

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Semester II Year 1982-83

<u>Course No.</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Instructor</u>
573--5	Social History of Colonial Mexico	Stern

Course Description

This seminar will study the colonial experience of Mexico's peoples (16th--18th centuries), and the legacy of that experience in more recent times. Although we will not ignore individuals or elites, we will focus especially on the social history of the "common folk." Our method will be two-fold. On the one hand, we will engage in intensive reading of significant and provocative materials, and meet weekly to assess, discuss, and debate these materials. On the other hand, we will set aside three special sessions for "student panels." The panels will present and critically assess student research and ideas on issues of interest that are not covered in our shared class readings.

Specific topics will include: the age of conquest, through Aztec, Spanish, and peasant eyes; the political economy of mining, commerce, and landed estates; village culture and urban elite culture; violence and social conflict; women and patriarchy; race and class; the struggle for agrarian reform; the roots of Mexican identity.

The success of our seminar will depend on the hard work, active participation, and insights of all members. If our seminar is successful, we will have by the end of the semester acquired: a) a solid and perceptive feel for the colonial experience of the Mexican people; b) a sharpened set of historical and critical skills, both written and oral, transferable to study of other societies and situations, both past ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ and present; and c) a collective experience that demonstrates that critical and sharp debates need not preclude a warm and constructive atmosphere among the people who "test" the validity and perception of one another's ideas!!

Tentatively: written work 45%; seminar leadership of one session 15%; week-to-week participation 40%.

About a book a week during 11 weeks; student seminar papers during the other weeks. (A list of books and articles will be available during registration week.)

Written Work (tentatively)

Either one short paper (4-5 pages; 15% of grade) and a medium length ~~(10-12 pages)~~ paper (10-14 pages; 30%) for panel discussion;

or two short papers (30%) and a critique of panel papers (15%).