Course Description

This is a problem-based course that seeks to reconstruct the route through Texas of sixteenth-century Spanish explorer Álvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca and his companions. De Vaca was treasurer of the failed Narvaez expedition to Florida in 1527. He and the other three sole survivors of the expedition washed up on what is now Galveston Island and spent eight years wandering across Texas and northern Mexico before finally encountering Spanish slave raiders on the Gulf on California. For more than one hundred years historians have debated their route through Texas, and their interpretations have varied widely. Working collaboratively, this class will formulate our own interpretation based on a review this literature and a careful study of Cabeza de Vaca’s Relación, supplemented by archaeological and ethnohistorical works.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this class will:

• Master the historical literature on Cabeza de Vaca’s route through Texas. Measure: class participation (notes and discussion).
• Sharpen critical reading skills by identifying key contributions, strengths, and weaknesses of historical interpretations. Measure: class participation, book/article reviews.
• Gain content knowledge of indigenous people and environmental features of contact-era Texas as well as the Spanish entradas in general and Cabeza de Vaca in particular. Measure: class participation (notes and discussion), book/article reviews, final project.
• Develop oral communication skills, both as engaged seminar participants and presenters. Measures: discussion participation and book/article review presentations.
• Demonstrate advanced writing skills by crafting nicely written and critically engaged book reviews and historiographical contributions. Measures: book reviews and final project.

Graded Assignments

Grades will be based on class participation, article and book reviews, and individual contributions to the final project.

• Class participation (40 percent of grade): This is a collaborative project whose success depends on critically engaged participation from all students. Each class period we will discuss one or more works to help us answer our central question, “what was Cabeza de Vaca’s route through Texas?” Students are expected to read the works carefully, take detailed notes, and participate in every aspect of class discussions. Half of your participation grade will be based on your notes and half on your discussion participation.
• **Article and book reviews (30 percent of grade):** In addition to the common readings, we will divide up the reading list in order to digest as much of the historical, ethnographic, and archaeological literature as possible. Each class session at least one student will present an article or book review to the class. Besides giving an oral presentation of the work, you must turn in a three-page written review. Each student will complete three of these reviews over the course of the term.

• **Final project (30 percent of grade):** working alone or in pairs (depending on the size of the class), students will write a critical summary of one or more interpretation(s) of Cabeza de Vaca’s route. These will be added to our comprehensive final paper, which will include a written report and maps.

This class uses a standard grading scale: A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F=59 or below. Grades will be determined as follows:

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<td>Participation</td>
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<td>Article/book reviews</td>
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<td>Final project</td>
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**Texts**

The following books are required and can be found in the University Bookstore:
- Adorno (ed.), *The Narrative of Cabeza de Vaca*
- La Vere, *The Texas Indians*
- Krieger, *We Came Naked and Barefoot: The Journey of C. de Vaca across N. America*
- Chipman, *Álvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca: The Great Pedestrian of N. and South America*

A number of journal articles and book chapters are also required and are available on Blackboard. In addition, you are required to read, present, and review one or more books for the class. If these books are not available in the Bell Library, students are responsible for purchasing them or ordering them through interlibrary loan.

**General Policies**

- **Attendance:** You are expected to attend every class. Absences will be excused only in cases of sickness or personal/family emergency. Students must notify the professor as soon as possible regarding an absence.
- **Late work:** Electronic copies of your notes are due before each class; late notes will not be accepted. Hard copies of book and article reviews are due in class on the day you are presenting. Late reviews and final project contributions will be accepted but will be given a one letter-grade deduction for each late day.
- **Academic honesty:** Plagiarism and other forms of cheating are serious offenses and will be treated as such. I have a zero tolerance policy for plagiarism in my graduate courses. You must use your own words on all written assignments or use quotation marks when borrowing language from a source. Depending on the severity of the offense, students who plagiarize may receive an F in the course.
Other Things You May Need to Know

Disabilities Accommodations
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Grade Appeals
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

Academic Advising
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

Dropping a Class
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Last day to drop for Summer I is Friday, June 19th.
**Course Outline**
Refer to the following outline for topics, assignments, and due dates. It is subject to change.

**June 2**
Common: Chipman, “In Search of Cabeza de Vaca’s Route across Texas: A Historiographical Survey”
Chipman and Weddle, “How Historical Myths are Born, and Why They Seldom Die”

**June 4**
Common: La Vere, *The Texas Indians*, 1-103
Reviews: Dickerson, “How Cabeza de Vaca Lived With, Worked Among, and Finally Left the Indians of Texas”
Archaeology studies TBD

**June 9**
Common: Adorno, *Narrative of Cabeza de Vaca*
Reviews: Varnum, Álvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca: American Trailblazer
Bishop, *The Odyssey of Cabeza de Vaca*

**June 11**
Common: Adorno, *Narrative of Cabeza de Vaca* (continued)
Reviews: Reséndez, *A Land So Strange: The Epic Journey of Cabeza de Vaca*
Howard, *Conquistador in Chains: Cabeza de Vaca and the Indians of the Americas*

**June 16**
Common: Krieger, *We Came Naked and Barefoot*
Reviews: Williams, “Route of Cabeza de Vaca in Texas”
Coopwood, “Route of Cabeza de Vaca, Part I”
Coopwood, “Route of Cabeza de Vaca, Part II”

**June 18**
Common: Krieger, *We Came Naked and Barefoot* (continued)
Olson, “Piñon Pines and the Route of Cabeza de Vaca”
Reviews: Baskett, “A Study of the Route of Cabeza de Vaca” (part 1)
Baskett, “A Study of the Route of Cabeza de Vaca” (part 2)
Coopwood, “Route of Cabeza de Vaca, Part IIIA”
Coopwood, “Route of Cabeza de Vaca, Part IIIB”

**June 23**
Common: Chipman, Álvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca
Reviews: Baskett, “A Study of the Route of Cabeza de Vaca” (part 1)
Baskett, “A Study of the Route of Cabeza de Vaca” (part 2)
Coopwood, “Route of Cabeza de Vaca, Part IIIA”
Coopwood, “Route of Cabeza de Vaca, Part IIIB”

**June 25**
Common: Chipman, Álvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca (continued)
Reviews: TBD

**June 30 and July 2**
Collaborate on map and final report

**Friday, July 3:**
Review of final project and film, *Cabeza de Vaca*