

**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:  
[http://ufl.summon.serialssolutions.com/#!/search?bookMark=ePnHCXMw42LgTQStzc4rAe\\_hSmGGHHIDbEaYgpnvnbAwcPkYWwFrDylgDGu\\_AzArMrpamnAyiWHzPkUJisUKiQnlipUJ-mkJOZhqwmJRxcw1x9tAtTcuJh45qxIM2dVoYGRuDbrzFKw0AYyYI5w](http://ufl.summon.serialssolutions.com/#!/search?bookMark=ePnHCXMw42LgTQStzc4rAe_hSmGGHHIDbEaYgpnvnbAwcPkYWwFrDylgDGu_AzArMrpamnAyiWHzPkUJisUKiQnlipUJ-mkJOZhqwmJRxcw1x9tAtTcuJh45qxIM2dVoYGRuDbrzFKw0AYyYI5w)
  2. Royce, Anya. 2011. *Becoming an Ancestor: The Isthmus Zapotec Way of Death*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

**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.

<b>COURSE OBJECTIVES</b>
--------------------------

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:

A = 93-100%	A- = 90-92.9%	B+ = 87-89.9%
B = 83-86.9%	B- = 80-82.9%	C+ = 77-79.9%
C = 73-76.9%	C- = 70-72.9%	D+ = 67-69.9%
D = 63-66.9%	D- = 60-62%	F = below 60%

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.

<b>COURSE OUTLINE</b>
-----------------------

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readings need to be read <u>before</u> the class for which they are assigned.</li> <li>• Come to class prepared to discuss the readings of the day.</li> <li>• Films will be viewed in class unless otherwise indicated.</li> <li>• Changes may be made in the course to fit interests and circumstances.</li> </ul> |
|---|

**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**

Chase, A.F.; D.Z. Chase; C.T. Fisher; S.J. Leisz; and J.F. Weishampel. 2012. Geospatial revolution and remote sensing LiDAR in Mesoamerican archaeology. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 109:12916-12921.

Stark, B.L. and A. Ossa. 2007. Ancient Settlement, Urban Gardening, and Environment in the Gulf Lowlands of Mexico. *Latin American Antiquity* 18:385-406.

Optional:

Fisher, C.T.; H.P. Pollard; I. Israde-Alcántara; V.H. Garduño-Monroy; and S.K. Banerjee. 2003. A Reexamination of Human-Induced Environmental Change within the Lake Pátzcuaro Basin, Michoacán, Mexico. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 100:4957-4962.

Joyce, A.A. and R.G. Mueller. 1997. Prehispanic Human Ecology of the Rio Verde Drainage Basin, Mexico. *World Archaeology* 29:75-94.

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

- Adams, R. 1991. Strategies of Ethnic Survival in Central America. In *Nation-States and Indians in Latin America*. Austin: University of Texas Press. Pp. 181-206.
- Newson, L. 1986. Ch. 1: Patterns of Conquest and Indian Populations. In *Cost of Conquest: Indian Decline in Honduras Under Spanish Rule*. Boulder: Westview Press. Pp. 1-13.

### Optional:

- Newson, L. 1986. Ch. 7: The Cultural and Demographic Cost of Conquest, 1502 to 1550. In *Cost of Conquest: Indian Decline in Honduras Under Spanish Rule*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Townsend, C. 2003. Burying the White Gods: New Perspectives on the Conquest of Mexico. *American Historical Review* 108(3):659-687.

## 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>

Suslak, D. 2014. Vodafone's cliché: Who can save Ayapaneco? *Schwa-Fire*. Season 1 (Issue 2). [http://stories.schwa-fire.com/who\\_save\\_ayapaneco#story-cover](http://stories.schwa-fire.com/who_save_ayapaneco#story-cover)

Suslak, D. 2011. Ayapan Echoes: Linguistic Persistence and Loss in Tabasco, Mexico. *American Anthropologist* 113:569-581.

## Sept 5 Maya Peoples of Guatemala

Video: Todos Santos Cuchumatán (41 min)

[http://ufl.summon.serialssolutions.com/#!/search?bookMark=ePnHCXMw42LgTQStzc4rAe\\_hSmFj4AB2gwxBGyw5GcRDgH2tYoVgOP24xQrOpcmgI-iAjSBuBhk31xBnD93StJx46LhFvAGo5DSxMANDFolXGgCRxSfE](http://ufl.summon.serialssolutions.com/#!/search?bookMark=ePnHCXMw42LgTQStzc4rAe_hSmFj4AB2gwxBGyw5GcRDgH2tYoVgOP24xQrOpcmgI-iAjSBuBhk31xBnD93StJx46LhFvAGo5DSxMANDFolXGgCRxSfE)

Wolf, Eric. 1957 The Closed Corporate Peasant Community. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 13(1): 1-18.

### Optional:

Wolf, Eric. 1986 The Vicissitudes of the Closed Corporate Peasant Community. *American Ethnologist* 13(2):325-329.

Start reading *Fear as a Way of Life*.

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

Green. Ch. 1: In the Aftermath of War: An Introduction. In *Fear as a Way of Life*. Pp. 3-24.

Green. Ch. 2: The Altiplano: A History of Violence and Survival. Pp. 25-54.

