

Mexican Foreign Policy:

A brief history and highlights of its contemporary practice

In the context of Latin America, Mexico has always stood out because of its post-revolutionary political system, its geographical proximity to the United States and its potential to establish relations with the North, the South, the Atlantic and the Pacific. That has made of Mexico a peculiar international actor, that at times plays together with the rest of Latin America and the Caribbean and others tries to link itself to the global North as a key partner in North America or a strategic travel companion for Europe. Mexico has been characterized as a middle power, an emergent economy, a middle-income country and a potential leader in Latin America, if not a sort of “big brother” for Central America. It has a tradition of being an accomplished multilateralist and a supporter of “minilateralism” through the G-20 and MIKTA. However, it is also a country that has an ambivalent relation with the outside world, at times seen as a menace and at others a resource and even a substitute for the state itself. The purpose of this course is to provide a bird’s eye view of the history of Mexican foreign policy to understand where does Mexico stand in the current international scenario. The analysis will be based on both theory and practice of Mexican foreign policy and its main bilateral and multilateral ties and strategies. It will pay special attention to the historical context of the Cold War, the Post-Cold War and the current transition in the international system, while keeping an eye on the various internal transformations that have been locked in through international treaties and memberships. The main objective is to have all students reflect on the role of a Latin American middle power in the new geopolitical scenario based on the particular trajectory of Mexico.

Methodology

Each session will start with an introduction by the professor and an intense exchange with the students. Participants are expected to read the bibliography assigned for each session and to actively participate in the discussion. Those students taking this course are required to write an Op-Ed on a particular feature of period of Mexican foreign policy. The Op-Ed will be a 10,000-character text, including spaces.

(12 sessions)

1. Introduction to Mexican foreign policy: capabilities and expectations
2. From the end of World War II to the collapse of the ISI Model (1945-1986)
3. From GATT to NAFTA (1986-1994)
4. From Chiapas to Fox (1994-2000)
5. The PAN governments and foreign policy (2000-2012)
6. The PRI comeback: from the Mexican Moment to Ayotzinapa (2012-2018)
7. The Fourth Transformation and foreign policy (2018-2023)
8. Mexican foreign policy: the United States
9. Mexican foreign policy: Latin America
10. Mexican foreign policy: Europe and Asia
11. Mexican foreign policy and multilateralism (UN, G20 and MIKTA)
12. Mexico as an international actor in the XXI century

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