

Seminar: Engaging Cultures

IS 193M, Fall 2026

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Class: Tues & Thurs 11:00 a.m-1:00 pm, UAQ (room TBD)

Student Hours: Tues & Thurs 1-2 pm; & by appointment: at my house, the CIQ, a café, any time!

Every time you leave home,
Another road takes you
Into a world you were never in.

New strangers on other paths await.
New places that have never seen you
Will startle a little at your entry.

...

When you travel, you find yourself
Alone in a different way,
More attentive now
To the self you bring along,
Your more subtle eye watching
You abroad; and how what meets you
Touches that part of the heart
That lies low at home

...

A journey can become a sacred thing:
Make sure, before you go,
To take the time
To bless your going forth,
To free your heart of ballast
So that the compass of your soul
Might direct you toward
The territories of spirit
Where you will discover
More of your hidden life,
And the urgencies
That deserve to claim you.

May you travel in an awakened way,
Gathered wisely into your inner ground;
That you may not waste the invitations
Which wait along the way to transform you.

May you travel safely, arrive refreshed,
And live your time away to its fullest;
Return home more enriched, and free
To balance the gift of days which call you.

—John O’Donohue, “For the Traveler”

Sojourners know that new experience becomes new knowledge, and new knowledge demands disciplined thought and action.

—J. Daniel Hess, *Studying Abroad/Learning Abroad*

The intercultural person represents a type of person whose cognitive, affective, and behavioral characteristics are not limited but are open to growth beyond the psychological parameters of his or her own culture... With an openness toward change, a willingness to revise our own cultural premises, and the enthusiasm to work it through, we are on the way to cultivating our fullest human potentialities and to contributing our share in this enormous process of civilizational change.

—Young Yun Kim

In the end we will conserve only what we love. We love only what we understand, and we will understand only what we are taught.’ We must learn about other cultures in order to understand, in order to love, and in order to preserve our common world heritage.

—Yo Yo Ma, quoting a Senegalese poet

A Personal Note: Why I’m particularly excited to teach this course

For me, personally, my junior year abroad in Mexico literally changed my life. It opened doors, both professionally and personally; made me more confident, mature, and independent; taught me that I could overcome challenges when they arose; helped me see the world with new eyes and to know God in new ways; and enabled me to connect and develop deep friendships with so many people who are now *familia*. Still, when I look back on that time, sometimes I cringe at my behavior and the incorrect assumptions I made due to my cultural ignorance. I wish I had a course like this when I was abroad!

I am hoping that this class will be something you look forward to as you learn more about yourself, your culture, and Mexican culture. I hope you will feel engaged and challenged in this course, and comfortable to share with your peers what you are learning and the questions that arise. Some of the topics we will address will be challenging ones, but I am confident we can build a community of trust and openness to deal with these issues together—with humility, empathy and respect.

I also know that after reading the syllabus you may feel a bit overwhelmed and wondering if you’ll be able to keep up (trust me, you will!). Additionally, I’m aware that life is complex and unpredictable—especially when you are navigating a new city, family, university, and social group—and that each of us has different challenges.

With that in mind, I want to open with some ***overarching principles*** to guide us through this course. And yes, in my opinion, this is the most important stuff!

1. **The course may need to be adjusted, and perhaps more than once.** Therefore, we will remain flexible and open: We will be patient with the professor and each other as we navigate this situation. We will communicate with each other when we are confused. We will remember that we all need support and understanding.
2. I want you all to learn as much as possible this semester, but I also want you to leave as healthy individuals, so we'll **prioritize our humanity—supporting each other as humans—first and foremost.** While I hope that you will all receive A's, I also hope you realize that a letter grade does not define you, and that the most important thing is to leave having *learned something of value.*
3. **We will commit to building a community here in class and in Querétaro.** As we are able, we will listen well to our classmates and we will share of ourselves. We will be charitable and encouraging; sensitive and empathetic. When some aren't able to come to class or to engage fully, we will refrain from judging and remember that some among us may be carrying special burdens or sorrows, hidden from all.
4. Therefore, and most importantly, **we will prioritize kindness, patience, and grace—with each other, and with ourselves.** All of us will struggle and fall at times. But with the grace of God and the support of each other, we will get up again and push forward.

