. It is your responsibility to arrive on time; take notes during lecture; participate in our in-class activities; and stay until class has ended. Moreover, we ask that you respect the learning experience of others: Laptops, cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off and stowed away for the duration of our meeting. Do not study for another class, read the newspaper, take a nap, play games on your phone or laptop, or send text messages during class time. If any occur, we reserve the right to ask you to leave class.

Be respectful of all members of our classroom community. Be prepared to challenge and be challenged. Participation includes not only speaking, but also listening. Be open-minded, and mindful that your contributions are constructive and relevant to the discussion.

**Communicate with us.** If you have any questions or concerns about the readings and assignments, please let us know. This is particularly important if you experience a family or medical emergency that interferes with your performance in the course. On a more positive note, if you have

suggestions for historical events or figures you would like to hear more about, or want to express your enthusiasm for one of our topics, we would like to hear that, too!

**Complete the required assignments on time. Late Work Will Not Be Accepted.** All papers and assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. The assignments offer you both informal and formal opportunities to articulate your responses to our material and course themes and develop your writing skills. You will gain the most if you turn in your work on time. If you have an emergency or unforeseen circumstance, please see us or contact us as soon as possible. Any special arrangements that need to be made regarding the due date for class assignments must be made as soon as you become aware of the problem, preferably in advance of the deadline if possible. Late penalty may be incurred.

Your papers should be stapled. It is suggested that you invest in a stapler if you do not have one and make sure you have an extra ink cartridge and a working printer, or other options in case yours does not come through. Papers are formatted with 1" margins all around, Double-spaced, Printed in 12-point Times New Roman, Numbered on all pages, Spell-checked, Carefully edited and proof-read, Stapled before you get to class. **We do not accept assignments via email.**

**Read the assigned materials.** The assigned readings provide us with a common background so that we can proceed together to new understandings in lecture, discussions and other activities. If you do not keep up with and/or do not complete the readings, you will have little chance of doing well in this class.

### **Critical Thinking, Writing, Discussing:**

Reading critically is essential preparation for participating in an engaged class discussion. Below is a "critical reading framework." Please use it when preparing your reading notes and when writing discussion questions and when writing your own papers. Critical thinking is the careful, deliberate determination of whether we should accept, reject, or suspend judgment about a claim and the degree of confidence with which we accept or reject it.

- What is the author's thesis and central purpose?
- Why does s/he consider this important? What is the relevance, according to the author?
- How and where did the author achieve her/his goals (illustrate/explore/support the thesis)? Explain and demonstrate with specific references.
- What methods, voice [first or third person], examples, questions, illustrations does the author use? What impact or effect does this have on the author's claims or arguments? Be specific.
- Identify the author's strongest argument. Annotate and explain its strength/persuasiveness.
- Identify areas of weakness in the author's argument. Clearly explain how it is weak, where it needs further exploration/clarification and why.

The classroom is a safe space for discussion of political, social, and cultural differences. Please be respectful of all differences and come with an open mind. Please remember that you are now university scholars and you should practice ethical and considerate behavior toward your peers in terms of general behavior, gender/sexual, race/ethnic commentary. Be aware of potentially offensive, harassing, or otherwise uncritical common behaviors and practices.

## Assignments and Grades

You will be graded on the following components:

- **Portfolios**= 50 points total (2 at 25 points each)
- **Quizzes**= 30 points total (3 out of 4 best scores each worth 10points)
- **Class Participation**= 20 points total (includes 5points for grad mentor meeting)

**COURSE TOTAL POSSIBLE= 100 POINTS**

GRADE SCALE		
99-100= A+	77-79=C+	0-59=F
94-98=A	74-76=C	
90-93=A-	70-73=C-	
87-89=B+	67-69=D+	
84-86=B	64-66=D	
80-83=B-	60-63=D-	

### **Class Participation (15 + 5 (Grad mentor meeting) =20 points)**

If you make the wise choice to attend lecture every day, you will be in an excellent position to fully take advantage of our group activities and class discussions that will enhance your comprehension of key terms and ideas. Moreover, we may on occasion collect the in-class writing assignments you do, and so it follows that only those who are present can get credit for their work. **The lecture setting:** This is a class of 70+ students and it is based primarily on the professors' lectures. However, that does not mean that you come to class only to sit impassively in your seat. You will need to participate actively in lecture: Take detailed notes; ask a question if you need clarification about something; share your response to the questions we may ask of you; engage in small-group activities; and write in-depth, genuine responses during in-class writing assignments.

