Peoples of Mexico and Central America
ANT 4930 (Sec. 079E) / LAS 4935 (Sec. 0228)
Tuesdays 9:35-11:30  NRN 342 & Thursdays 9:35-10:25  RNK 225

Professor: Catherine Tucker
Office: Grinter 309
Phone: 352-392-0690
Email: tuckerc@ufl.edu

DESCRIPTION

The indigenous peoples of Mexico and Central America are known for cultural and linguistic diversity, resilience, and creativity. This course will introduce these diverse cultures from northern Mexico to Panama, with special attention given to Maya and Zapotec peoples. While emphasizing current experiences, we will examine historical processes that have shaped the present. We will explore key issues including land rights, environmental justice, intellectual property rights, political autonomy, human rights and economic development, which have motivated major indigenous movements including the Zapatista National Liberation Front. Evaluation will be based upon class activities, a midterm exam, and a research project.

Required Texts:
- Buy new or used through Amazon, Better World Books, UF Bookstore, and or another venue.
- On Reserve in Smathers Library West.

1. Green, Linda. 1999. *Fear as a Way of Life: Maya Widows in Guatemala*. New York: Columbia University Press. Available to view online through UF: [link](http://ufl.summon.serialssolutions.com/#!/search?bookMark=ePnHCMw42LgTQSTzc4rAe_hSmGGHIDbEAygpvnbAwcpkYywFrDylgDGu_AzArMrpammnAyiwHZPkJisUKiQnltiUDmkJ0ZhqwmJRxcw1x9tAtTcuJh45qxIM2dVoYGRuDbzFKw0AYyYI5w)


Required Readings: Available on Canvas

Readings are assigned for the day on which they will be discussed. Finish reading them *before* class on the day that they are listed. In class discussions and activities require knowledge of the readings.

Note: Readings may be added or adjusted depending on the development of the course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students who engage fully in the course will:
- Gain appreciation for the cultural diversity, historical experiences, and current realities of the indigenous peoples of Mexico and Central America.
- Develop an in-depth understanding of two indigenous groups: the Maya and Zapotec
- Increase knowledge of the challenges facing indigenous peoples in Mesoamerican contexts,
including maintenance of land rights and human rights, environmental degradation, cultural survival, economic and political pressures, and global change processes.

• Understand the historical and current circumstances that have inspired indigenous social movements and innovative adaptations to societal and global changes

• Conduct a focused research project to explore a specific aspect of Mesoamerican indigenous culture and experience in detail.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES**

Evaluation will be based on six components (200 possible points):

1. **Reading Responses:** (3 written responses, 15 points each, total = 45 points). Each reading response will be 2-3 pages in length and address the readings for the week that the response is due. Guidelines will be handed out and discussed in class.

2. **Film Trilogy Reflection:** 2-3 page critical reflection on the three sequential documentary films by Olivia Carrescia with respect to related material in Green’s *Fear as a Way of Life* (15 points). Guidelines will be handed out and discussed in class.

3. **In-class Activities:** (30 points) Written responses, activities and discussions.

4. **Midterm Exam:** (50 points)

5. **Research Paper Abstract and Outline (10 pts):** Instructions and expectations will be discussed in class.

6. **Presentation of Research Projects:** (10 pts)

7. **Research Paper:** (40 points). Research papers will be 8-12 pages in length. The final paper is due on **Wednesday, December 6 by 5 p.m.**, and must be submitted in hard copy to Dr. Tucker and in digital form to Canvas.

**Grading:**

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<td>A</td>
<td>93-100%</td>
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<td>A-</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>D-</td>
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Late submissions of assignments will be discounted 10% of the total possible points per day. This is only fair to those in the class who made every effort to meet deadlines, otherwise they would be disadvantaged relative to those who took more time.

**Guidelines for written assignments:**

- All assignments are to be typed with 1” margins on all sides, and double-spaced using Times New Roman 12 point font, or an equivalent (Arial 11 point font, Calibri 11 pt font, Verdana 11 pt font).

- Cite all sources with in-text Author-Date citations followed by full reference in the References Cited section at the end of the paper. Do NOT use footnotes for citations. If you are unsure about using in-text Author-Date citations correctly, please ask Prof. Tucker.

- Use an established reference style, such as the *American Anthropologist* or *Professional Geographer* for formatting, citation and references. Consult the *Chicago Manual of Style* for other questions of usage.

- Avoid footnotes or endnotes; include relevant information in the text.

- Reading responses should be submitted digitally to Canvas.

- The final paper can be submitted digitally to Canvas, by email to Prof. Tucker or in hard copy to Prof. Tucker’s mailbox in Grinter 319. If you want written comments returned, the best form of submission is by hard copy to Prof. Tucker.
• **Note:** ALWAYS keep a digital hard copy of every assignment and paper submitted for this class.