Course Description & Objectives:

Engaging Cultures (IS 193M) is a required integrative seminar for students participating in Westmont in Mexico. Like the spring orientation course, the overarching goal of the course is to help you get the most out of your study abroad experience by helping you *understand and process it* intellectually, culturally, emotionally, and spiritually. It builds on themes covered in the pre-seminar, allowing you to *deepen and apply* the knowledge, concepts, and skills of intercultural competency and greater knowledge of Mexico's varied cultures.

For example, by the end of this course you be able to articulate the profound role of culture in human experience and your own cultural identity. You will also refine skills and tools for living and learning effectively in another culture, such as perceptual acuity, flexibility and openness, emotional resilience, and personal autonomy; *disciplined* reflection and *active* participation; the ability to gather, evaluate and interpret data appropriately in context without reliance on stereotypes or your own cultural framework; and the ability to empathize with others without losing one's sense of self. This course will also give you tools to identify, manage and move through culture shock and other potentially unpleasant cultural incidents. Of course, as in the pre-seminar, all of the specific objectives listed above are designed to help us become more culturally sensitive individuals, more aware and observant of our surroundings, of others, and of ourselves.

This course also integrates material taken in other classes during the semester, particularly Mexican history, with issues of culture, politics, economics, religion, and other relevant topics to deepen your knowledge and understanding of the peoples and place of Mexico. It strives to equip you to see beyond yourself, understanding that the categories we use in Western culture do not necessarily transfer to the non-Western world. In the process, you will learn to "think globally" as you study cultural, religious, and economic traditions from a comparative global perspective and encounter "ways of thinking" or worldviews different from your own. As such, this course—in combination with the orientation seminar—satisfies the GE requirement for Thinking Globally (a Common Inquiry).

Additionally, this course will equip you with the tools to understand the concept of race in general and how this construct is applied in various contexts both in the US and in Latin America and specifically in Mexico; to analyze issues of justice and injustice involving race and racism in the US and in Mexico in biblically and

theologically grounded ways; and to identify our responsibilities as Christians to pursue justice and reconciliation in diverse relationships, practices, and structures according to God’s loving reign expressed in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. As such, this course satisfies the Justice, Reconciliation and Diversity on Biblical and Theological Grounds (JRD) GE requirement (Common Skills and Emphases).

Finally, this course strives to provide a safe space for you to share your questions, concerns, frustrations, and doubts as you attempt to make sense of the new material and this new situation. I hope this class will provide a supportive environment for all of us to risk and grow individually and as a group. Of course, all of the specific objectives listed above are in an effort to help us become more culturally sensitive individuals, more aware and observant of our surroundings, of others, and of ourselves. As such, this course helps accomplish many of the goals of Westmont’s college-wide Global Awareness and Diversity learning outcome (ILO) for all our graduates.

Student Learning Outcomes & Assessment:

Student Learning Outcome	Instructional Activity	Assessment
Demonstrate knowledge of different aspects of Mexico’s history and culture, including social relationships; Mexican identity; social class; gender dynamics; race and ethnicity; tourism (and its effects on culture); and views of death.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings • Discussions • Oral presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading logs • Oral presentation • Final essay
Describe and analyze the dynamics of a particular artistic, economic, political, scientific, or social connection across cultural or regional boundaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings & videos • Discussions & oral presentations • Guest speakers and site visits • Oral presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading logs • Final essay • Oral presentation
Refine skills for cross-cultural living, including perceptual acuity, personal autonomy, flexibility and openness, and emotional resilience; as well as develop tools for dealing with cultural shock, “cucarachas” and critical incidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings • Class discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection logs • Critical incident reflection
Analyze issues of justice and injustice involving race and racism in the US in biblically and theologically grounded ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings & videos • Discussions • Oral presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading logs • “Faithful Response to Race & Racism” essay • Oral presentation
Identify Christian responsibilities to pursue justice and reconciliation in diverse relationships, practices, and structures according to the character of God’s loving reign expressed in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings & videos • Discussions • Oral presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading logs • “Faithful Response to Race & Racism” essay • Oral presentation

Course Content

While we will have regular readings and assignments (which I expect you to complete diligently), I also anticipate that at times our syllabus may need to be adjusted. To maximize your experience, be prepared to be flexible and open, willing to share your stories, and to listen to and learn from others.