### **Office Hour Meeting with Graduate Mentor (5 participation points)**

*Due Date:* by **October 1<sup>st</sup>**

Graduate Mentor will hold regular office hours where he/she can provide you with feedback on your writing and clear up any questions you may have from lecture week to week. When you meet with him/her one-on-one, he/she can help you assess your reading, writing and study skills and point you to other campus resources, enabling you to do your very best in this course. For more information, please see the "Graduate Mentor Program" description below.

### **Quizzes (30 points)**

We will have 4 quizzes (10 points each) of which we will drop the lowest score. You will be asked to identify important terms, people, events and concepts that have emerged from lecture as well as relevant aspects of assigned readings. **You will need to have 4 scantron sheets available to take the quizzes (half sheet).**

- **Portfolio I, Due Date:** 10/15 (25 points)
- **Portfolio II, Due Date:** 12/10 (25 points)

Throughout the semester, you will be assembling 2 portfolios of two 3-4-page essays each. The portfolios will allow you to demonstrate what you have learned by engaging in critical thinking and putting the core concepts from our class into your own words. Detailed instructions and essay prompts will be issued in-class.

**The portfolios:** 50% of your grade depends on how well you do on these two assignments. Therefore, your ability to manage your time effectively and set your own mini-deadlines for the essays that comprise the portfolio will be of the utmost importance: You will have to motivate yourself to write drafts of the essays *well before* the night your work is due.

Overall, there are 100 points you can earn in this class. Therefore, missing just one assignment or not putting your best foot forward can mean the significant loss of points to your overall

grade/percentage. We only offer limited extra credit in the class. You are encouraged to keep track of your own grades.

### **Graduate Mentor Program**

We are very fortunate to participate in the Graduate Mentor Program in this course. Established in the fall of 2008, the program was designed to match a current graduate student (Master's Candidates from the Mexican American Studies Department) with each section of MAS 10A/B in order to help personalize your experience in this large lecture course. The Mentor's role is to enhance your learning experience by providing academic skills workshops, both in and out of class; review sessions for the major assignments; community-building activities such as movie nights; and regular office hours to supplement those of the faculty. You should view the Mentor as an experienced friend, one who understands the demands of juggling full-time coursework, extracurricular activities and working part-time. Please feel free to approach the Mentor with any questions or concerns about the class, just as you would a faculty member. If you have suggestions for activities you would like to see the Mentor provide, please let any one of us know.

### **Email Guidelines and Policy**

As you can imagine in a class of this size, we receive numerous emails from students. There are several things you can do to help your email stand out in a positive way:

1. Begin by using a professional-sounding email account that gives a good first impression.
  - *Bad*: "Drama4yomama@hotmail.com"
  - *Good*: "Firstname.Lastname@sjsu.edu."

Information on [how to get an SJSU email account](http://students.sjsu.edu/) can be found at <http://students.sjsu.edu/>.

2. In the subject, offer a specific topic: "Question about MAS10A assignment."
3. Open the body of your email with an actual, respectful salutation. Unless your instructor indicates otherwise, never call them by any sort of nickname!
  - *Bad*: "Hey Cova," or even having no salutation at all!
  - *Good*: "Hello Professor Gamboa"
4. State your request politely:
  - *Bad*: "I need the assignment."
  - *Good*: "Could you please send the assignment to me? Thanks!"
5. Proofread your email. Every time you communicate with your instructors, you are representing what kind of student you are. Proofreading your spelling and grammar goes a long way towards making a positive impact.
6. Close with your full name, course number and meeting time. Some faculty teach more than one section of the class and may not know which one you are in.
7. Once you get a reply, it is never a bad idea to say "thank you."

Please do not expect an immediate reply. Professors not only teach multiple classes, but also serve on multiple university committees and conduct their own research . . . not to mention have a personal life, families and hobbies! We will do our best to respond within 48 hours. Also note that in general, we do not check email before 9am or after 7pm.

### **Academic Integrity**

Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University, and the University's Integrity Policy require you to be honest in all your academic coursework. Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all

assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at [http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial\\_affairs/index.html](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html).

### **SJSU Writing Center**

The Writing Center in Clark Hall 126 offers tutoring services to San Jose State students in all courses. Writing Specialists assist in all areas of the writing process, including grammar, organization, paragraph development, coherence, syntax, and documentation styles. For more information, visit the [Writing Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>) or call 924-2308.

