

## **Course: HIST151: Young America (Undergraduate)**

**Course Description:** This course explores U.S. history from European colonization until the end of the Civil War. Students critically examine the social, cultural, economic, and political dynamics of America's agrarian age.

(Source: <http://www.bucks.edu/academics/courses/syllabus/?lookup=HIST151>)

### **Class Topic**

The Mexican-American War and Beyond

**Instructor:** Samantha Gross

### **Lesson Goals (Specifically, what will students learn?)**

This lesson focuses on events following the Mexican-American War. Students will learn what was agreed upon in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and how Mexicans living in areas taken over by United States were treated socially, culturally and legally. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo officially ended the Mexican-American War, delivering the United States nearly half of Mexico's land and providing protections for Mexican people living in the United States as a result of the treaty.

### **Description**

There are many gaps in the U.S. history curriculum. Textbooks often jump from a very brief mention of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo to sectional conflicts. Yet, after the war, the U.S. acquires more than half of Mexico and the people in these areas become "Foreigners in Their Own Land." This activity explores what legal (particularly property) protections were due to Mexicans who found themselves living in the U.S and uses case studies of individuals and families to examine who did and did not receive such protections. This activity can be paired with documents to explore more modern cases of property and mineral and water rights that cite the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo as the legal basis for their claims. The activity could be followed by a debate in class or online on the topic: The Mexican-American War: U.S. Aggression or Natural Extension of Manifest Destiny. (This would also be a good way to review contemporary arguments for and against the war.)

### **Step One**

Through a brief lecture and review of textbook, students learn the causes and major events of the Mexican-American War and the arguments for and against the war in the U.S.

#### **1. Step Two**

In small groups, students read the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo focusing on Articles VIII and IX as well as the deleted Article X. Students should write one paragraph responses (about 4-6 sentences) for each question below so that we can explore the questions in class discussion. As you are reading, you may find it helpful to make note of any passages that are difficult to understand so that we can work through them together.

What type of document is this; what is its purpose?

2. In Article VIII, what does the treaty say about the rights of Mexicans in the territory regarding their land and their citizenship?
3. In Article IX, what rights of citizenship did the treaty grant?
4. In Article X, which was deleted by the U.S. Senate prior to ratification, the treaty protected all land grants made by the Mexican Government. The Article also extends the time period for meeting the requirements for land grants in Texas as well as the newly acquired territory. What is the importance of the land grant rights why might have the U.S. Senate deleted this provision?
5. If you were Mexican American and living in part of the newly acquired territory, what expectations would you have about your rights to property? Why?

### Step Three

Show a 20-minute excerpt (from 32:09 to 52:09 minutes) of "*Latino Americans: Episode 1 Foreigners in Their Own Land.*" As the class watches the documentary excerpt, students should think about the following questions and write your responses so that we can explore them in small groups and then as a class:

1. Why did landowners like Vallejo have a difficult time keeping their property? What ultimately happened to his property?
2. In what ways were the experiences of Mexican Americans in New Mexico different from people's experiences in Texas and California? (Support for this question will be found throughout the New Mexico clip.)
3. What is common land? Why was access to common land cut off in New Mexico? What was the response by people and groups such as the White Caps?
4. Review your answer to question 5 from our Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo worksheet. After watching *Foreigners in Our Own Land* were your expectations met? Why or why not?

### 1. List of Materials

Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, excerpts provided (primary source)

Source: National Archives, "Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)" in Our Documents, <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=26>.

### 2. "*Latino Americans: Foreigners in Their Own Land*"

Source: <http://www.pbs.org/latino-americans/en/watch-videos/#2365075996>

### 3. María E. Montoya, "Dividing the Land: The Taylor Ranch and the Case for Preserving the Limited Access Commons," in *Land in the American West: Private Claims and the Common Good*, eds. William G. Robbins and James C. Foster (2000) 121-144.

**The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo as Ratified by the U.S. Senate and President (Excerpts)**  
TREATY OF PEACE, FRIENDSHIP, LIMITS, AND SETTLEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES CONCLUDED AT GUADALUPE HIDALGO, FEBRUARY 2, 1848; RATIFICATION ADVISED BY SENATE, WITH AMENDMENTS, MARCH 10, 1848; RATIFIED BY PRESIDENT, MARCH 16, 1848; RATIFICATIONS EXCHANGED AT QUERETARO, MAY 30, 1848; PROCLAIMED, JULY 4, 1848.

ARTICLE I

There shall be firm and universal peace between the United States of America and the Mexican Republic, and between their respective countries, territories, cities, towns, and people, without exception of places or persons....

ARTICLE VIII

Mexicans now established in territories previously belonging to Mexico, and which remain for the future within the limits of the United States, as defined by the present treaty, shall be free to continue where they now reside, or to remove at any time to the Mexican Republic, retaining the property which they possess in the said territories, or disposing thereof, and removing the proceeds wherever they please... Those who shall prefer to remain in the said territories may either retain the title and rights of Mexican citizens, or acquire those of citizens of the United States....

ARTICLE IX

The Mexicans who, in the territories aforesaid, shall not preserve the character of citizens of the Mexican Republic, conformably with what is stipulated in the preceding article, shall be incorporated into the Union of the United States. and be admitted at the proper time (to be judged of by the Congress of the United States) to the enjoyment of all the rights of citizens of the United States, according to the principles of the Constitution; and in the mean time, shall be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty and property, and secured in the free exercise of their religion without restriction.

ARTICLE X [Stricken out]

Source: National Archives, "Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)" in Our Documents, <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=26>.

## **The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, X in the Original Version**

### ARTICLE X

All grants of land made by the Mexican Government or by the component authorities, in territories previously appertaining to Mexico, and remaining for the future within the limits of the United States, shall be respected as valid, to the same extent that the same grants would be valid, if the said territories had remained within the limits of Mexico. But the grantees of lands in Texas, put in possession thereof, who, by reason of the circumstances of the country since the beginning of the troubles between Texas and the Mexican Government, may have been prevented from fulfilling all the conditions of their grants, shall be under the obligation to fulfill said conditions within the periods limited in the same respectively; such periods to be now counted from the date of exchange of ratifications of this treaty: in default of which the said grants shall not be obligatory upon the State of Texas, in virtue of the stipulations contained in this Article. The foregoing stipulation in regard to grantees of land in Texas, is extended to all grantees of land in the territories aforesaid, elsewhere than Texas, put in possession under such grants; and, in default of the fulfillment of the conditions of any such grant, within the new period, which, as is above stipulated, begins with the day of the exchange of ratifications of this treaty, the same shall be null and void.

Source: Ernesto Chávez, *The U.S. War with Mexico: A Brief History with Documents*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2008, 122-23.