Topics we will address include the following:

- Cultural & personal observations: of the city, your family, critical incidents, etc.
- Social relationships: the Mexican family & *el compadrazco*; the diadic contract
- Gender: Machismo & marianismo / masculinity & femininity; changing gender roles in Mexico
- Social class and the economy; the Mexican middle class; social inequality and intersectionality (race, ethnicity, and gender); the impact of NAFTA, globalization, and American policies on Mexico
- Oaxaca: The cultural and economic importance of Oaxaca; crafts and tourism; cultural tourism & “Magic Villages”
- Race, ethnicity, and the complex nature of Mexican and Latino identity: the conquest, colonization, and mestizaje; *indigenismo* & Afro-Latinos; whiteness & colorism; race & racism in the US and Mexico; a Christian response to racism
- Religion: Mexican Catholicism, the Virgin of Guadalupe, and the rise of Protestantism in Mexico
- Death in Mexico: the Day of the Dead and the rise of Halloween; how tourism impacts culture
- “Leaving Well”: Going “home” and the complexity of reentry

The Basics:

Prerequisites: IS 192 (Orientation to Westmont in Mexico) or SP/FR 150 (Cross-Cultural Studies)

Required Texts: No texts are required. Instead, you will receive weekly or bi-weekly photocopy packets. Additionally, all readings will be available in pdf form on Canvas.

Evaluation: The final grade will be based upon the following:

E-portfolio (written work & projects)	80 %
Participation & oral presentations	20 %

94-100 = A	88-89.9 = B+	78-79.9 = C+	68-69.9 = D+
90-93.9 = A-	83-87.9 = B	73-77.9 = C	63-67.9 = D
	80-82.9 = B-	70-72.9 = C-	60-62.9 = D-

Student Responsibilities:

1. **Attendance & Participation:** Because this class is heavily based upon participation and interaction, attendance in class is mandatory. If you are absent, you will miss key activities, simulations, and discussions that cannot be duplicated outside of class. We will also miss the opportunity to learn from *you!* Therefore, more than *one* unexcused absence will lower your grade and *four* unexcused absences may result in a failing grade.

In order to receive full credit for participation you must:

- take responsibility for your own learning
- arrive/leave on time; in other words, attend the entire class period
- demonstrate your preparation of the day's material by coming prepared, with the homework completed and ready to discuss and engage
- participate actively, which includes active listening to classmates and guests
- contribute *positively* to the class environment, discussion, and group activities by fostering a hospitable environment that facilitates others' involvement
- behave with respect and with Christlike love in class: "... live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:1-2).
- NOTE: these principles also apply when we are on excursions and the professor, guest speaker, and/or guide is speaking. Always bring a notepad with you to jot down important information, questions that arise, and new vocabulary and/or grammar structures.

Active participation means being actively present. While **electronic devices** are helpful aids to learning, checking e-mail, text messages, or browsing the Internet for personal reasons through a wireless device during class or on excursions detracts from class discussions and presentations, and demonstrates disrespect for classmates and the instructor. If bringing your computer or phone will present a problem it is best left at home or in your backpack.

2. **Homework/Preparation:** Because most class time will be devoted to discussing readings and activities assigned the week prior, it is important that you arrive to class having completed all the homework and prepared to discuss, debate, ask questions, and share your observations. To check your understanding of the assignments, homework/written reflections about the readings or concepts studied in class will be assigned frequently. Additionally, during the semester, teams of students will choose and teach 1-2 articles on the major themes of race & ethnicity and social class. Your work on this project will count as part of your portfolio *and* your participation.

3. **Portfolio:** As in the Orientation course, you will keep all your work this semester in an e-portfolio (on Google), to be turned in at the end of the semester. Most of your work will be turned in weekly throughout the semester (electronically on Canvas), read by the professor, and returned to you for inclusion in the portfolio. At times I will ask you to reread something you wrote earlier and to reflect upon it, hopefully with new eyes. The portfolio, then, will serve as a record or log of your questions, observations, thoughts and reflections and will provide a tangible way of gauging your growth and improvement throughout the semester in Mexico. Your portfolio will contain several different types of writings, including:
 - Free-writes: quick, timed, in-class (or at home) reflections in writing (ungraded), used as a brainstorm device
 - Homework Assignments/Guides: Notes, observations, and more formal responses to the questions and assignments presented in the readings or experiential exercises.
 - Reading Logs/Essays: written reflections on the readings, concepts, discussions, assignments, etc. completed at home prior to class (similar to what we did in the orientation class). Your task here may

be to describe, analyze, and/or to reflect personally. Observations and interviews are frequently a part of these logs, e.g., “How do you see the themes discussed in the readings exemplified in your daily life in Mexico?” These writings will serve as a way to get the conversation going, and you will have an opportunity to share your observations in small groups with your peers. These journal entries will also serve as a springboard for more formal essays.