### **Campus Policy in Compliance with the Americans with Disability Act**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with either one of us as soon as possible, or see us during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

### **Student Technology Resources (Optional)**

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Clark Hall and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Laptops and iPads can be checked out, and are also available in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

### **Learning Assistance Resource Center**

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. [The LARC website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/.](http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/)

### **Library Liaison:**

Kathryn Blackmeyer Reyes, Director, Chicano Library Resource Center (CLRC) of the Multicultural Heritage Center of the MLK, Jr. Library, fifth floor.  
Phone: 808-2097 E-mail: [Kathryn.BlackmerReyes@sjsu.edu](mailto:Kathryn.BlackmerReyes@sjsu.edu)

## Schedule of Meetings and Assignments

(Subject to change per the needs of the class)

DATE	TOPICS, READINGS AND DUE DATES (READINGS TO BE READ BY THE DATE LISTED)
Week 1	8/25 <b><u>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE</u></b>
	8/27 <b><u>OVERVIEW OF MESOAMERICAN CIVILIZATIONS</u></b> <i>Reading:</i> Carrasco Ch. 1
	<b>9/1 NO CLASS-LABOR DAY</b>
Week 2	9/3 <i>Reading:</i> Carrasco Ch. 2, 4 <b>Essay Due: 9/3</b>
Week 3	9/8 <b><u>MEXICA/"AZTEC" CULTURE AND SOCIETY</u></b> <i>Reading:</i> Carrasco Ch. 3
	9/10 <b>Mexica cont.</b>
Week 4	9/15 <i>Reading:</i> Acuña Ch.1
	9/17 <b>Quiz #1 &amp; Portfolio I Handout</b>
Week 5	9/22 <b><u>THE CONQUISTA AND ITS AFTERMATH</u></b> <i>Reading:</i> Menchaca Ch. 1, Acuña Ch. 2 (p. 19-25), Carrasco Ch. 5
	9/24 <b><u>COLONIAL MEXICO</u></b> <i>Reading:</i> Menchaca Ch. 2,
Week 6	9/29 <i>Reading:</i> Menchaca Ch. 3
	10/1 <i>Reading:</i> Menchaca Ch. 4 <b>➤ Meeting with mentor must be done by this date</b>
Week 7	10/6 <b><u>COLONIAL MEXICO (CONCL.)</u></b> <i>Reading:</i> Menchaca Ch. 5,
	10/8 In-class Portfolio Workshop
Week 8	10/13 <b>Film: "Even the Rain" (in-class screening)</b>
	10/15 <b><u>PORTFOLIO #1 DUE/ FINISH FILM</u></b>
Week 9	10/20 <b><u>QUIZ #2</u></b>
	10/22 <b>Mexican Independence</b> , <i>Reading:</i> Menchaca Ch. 6

<i>Week 10</i>	10/27	<b><u>AFRICAN AMERICAN AND NATIVE AMERICAN EXPERIENCES IN THE US</u></b>
		<i>Film:</i> "Ethnic Notions" (in-class screening)
	10/29	Ethnic Notions cont./Discussion
<i>Week 11</i>	11/3	<b><u>Native Americans &amp; Racial Ideology</u></b>
	11/5	<b><u>NORTHERN MEXICAN BORDERLANDS</u></b>
		<i>Reading:</i> Acuña Ch. 2 (p.26-33)
<i>Week 12</i>	11/10	<b><u>US EXPANSION AND MANIFEST DESTINY</u></b>
		<i>Reading:</i> Acuña Ch. 3
		<b>Quiz #3: 11/10</b>
	11/12	<b><u>MEXICAN AMERICAN WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH</u></b>
		<i>Reading:</i> Menchaca Ch. 7, Acuña pg. 59-61
<i>Week 13</i>	11/17	<b><u>TREATY OF GUADALUPE HIDALGO</u></b>
		<i>Reading:</i> Menchaca Ch. 8
	11/19	<i>Reading:</i> Menchaca Ch. 9, Epilogue
<i>Week 14</i>	11/24	<b><u>MEXICAN AMERICAN REPRESSION-RESISTANCE</u></b>
	11/26	No class
<i>Week 15</i>	12/1	In-class Portfolio Workshop
	12/3	<b><u>CIVIL WAR /RETURNING TO THE BEGINNING</u></b>
<i>Week 16</i>	12/8	Final Quiz 12/8
		<b>(Portfolio 2 Due 12/10)</b>