Academic Honesty - Policy on Plagiarism / Cheating: Plagiarism in written assignments (i.e. copying material without citing the source) and cheating on examinations are unacceptable. Minor violations will lead to a zero on the assignment or examination. A Fail grade in the course will result if cheating is extensive (i.e. more than two lines copied or two questions cheated on). If you are in doubt about how to cite sources, please see Prof. Tucker and purchase a guideline on these matters.

Emergency Situations:
If you have a medical or family emergency that prevents you from attending class or completing an assignment on time, bring it to the attention of professor immediately. Reasonable adjustments will be made with proper documentation of the emergency. Medical conditions must be documented by a doctor's note. Family emergencies must be documented by an appropriate authority (doctor, minister, rabbi, counselor) along with a phone number for contact. Deaths in the family should be documented by an obituary.

Communication Courtesy and Netiquette: All class members are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in class communications whether in or outside of class, including emails, texts, and other forms of digital communications.

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<th>COURSE OUTLINE</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Readings need to be read before the class for which they are assigned.</td>
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<td>• Come to class prepared to discuss the readings of the day.</td>
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<td>• Films will be viewed in class unless otherwise indicated.</td>
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<td>• Changes may be made in the course to fit interests and circumstances.</td>
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**August 22**  **Introduction: Indigenous Peoples in Mexico and Central America**

Video: “Columbus didn’t discover us” (24 min)

**August 24**  **PreHistoric Cultures, Geographies and the Environment**


Optional:

August 29: Indigenous Identity, Ethnic Survival and Legacies of Conquest


Optional:

August 31 Mesoamerican Languages and Voices
Reading Response #1 Due
Guest Speaker Video Conference: Prof. Dan Suslak

Website: SIL. “Languages of Mexico.” Online URL: http://www.mexico.sil.org

Sept 5 Maya Peoples of Guatemala
Video: Todos Santos Cuchumatán (41 min) http://ufl.summon.serialssolutions.com/#!/search?bookMark=ePnHCXMw42LgTQStzc4rAe_hSmFj4AB2gwxBGywS5GrRDgH2tYoVg0P24xQrOpcmgi-IAJbSu8hk31xBnD93StJx46LhFvAGo5DSxMANdFoiXGgCRxSFe


Optional:

Start reading Fear as a Way of Life.

Sept 7 Maya Peoples and the Nation-state in Guatemala: La Violencia


Sept 12 Impacts of La Violencia: The Maya Peoples and the Nation-state in Guatemala
Video: “Todos Santos: The Survivors” (41 min).


Sept 14 Recovery and Moving Forward
Reading Response #2 Due

Ch. 8 Mutual Betrayal and Collective Dignity. Pp. 166-172.

Sept 19 Adaptation, “Development,” and Modernity

Film: “Una Vida Mejor: A Better Life,” by Olivia Carrescia (F1466.B4884 2011, UF SMATHERS)


Sept 21 Human rights and Environmental Justice
Film Trilogy Reflection Due


Sept 26 Indigenous Livelihoods, Global Markets, and Biodiversity


Optional:

Sept 28 Natural Resources, Land Rights and Environmental Conservation


Optional:

Oct 3 Traditional Environmental Knowledge and Belief Systems


Oct 5 Peoples and Environments of Oaxaca: History, Culture and Environment


Oct 10 Indigenous science and the culture of maize: Zapotecs of the Sierra Norte


Oct 12 Midterm Exam

Oct 17 Isthmus Zapotec: Fundamental Values and Artistic Expression

Research Paper Abstract and Outline Due


Optional:

Oct 19 Isthmus Zapotec Understanding of Flowers, Water and Lifeways

Research Paper Abstract and Outline Due


Optional:
Royce. Ch. 4: Tending to the Dead: Home Altars and Cemeteries. Pp. 73-97.

Oct 24 Rituals of Community

Reading Response #3 Due


Oct 26 Becoming an Ancestor
Video Conference Guest Speaker: Anya Royce


Optional:
Royce: Ch. 8: *Nabaana Ro*: Roman Catholic Liturgy and Zapotec Practice. Pp. 147-177.

Oct 31 Migration, Community and Social Transformation


Nov 2 Day of the Dead
Celebration of Mesoamerica’s Day of the Dead

Nov 7 Project Research Time (Tucker at a Conference in Oaxaca)

Nov 9 Project Research Time (Tucker at a Conference in Oaxaca)

Nov 14 Indigenous Social Movements


Nov 16 Emergence and Impacts of the Zapatista National Liberation Front

Readings TBA

Nov 21 Special Topic & Activity

Nov 23: Thanksgiving Holiday

Nov 28 Project Presentations

Nov 30 Project Presentations

Dec 5 Synthesis and Summary

Dec 6 Final Paper Due by 11:59 pm