- Personal reflection and/or creative essays: 1-2 polished reflective pieces (an essay, poem, video, work of art, photography reflection, etc.) addressing a specific theme of your choice. Here the task is to get you thinking deeply and creatively about an experience you have had (e.g., something from one of the excursions), its impact on you, the questions that may still linger, and the insights you have gained. Through this essay you will communicate an aspect of your growth in Mexico (something you learned about yourself, Mexican culture, your neighbor, God, or your faith. All essays will be peer-reviewed and rewritten. The idea here is to submit something you are proud of and want to share with others. See Canvas for details on this assignment. All essays will be peer-reviewed and rewritten. The idea here is to submit something you are proud of and want to share with others. See Canvas for details on this assignment.
- “A faithful response to race and racism” essay: In this 4-5-page essay, you will articulate the following: (1) How have your views of race and racism (both in the US and in Mexico) been affected by what you have learned thus far? (2) Taking into account what you have learned about these topics from a *biblical perspective*, how will you utilize and incorporate the knowledge you have gained in your life of faith and Christian practice? (In other words, what present and future actions might this learning inspire?)
- Final essay or video reflection on your growth in Mexico. Essentially, you will reflect on your (1) personal growth (what have you learned about yourself?); (2) cultural growth (what have you learned about your neighbor?); and (3) spiritual growth (what have you learned about God, your faith, and/or the worldwide Christian church?). See Canvas for details.

Resources & Other Information:

Late Assignment Policy: Work must be turned in *on time*; this shows respect for the professor as well as your peers. I will accept late work, but with a penalty: for each late day 10% will be deducted, and after 5 days you will receive a 0. Exceptions will be made for cases of *documented* illness or a family emergency.

However, I understand that life in a new culture can be overwhelming at times. Given this, everyone will receive two “Flex Passes” which can be used at any time during the semester for an extension on an assignment (for up to 3 days) with no penalty. The most important thing to do is simply to communicate with me if you are having problems getting work in on time. I want to work *with you* to help you succeed!

Warning Regarding Computer Glitches: Computers are wonderful devices, but they often malfunction and/or their human operators make mistakes. Back up your work. Plan ahead. Computers cannot be counted on to work properly at the last minute. The late assignment policy applies to computer problems (with the one exception being a serious, verifiable problem with the entire college’s computer system).

Support for all students:

We all have different strengths and gifts; likewise, we all need different kinds of support. Please know that I want you to succeed and will work with you to help you do so! Please come to my **student hours** (listed at the top of page 1) or reach out to have a meal with me! There are also many other resources

available to help you, such as the student success coaches, free Spanish tutoring (most nights in the library), and the ARO Office staff.

Westmont is committed to ensuring equal access to academic courses and college programs. In keeping with this commitment under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008, individuals with diagnoses that impact major life activities are protected from discrimination and are entitled to reasonable accommodations. Students who choose to disclose a disability are encouraged to contact the Accessibility Resource Office (ARO) as early as possible in the semester to discuss potential accommodations for this course. Accommodations are designed to ensure equal access to programs for all students who have a disability that impacts their participation in college activities. Email aro@westmont.edu or see westmont.edu/accessibility-resources for more information.

Honor and Respect in the Classroom:

Westmont's Community Life Statement calls us to treat each other according to two commands from Jesus: "Love one another as I have loved you," and "Love your neighbor as yourself." Further, our Diversity Matters document indicates that as we abide by these commandments, we learn to honor and respect one another. In this class, we will embody these commitments as we interact with one another and with the class material. If you experience or witness something that does not honor these commitments, please talk with the instructor as soon as possible. Please review the following webpage <https://my.westmont.edu/s/classroom-honor-res> You may also find it helpful to access the College's policy on [Bias, Harassment, and Discrimination](#).

