

PHIL 155: Mexican Philosophy

M/W 5-6:20pm, WLH 2205

Prof. Manuel Vargas

Winter 2019

Overview

Welcome! This is a course on Mexican philosophy, largely focused on some notable figures, movements, and debates within the history of Mexican philosophy. Topics include the nature of atrocities and war; the ethics of bringing about moral revolutions; the social construction of agency; the relationship of race and culture; problems for the very idea of something being Mexican; and whatever else we can fit into the course.

This course receives DEI credit.

Contact info

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Office: HSS 8089

Office hours: T 4-4:50; W 11:40-12:30pm

Teaching Assistant

Emma Duncan

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M 1-3, in HSS 7013

Evaluation

Paper 1: 1750 words (20%)

Paper 2: 1750 words (30%)

Paper 3: 2000 words (40%)

Discussion section grade (5% attendance* + 5% participation = 10%)

*More than two unexcused absences in section will result in an attendance grade of zero.

If the course doesn't run discussion sections, then 10% for participation.

Readings

Required texts:

Sánchez and Sanchez (2017) *Mexican Philosophy in the 20th Century*

All other readings are available via pdf at <TritonEd.ucsd.edu> or via links from this syllabus.

Note: Because electronics are not permitted in this class, you may find it best serves your purposes to print out the readings in advance.

Provisional Schedule

Subject to change, but if so, there will be advance warning.

Read the articles *prior* to the date of the class meeting.

Readings noted as (S&S) are from the textbook. All other readings are on TritonEd.

- Week 1**
1/7 **Orienting:** What is philosophy? What is Mexican philosophy? Pre-Conquest thought?
Optional background reading:
Hurtado, G (2016) "[Philosophy in Mexico](#)" *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
Sánchez and Sanchez (2017) "Introduction" pp. xxi-xxvii (S&S)
- 1/9 León Portilla, M (1966) "Pre-Hispanic Thought"
- Week 2**
1/14-16 **The Las Casas/Sepúlveda Debate**
Sepúlveda, J (1550) *Democrates Alter* (selections)
Las Casas, B (1550) *In Defense of the Indians* (selections)
- 1/18 *Paper topics posted on TritonEd.*
- Week 3**
1/21 **Further reflections on the Conquest**
NO CLASS MEETING: MLK HOLIDAY
- 1/23 Villoro, L (1950) "The Major Moments of Indigenism in Mexico" (S&S)
- 1/25 *PAPER 1 DUE @ 10PM [FRI]; if you don't have a submission receipt, it isn't submitted*
- Week 4**
1/28 **Social epistemology, culturally-structured agency** [heads up: lots of reading this week]
Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1690) (Selections)
- 1/30 Femenías, M. (2005) "Philosophical Genealogies and Feminism in Sor Juana"
- Week 5**
2/4 **Mestizaje as solution and problem**
Vasconcelos, J (1926) "The Race Problem" from *Aspects of Mexican Civilization*
- 2/6 Forbes, J (1973) "The Mestizo Concept as a Product of European Imperialism"
- Week 6**
2/11 **Particularity**
Ramos, S (orig. 1934; 3rd ed. in 1951) *Profile of Man and Culture in Mexico* (selections)
- 2/13 Castellanos, R (1970ish) Essays (selections)
EMMA DUNCAN GUEST LECTURE
- 2/15 *Paper 2 topics are posted on TritonEd*
- Week 7**
2/18 **Filosofía de lo mexicano**
PRESIDENT'S DAY – NO CLASS MEETING

- 2/20 Uranga, E (1951) Essay on the Ontology of Mexicanness (S&S)
- 2/22 **PAPER 2 DUE @ 10PM [FRI]**; if you don't have a submission receipt, it isn't submitted

Week 8

- 2/25 Portilla, J (1949) "Community, Greatness, and Misery in Mexican Life" (S&S)
- 2/27 Revueltas, J (1958) "Possibilities and Limitations of the Mexican" (S&S)

Week 9 Contemporary Topics"

- 3/4 Hierro, G (1994) "Gender and Power"
- 3/6 Sánchez, C (forth) "On Narcoculture"

Week 10

- 3/11 Pereda, C (2019) "On Mexican Philosophy, for Example"
- 3/13 Outro
Paper topics post 6pm
- 3/18 **PAPER 3 DUE [MON, 10pm]**; if you don't have a submission receipt, it isn't submitted

General Information

Office Hours

I keep office hours. Sometimes, I am available immediately after class or by appointment.

