

## HTST 410.2 Great Cities of the World: Mexico City

University of Calgary  
Department of History  
2025

Professor A. Kiddle

E-mail: akiddle@ucalgary.ca

Office Phone: (403) 220-7710

Office: SS644

\*\*\*Course delivery is in person on campus and in Mexico City\*\*\*

### Course Description and Objectives:

This course is an intensive examination of the past and present of one of the most fascinating cities in the world, Mexico City. Paying particular attention to space and place, we will examine the historical processes (political, intellectual, ecological, social, and cultural) that are manifest in the urban development of the megacity. By focusing primarily on three parts of the city – Xochimilco, Chapultepec, and Tlatelolco – we will examine through the lens of each location environmental, cultural, political history in the pre-Hispanic, colonial, and modern periods. By taking this class in Mexico City, students will be able to visit each of these locations, as well as several other significant museums and archaeological sites. Successful students will develop critical analysis, writing, research, and oral presentation skills, and will engage in experiential learning.

### Required Reading:

Conway, Richard M. *Islands in the Lake: Environment and Ethnohistory in Xochimilco, New Spain*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2021.

Vitz, Matthew. *A City on a Lake: Urban Political Ecology and the Growth of Mexico City*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2018.

Carey, Elaine. *Plaza of Sacrifices: Gender, Power, and Terror in 1968 Mexico* 1991. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005.

Required texts are available for purchase at the bookstore and have been placed on reserve at the library. Additional readings will be posted on d2l. **Students are strongly encouraged (but not required) to do the readings in advance of our departure so that they can immerse themselves fully in the culture of Mexico City during the week of travel.**

### Suggested Reading:

Students who do not have a background in Mexican or Latin American history are encouraged to review this short accessible textbook before doing the other readings.

Buchenau, Jürgen. *Mexican Mosaic*. Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, 2008.

“The History Student’s Handbook: A Short Guide to Writing History Essays” (available at <http://hist.ucalgary.ca/sites/hist.ucalgary.ca/files/EssayHandbook1.pdf>).

### **Course Outline**

TBD, SS 623

Pre-Departure Meeting, led by GSP Staff, Introduction to LAST 301 and HTST 410.02

Friday, May 2, 2025, 1-4 pm, SS 623

Introduction to Mexican History, led by Prof. Kiddle

Monday, May 5, 2025, 1-4 pm, SS 623

Tuesday, May 6, 2025, 1-4 pm, SS 623, Showing of *Roma* , followed by group discussion

\*\*\*Academic meeting following return to Calgary, date TBD (3 hours)\*\*\*

### **Inclusiveness, Accommodation, Privacy, and Conduct**

I am committed to creating an inclusive learning environment for all registered students. If you have conditions or circumstances that require a formal accommodation, be sure to register with Student Accessibility Services, or if you face circumstances that require an informal accommodation or adjustment, please let me know as soon as possible.

### **Course Policies:**

Grades will be recorded as percentages and will conform to the History Department Grading Scale posted on d2l. Although AI tools can be used for brainstorming purposes, writing essays using AI will be considered academic misconduct. Students requesting extensions must do so at least 48 hours before an assignment’s due date. Although I do not require doctor’s notes, the UCalgary supporting documentation policy is explained in the Calendar . Unexcused late work will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade per day. Students must wait at least 48 hours before asking to discuss an assignment’s grade with the instructor.

### **Chapultepec**

Vitz, Matthew. *A City on a Lake: Urban Political Ecology and the Growth of Mexico City*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2018.

Wakild, Emily. “Naturalizing Modernity: Urban Parks, Public Gardens, and Drainage Projects in Porfirian Mexico City.” *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 23:1 (Winter 2007): 101-123.

Del Valle, Ivonne. "On Shaky Ground: Hydraulics, State Formation, and Colonialism in Sixteenth-Century Mexico." *Hispanic Review* 77: 2 (Spring 2009): 197-220.

### **Xochimilco**

Conway, Richard M. *Islands in the Lake: Environment and Ethnohistory in Xochimilco, New Spain*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2021.

Banister, Jeffrey M. and Stacie G. Widdifield. "This History and Visual Culture of Mexico City's Xochimilco Potable Water System during the Porfiriato." *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Latin American History*.

Aguilar, Adrian Guillermo and Flor M. López. "Water Insecurity among the Urban Poor in the Peri-urban Zone of Xochimilco, Mexico City." *Journal of Latin American Geography* 8: 2 (2009): 97-123.

### **Tlatelolco**

Carey, Elaine. *Plaza of Sacrifices: Gender, Power, and Terror in 1968 Mexico* 1991. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005.

Estarellas, Juan. "The College of Tlatelolco and the Problem of Higher Education for Indians in 16<sup>th</sup> Century Mexico." *History of Education Quarterly* 2: 4 (Dec., 1962): 234-243.

Walker, Louise E. Chapter 6: "Earthquake: Civil Society in the Rubble of Tlatelolco, 1985-1988." *Waking from the Dream: Mexico's Middle Classes after 1968*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013.

### **Assignments:**

#### I. Streetwise History

Tannenbaum, Barbara. "Streetwise History: The Paseo de la Reforma" In *Rituals of Rule*, edited by William H. Beezley, William E. French and Cheryl E. Martin. Wilmington, DE: SR Books, 1994.

Students will complete a short (5 page) written assignment on a Mexico City monument of their choosing (e.g. Monument to the Revolution, Independence Monument, among others). In this reflective assignment, students will be encouraged to include personal photographs and ephemera from their time in Mexico City. Due May 23, 2025, students will present their assignments in the class meeting following our return to Calgary.

#### II. Document Analysis

Students will choose and analyse a document from among those provided by the instructor, with reference to the assigned readings and additional scholarly sources identified by the student. Essays should be approximately 10 pages (2500 words) in length. Be sure to consult *The History Student's Handbook* for help with footnotes. The essay will be assessed on the basis of both the clarity of argument and writing effectiveness (grammar, style, etc.). Bibliographies must include at least 10 scholarly sources. Due June 6, 2025

### III. Participation

Students will participate actively in the discussion of the readings in three seminars in held in Mexico City. Students will be evaluated on the discussion questions they prepare and share (electronically with the whole group) on each of the three sets of readings, as well as the familiarity they demonstrate with the readings during the discussion, and the depth of analysis they demonstrate both in the questions and their engagement in the discussion. Active participation in the day-to-day academic content (walking tours, museum visits) will also be considered. The instructor will provide sample discussion questions on d21 pre-departure to help students understand the expectations regarding participation.

#### **Course Grading:**

Participation	30%
Streetwise History Paper (due May 23, 2025)	20%
Streetwise History Presentation (upon return)	10%
Research Essay (due June 6, 2025)	40%

*There is no registrar-scheduled exam for this course.*