Academic Integrity, AI Tools & Translation Software:

Westmont's [academic integrity policy](#) prohibits us from "present[ing] another's work as our own." Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT attempt to do the work of writing, making, and other creative activities for their users. Therefore, **students should NOT substitute AI-generated content or ideas for original academic work**. Westmont faculty members design courses and assignments for students' incremental and active learning through methods such as reading, summarizing, discussion, and an authentic generative process in which a student does the work of critical thinking, making meaning, and constructing messages and other creative works. When in doubt, please seek permission from the instructor *prior* to an assignment submission if considering using an AI tool for editing or another assignment-related task.

"HOW did you do your work?" Students are advised to *document* their process of completing each assignment: e.g., their brainstorming and rough drafts, used to achieve this work. Since software capabilities and AI integrations are rapidly changing, using even such tools as Grammarly without an instructor's permission puts a student's academic integrity at risk. When this use has been permitted, the content generated or modified by AI must be properly attributed (e.g., sharing the [AI Archives](#) link to that chat). Upon instructor request, a student should be able to narrate the process of assignment completion from start to finish, which shows **how a student is learning** within and across assignments.

While some professors permit use of AI editing tools (e.g., spell and grammar check), you should talk to me first when in doubt. In cases of proven academic dishonesty—cheating on exams, plagiarism, falsifying written work (including using translation software or ChatGPT)—the student will receive a "0" on the assignment or exam and may be reported to the provost.

Tips on Written Work:

Writing assignments serve many purposes. Some are intended to help you clarify your thinking or to remind you of ideas presented in class. Both of these types of writing are usually writer-centered. In other words, they are intended for the writer's use alone. Thus, their style may be informal and the use of grammar, punctuation, and spelling may be imprecise as you are not really trying to communicate your ideas to others. In writer-centered work, your main concern is to get ideas down in a way that allows you to work through your thoughts in a manner that you can make sense of later.

Except for your personal class notes, the majority of writing that you will do in this class will be reader-oriented. That means that your writing will need to communicate clearly your ideas and knowledge to the professor and, in some cases, to other students. This type of writing requires you to ask, "Will my reader understand or correctly interpret what I am trying to say?" Reader-centered writing requires precision in spelling, grammar, and punctuation as these are some of the tools that aid clear communication. Good writing demonstrates to others not only what you know and think but also how well you do it. Here are some key points to keep in mind as you write (from Richard Paul and Linda Elder, *How to Improve Student Learning*):

1. When you write sentences that can be interpreted in many different ways (and you do not make clear which meaning you intend), you demonstrate that you are writing, and presumably, thinking in a vague way. You should therefore strive to write so that you make clear precisely what you mean.
2. When you do not give concrete examples and illustrations to make your point clear, you demonstrate that you do not know how to clarify your thought (or for some reason have chosen not to). You should therefore give examples and illustrations wherever clarification of your meaning is needed.
3. When you do not make clear—with appropriate transitional words and critical vocabulary—the logical relations between the sentences you write, you make evident that you are not thinking in terms of the logic of your thought and that you do not fully understand the structure of your own reasoning. You should therefore make clear the logical relations between the sentences and paragraphs you write.
4. When you do not analyze key concepts and demonstrate how to lay bare their logic, you make evident that you are weak at conceptual analysis. You should therefore analyze key concepts in your written work wherever it is needed.
5. When you do not make clear the question or issue you are dealing with or drift (for no apparent reason) from one issue to another, you reveal that you lack the intellectual discipline and focus to appreciate what each issue you raise requires of you. You demonstrate that you lack a sense of relevance. You should, therefore, clarify the question you are focused on and stick to that question throughout the written piece showing how each point is relevant to that question.
6. When you make sweeping judgments about positions you have not sufficiently analyzed empathetically, you demonstrate intellectual arrogance. You should therefore show in your writing that you have fully considered all reasonable ways of looking at the issue.

The Modern Language Association (MLA) Style Manual also provides examples of many of the stylistic conventions that characterize good writing. If you find writing difficult, I encourage you to make use of the professor, my assistant, or perhaps make a virtual appointment with the *Writer's Corner*.