Email Policy

I am happy to reply to emails sent from UCSD email addresses. I do not reply to emails from non-UCSD addresses. Please note that there are two subjects I do not discuss by email, even if they are sent from a UCSD account. These are:

- a) Requests for information about the exam or final assignment that arrive in the 24-hour period immediately preceding the exam.
- b) Requests to adjust your final class grade. If you have an issue with your grade please make an appointment to discuss it during my office hour next quarter.

Paper submissions

Essays will be submitted electronically. Hard copies are not required. Any and all submitted work may be run through turnitin.com. You are required to retain a receipt from your turnitin.com submission, and your assignment is not turned in if you have not received one. Without a receipt showing a successful submission, you cannot appeal a missing submission.

One-time Discretionary TA Extensions

Teaching assistants can grant each student one extension of up to 48 hours without requiring a medical certificate or other documentation. In order to grant such an extension your TA needs to receive your request before noon on the day the assessment in question is due. Email is fine, but please note that UCSD's email servers sometimes go down, and students are advised not to leave their requests to the last minute. Requests received after noon on the due date will require documentation, as will requests

for extensions longer than 48 hours. Please note that if you receive an extension your paper may be returned a few days after those that were completed on time.

Note that each student is entitled to only one discretionary TA extension. So, if you receive one for your first essay, any extension for the second essay will require documentation.

Late Work

Late work without an extension is automatically subject to a grade penalty of a third of a grade for every 24 hours period after the due date (that is, approximately, 3.3% of the value of the assignment per 24-hour period after the assignment was due). After a week, the assignment becomes an automatic 'F', but it must be submitted because (a) all assignments must be turned in to pass the class and (b) a 59% F is better than a 0% F. Note also that assignments that are handed in late without an extension will be graded and returned after those that were completed on time and will not receive comments.

Re-grading

Students unhappy with their grade for a class essay can apply to have it re-graded. Students first need to arrange a face-to-face meeting with their grader to discuss the basis for the original grade. Please note that email or other electronic forms of communication are not an acceptable substitute and no regrading will occur without an initial face-to-face meeting. If the student and grader come to an agreement on the merit of the initial grade, or on an adjusted grade resulting from their meeting, no further student action is required. If the student still prefers a re-grade he or she should email me a clean copy of the original essay, without the original grader's grade or comments. The essay will then go to a second grader unfamiliar with the original grade for re-grading.

In order for a re-grade to occur I need to receive the clean copy within two weeks of the original essay grade being released, or before the exam, whichever is sooner. Whatever grade the second grader gives the essay will be the final grade, even if it is lower than the original grader's grade. The professor reserves the right to review and decide any re-grade cases.

Note that there is no option to regrade exams or complete assignments for bonus points..

Disabilities

Students requesting accommodations for this course due to a disability must provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) which is located in University Center 202 behind Center Hall. Students are required to present their AFA letters to Faculty (please contact me privately) and to the OSD Liaison in the department in advance so that accommodations may be arranged. Contact the OSD for further information: 858.534.4382 (phone), osd@ucsd.edu (email), disabilities.ucsd.edu (web)

Academic Integrity

Integrity of scholarship is essential for an academic community. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor this principle and in so doing protect the validity of University intellectual work. For students, this means that all academic work will be done by the individual to whom it is assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind. Plagiarism in this course is ordinarily grounds for failing this course. For more information about UCSD's policy on academic integrity go to: <http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/appendices/2>

Slides, handouts, etc.

Any handouts, slides, or the like that are used in class and that have substantive content will be made available online.

Technology in da classroom

Electronics (including but not limited to cell phones, laptops, and tablets) are not ordinarily permitted in lecture or during exams. If you believe you have compelling grounds for an exception, talk to the professor in advance.

The second violation of this policy will trigger a 0% for the participation grade.

Your TA will let you know what the policy is in discussion group.

Waitlist

Students will be admitted to this class according to their place on the waitlist.

Exams

By enrolling in this class, you agree to take the final at its scheduled day and time, unless registered with OSD. Failure to take the exam at that time constitutes failure to pass the course. Plan your end of term travel accordingly.

Where can I get help?

In addition to the readings, class, office hours, and maybe even sections, we've also got handouts.

[How to Survive Your First Philosophy Class](http://vargasphilosophy.com/Handouts/PhilClassGuide.pdf)

<http://vargasphilosophy.com/Handouts/PhilClassGuide.pdf>

[How to Write Philosophy Papers](http://vargasphilosophy.com/Handouts/How2writeHumPapers.pdf)

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If you have questions about any of this, please contact your TA or professor.