Tentative Schedule*

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	DUE*
1	Aug 25 Sept 27	<p>Course introduction City Guide: discussion</p> <p>Culture Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of Hess reading • First impressions discussion • Learning Contract <p>“Búsqueda” group presentation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tarea: City Guide • Tarea: Búsqueda • Log 1: “First Impressions” • Hess (ch. 2-3)
2	Sept 1 Sept 3	<p>Social Relationships: La familia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family guides, observations, & interviews • Compadrazco & diadic contract <p>Social Relationships: Gender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Machismo & marianismo / Masculinity & femininity • Changing gender roles & sexuality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hess Guides (12, 15, 16) • Log 2: Family reflection • Foster (2 articles) • Stevens; Sanabria • Whiteford & Allen • Learning Contract
3	Sept 8,10 Sept 10	<p>Social class & gender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender & class in Oaxaca • Domestic service & women’s agency • Different kinds of capital • The Mexican middle class <p>“Lo mexicano” (to prepare for fiestas patrias)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mexican identity • Los concheros & la Fiesta de la Cruz 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Howell • Murphey & Stepick • Gilbert • González • Log 3: class • Poinsett, Vasconcelos, Paz • Conchero readings
4	Sept 15 Sept 17	<p>Debrief independencia & Fiesta de la Cruz</p> <p>Oaxaca & the impact of tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crafts & tourism (intro) • Cultural tourism, “Magical Villages,” & the indigenous response <p>TRIP: PUEBLA, OAXACA (Oct. 17-22)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral report on conchero observations & interviews • Goertzin, Gross • Log 4: Oaxaca

5	Sept 22 Sept 24	OAXACA Oaxaca debrief Social Class: Finish discussion Culture Learning: Cucarachas, culture shock & citas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hess: Guides 4,7 • Log 5: cucarachas
6	Sept 29 Oct. 1	Race: Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventing Race / Creating Race • Inventing whiteness Race & Latino identity (intro) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Inventing Latinos” • The quest for whiteness • Race and ethnicity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video: <i>Power of an Illusion</i> • Race: Unit 1 reading packet • Race: Unit 1 reading packet • Log 6: race (intro)
7	Oct 6 Oct 8	Race & Racism in the US <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparative data on discrimination • History of discrimination against Mexican-Americans • Race & social class Race & Racism in the US <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idealized mestizaje & Anti-Black & Anti-Indian racism • Oral presentations 1-3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race: Unit 2 reading packet • Race: Unit 2 reading packet • Oral presentations 1-3 Reflection Essay due (draft 1) Peer review
8	Oct 13, 15	TRIP: LA SIERRA GORDA	

9	Oct 20 Oct 22	Sierra Debrief & Goal evaluation Race & Racism in Mexico & Latin America <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conquest & mestizaje • The caste system in colonial Mexico • The doctrine of discovery • Hidden black history of Mexico Race & Racism in Mexico & Latin America <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural politics of race & ethnicity • The denial of racism • Whiteness & beauty; Colorism in Mexico; • Social Class & race (inequality & interconnectivity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Contract revision • Log 7: goal reevaluation • Race: Unit 3 reading packet • Race: Unit 3 reading packet • Oral presentations 4-5 • Log 8 (race & racism) Reflection essay (final draft)
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10	Oct 27-29 Oct 29	A Christian Response to Race & Racism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race & the Bible • Faithful antiracists Culture Learning: Death in Mexico <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Day of the Dead & the rise of Halloween 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edmonson: ch. 2, 3, 8,11 • Edmonson: ch. 11 • Soerens & Yang • Paz; Brandes
11	Nov 3, 5	Mexico City Prep La conquista militar & espiritual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different perspectives of the Mexican conquest • Racial & cultural relevations of God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Log 9: death in Mexico • Meyers; Townsend; Tamez Race Essay Due (draft 1) Race Essay: Peer editing
12	Nov 10, 12	TRIP: MEXICO CITY	
13	Nov 17,19	Mexico City debrief Religion in Mexico <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mexican Catholicism & The Virgen of Guadalupe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wolfe Race Essay: Final draft
14	Nov 24, 26	Immigration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • US Immigration policies (a brief history) • Immigration facts & myths • Thinking biblically about immigration • Poverty & immigration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soerens & Yang • Log 10: Immigration
15	Dec 1,3	Leaving Well & Reentry Revisiting important themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storti • Log 11: leaving well
16	Dec 8	Final debriefing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PORTFOLIO DUE • Final paper

- You will receive detailed assignment sheets for each class period, listing in detail the class objectives, readings, and what is due that day.
- *The dates above are tentative. The dates on the weekly assignment sheets (and posted on Canvas) supersede the dates given here.

List of readings

**all available on Canvas*

Culture Readings

- Hess, J. Daniel. *The Whole World Guide to Culture Learning*
- Hess, J. Daniel. *Studying Abroad, Learning Abroad*

Social Relations, Family, Gender

- Hess, J. Daniel. *The Whole World Guide to Culture Learning* (family guides/experiential activities)
- Foster, George. "Interpersonal Relations: Family and Compadrazgo"
- Foster, George. "The Diadic Contract" (optional; we will have a lecture on this)
- Stevens, Evelyn. "Machismo and marianismo" (background reading to skim)
- Sanabria, Harry. "Femininity and Masculinity: Rethinking Marianismo & Machismo"
- Institute for Latino Studies. "Women, Men, and the Changing role of Gender in Immigration"
- Whiteford, Michael. "Changing Gender Role Attitudes among Women in an Urban Mexican Neighborhood" (skim)

Social Class

- Murphy, Arthur D. & Alex Stepick. "Social inequality in Oaxaca"
- Howell, Jayne. "The Dirt Came Up": Domestic Service and Women's Agency in Oaxaca City, Mexico"
- Gilbert, Dennis. "Magicians: The Response of Middle-Class Mexican Households to Economic Crisis"
- Stringer, Thomas. "Understanding Social Class in Mexico: An Intersectional Framework"
- Nygren, Anja. "Inequality and interconnectivity: Urban spaces of justice in Mexico" (optional)

"Lo mexicano"

- "The Search for "lo mexicano." *The Mexico Reader*
- Poinsett, Joel. "The Mexican Character" (deals with American racist views of Mexico in 1800s)
- Vasconcelos, José. "The Cosmic Race"
- Paz, Octavio. "The Sons of Malinche"
- Rostas, Susanna. "The Concheros of Mexico: A Search for Ethnic Identity"
- Rostas, Susanna. "'Mexicanidad': The resurgence of the Indian in popular Mexican Nationalism" (optional)

Tourism

- Goertzen, Chris. "Crafts and Tourism in Oaxaca"
- Gross, Toomas. "Divided over Tourism: Zapotec Responses to Mexico's Magical Villages Program"

Race, ethnicity, and Racism

Introduction (Unit 1 Reading Packet)

- "The Difference Between Us," episode 1 in *Race: the Power of an Illusion* (video series) **OR** chapters 2 & 3 in Goodman, Moses & Jones, *Race: Are We So Different?*, 2nd ed. > "Inventing Race" (ch. 2) & "Creating Race" (ch. 3).
- Goodman, Moses & Jones, "Inventing Whiteness," chapter 5 in *Race: Are We So Different?*, 2nd ed.

- Núñez, Cecilia et al., “Latino is not a Race,” UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Institute
- “Are Mexicans White?” video clip, *American Experience* 21:4 (PBS)
- Gómez, Laura, “The Elusive Quest for Whiteness,” chapter 3 in *Inventing Latinos: A New Story of American Racism*
- Navarro, “For many Latinos, racial identity is more culture than color” (NY Times)

Race and Racism in the US (Unit 2 packet)

- Goodman, Moses & Jones, “Living with Race and Racism,” chapter 7 in *Race: Are We So Different?*, 2nd ed.
- “Views of how much discrimination racial and ethnic groups in the US face,” Pew Research Center, 2025 (comparative analysis)
- *Voces: American Historia, The Untold History of Latinos* (3-hour PBS video series) > selections
- “Understanding systemic racism and resulting inequity in Latino communities,” 2021 Executive Summary, UnidosUS.
- “The history of discrimination against Mexican Americans” (video clip, PBS)
- Blakemore, Erin, “The long history of anti-Latino discrimination in America,” History.com

The articles above are required; the articles below will be divided into several teams, depending upon your interest (e.g., history, sociology, medicine, immigration, politics, etc.). Each team will prepare a formal oral presentation (with visuals and discussion questions) to the class on 1-2 of the articles below:

- Gómez, Laura, “Idealized Mestizaje and Anti-Black and Anti-Indian Racism,” chapter 2 in *Inventing Latinos: A New Story of American Racism*
- “Latino sounds of anti-blackness with Fordham Law Professor Tanya Hernández” (1-hour video lecture on Houston Public Media)
- Noé-Bustamante, “Latinos Experience discrimination from other Latinos as much as from non-Latinos” (Pew Research Center, 2022)
- Molina, Natalia, “How scientific racialization shapes Mexican immigration 1848-present” (video lecture by UCSD professor of history and urban studies)
- Blakemore, Erin, “The largest mass deportation in American history,” History.com (about “Operation Wetback”)
- Findling, Mary G. et al., “Discrimination in the United States: Experiences of Latinos” (dealing with health care, 2019)
- Canizales, Stephanie L. & Jody Agius Vallejo, “Latinos and Racism in the Trump Era” (2021)

Race and Racism in Mexico & Latin America (Unit 3 packet)

- Wolf, Eric R. “The Virgin of Guadalupe: A Mexican National Symbol”
- “The caste system in colonial Mexico” (painting)
- Vision, Ben III. “Wayward mixtures: the problem of race in the colonies” in *Before Mestizaje: The Frontiers of Race and Caste in Colonial Mexico*
- Sanabria, Harry, “Cultural Politics of Race & Ethnicity,” chapter 5 in *The Anthropology of Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2nd ed.

- Dulitzky, Ariel, “A Region in Denial: Racial Discrimination and Racism in Latin America,” chapter 2 in *Neither Enemies nor Friends: Latinos, Blacks, Afro-Latinos*
- Charles, Mark & Soong-Chan Rah. “The Doctrine of Discovery and Why it Matters,” chapter 1 in *Unsettling Truths: The Ongoing, Dehumanizing Legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery*
- Linthecum, Kate, “Mexico’s new racial reckoning: A movement protests colorism and white privilege” (LA times)
- Zizumbo-Colunga, Daniel, “Study reveals racial inequality in Mexico”
- Krozer, Alice & Andrea Gómez, “Not in the Eye of the Beholder: Racialization, Whiteness, and Beauty Standards in Mexico,” *Latin American Research Review*, 2023
- “The Hidden Black History of Mexico” (PBS video)

A Christian Response to Race & Racism

- Edmondson, Christina & Chad Brennan, *Faithful Anti-racism* (various chapters)
 - Ch. 2, “Faithful Antiracists Apply the Bible”
 - Ch. 3, “Faithful Antiracists Stand for Justice”
 - Ch. 8, “Faithful Antiracists Follow the Example of the Early Christians”
 - Ch. 11, “Faithful Antiracists Help to Change Our Society”
- González, Justo L., “Poverty,” chapter 2 in *Santa Biblia: The Bible Through Hispanic Eyes*.
- Soerens, Matthew & Jenny Yang, “Thinking Biblically about Immigration,” chapter 5 in *Welcoming the Stranger: Justice, Compassion, & Truth in the Immigration Debate*, 2nd ed.
- Optional selections from M. Daniel Carroll R., *Christians at the Border: Immigration, the Church, and the Bible*, 2nd ed.

Death in Mexico

- Paz, Octavio. “The Day of the Dead”
- NYT. “¿Cómo celebra México el Día de los Muertos?”
- Brandes, Stanley. “The Day of the Dead, Halloween, and the Quest for Mexican National Identity”

Conquest and Faith

- Meyer, et al. “The Spanish Invasion”
- Townsend, Camila. “Burying the White Gods: New Perspectives on the Conquest of Mexico”
- Tamez, Elsa. “Reliving our Histories: Racial and Cultural Revelations of God”
- Harner, Michael. “The Enigma of Aztec Sacrifice”
- Wolf, Eric R. “The Virgin of Guadalupe: A Mexican National Symbol “

Immigration

- *The Law that Broke US Immigration (IIRIRA)* > video
- González, Justo L., “Poverty,” chapter 2 in *Santa Biblia: The Bible Through Hispanic Eyes*.
- Soerens, Matthew & Jenny Yang, “Thinking Biblically about Immigration,” chapter 5 in *Welcoming the Stranger: Justice, Compassion, & Truth in the Immigration Debate*, 2nd ed.

- Optional selections from M. Daniel Carroll R., *Christians at the Border: Immigration, the Church, and the Bible*, 2nd ed.

Leaving Well

- Storti, Craig. *The Art of Coming Home* (selections)