## Sept 12 Impacts of La Violencia: The Maya Peoples and the Nation-state in Guatemala

Video: "Todos Santos: The Survivors" (41 min).

Green. Ch. 3: Living in a State of Fear. Pp. 55-79.

Ch. 4: From Wives to Widows. Pp. 83-110.

Ch. 5. The Embodiment of Violence: Lived Lives and Social Suffering. Pp.111-125.

**Sept 14 Recovery and Moving Forward**

Reading Response #2 Due

Green. Ch. 7: Shifting Affiliations: Social Exigencies and *Evangélicos*. Pp. 148--165.

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

Sanford, V. 2012. The 'grey zone' of justice: NGOs and the rule of law in postwar Guatemala. *Journal of Human Rights* 2(3):393-405.

**Sept 19 Adaptation, "Development," and Modernity**

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

Green. Ch. 6: The Dialectics of Cloth. Pp. 126-147.

Little, W. E. 2008. Living Within the Mundo Maya Project: Strategies of Maya Handicrafts Vendors. *Latin American Perspectives* 35:87-102.

**Sept 21 Human rights and Environmental Justice**

Film Trilogy Reflection Due

Murphy, M. and J. Vives. 2013. Perceptions of Justice and the Human Rights Protect, Respect, and Remedy Framework. *Journal of Business Ethics* 116:781-797.

Costanza, J.N. 2015. Indigenous Peoples' Right to Prior Consultation: Transforming Human Rights From the Grassroots in Guatemala. *Journal of Human Rights* 14:260-285.

**Sept 26 Indigenous Livelihoods, Global Markets, and Biodiversity**

Alcorn, J. 1990. Indigenous Agroforestry Strategies Meeting Farmer's Needs. In *Alternatives to Deforestation*. A. B. Anderson, ed. New York: Columbia University Press. Pp. 141-151.

Finley-Brook, M. 2007. Green Neoliberal Space: The Mesoamerican Biological Corridor. *Journal of Latin American Geography* 6(1):101-124.

Optional:

Moguel, P. and V.M. Toledo. 1999. Biodiversity Conservation in Traditional Coffee Systems of Mexico. *Conservation Biology* 13:11-21.

**Sept 28 Natural Resources, Land Rights and Environmental Conservation**

Mollet, S. 2006. Race and Natural Resource Conflicts in Honduras: The Miskito and Garífuna Struggle for Lasa Pulan. *Latin American Research Review* 41(1):76-101.

Wilshusen, P. R., L. Raleigh, and V. A. Russell. 2002. By, For and Of the People: The Development of Two Community-Managed Protected Areas in Oaxaca, Mexico. *Journal of Sustainable Forestry* 15(1):113-126.

Optional:

McSweeney, K. 2004. Forest Product Sale as Natural Insurance: The Effects of Household Characteristics and the Nature of Shock in Eastern Honduras. *Society and Natural Resources* 17:39-56.

### **Oct 3 Traditional Environmental Knowledge and Belief Systems**

Tucker, C. 2012. Syncretism and Conservation: Examining Indigenous Beliefs and Natural Resource Management in Honduras. In *Nature, Science and Religion*. C. Tucker, ed. Santa Fe SAR Press. Pp. 107-126.

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

Chance, J. 1989. *Conquest of the Sierra: Spaniards and Indians in Colonial Oaxaca*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. Excerpt.

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

González, R. 2001. Ch. 1: The Conceptual Bases of Zapotec Farming and Foodways. In *Zapotec Science*. Pp. 1-23 (Optional: Pp. 24-30).

González, R. 2001. Ch. 4: "Maize has a soul." Rincón Notions of Living Matter. In *Zapotec Science*. Pp. 102-128.

### **Oct 12 Midterm Exam**

### **Oct 17 Isthmus Zapotec: Fundamental Values and Artistic Expression**

Research Paper Abstract and Outline Due

Royce. Ch.1 Introduction. Pp. 1-23.

Royce. Ch. 3 Artists of Bread, Flowers, Prayers, and Music. Pp. 53-72.

Optional:

Royce. Ch. 2: The First Forty Days. Pp. 25-52.

### **Oct 19 Isthmus Zapotec Understanding of Flowers, Water and Lifeways**

Research Paper Abstract and Outline Due

Royce. Ch. 5 Flowers: The Water of Life and of Death. Pp. 99-114.

Optional:

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

### **Oct 24 Rituals of Community**

Reading Response #3 Due

Royce. Ch. 6: The Day of the Dead: Xandú. Pp. 115-135.

Royce. Ch. 7: The Way of the Cross. Pp. 137-146.

### **Oct 26 Becoming an Ancestor**

Video Conference Guest Speaker: Anya Royce

Royce. Ch. 9. *Nabaana Ro: Invitations from the Departed*. Pp. 179-198.

Royce. Ch. 10 *Becoming an Ancestor*. Pp. 199-207.

Optional:

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

**Oct 31 Migration, Community and Social Transformation**

Film: Oaxacan Hoops <http://www.imdb.com/find?s=tt&q=Oaxacan+Hoops+2003>

Nesheim, I., S. S. Dhillon, and K. A. Stølen. 2006. What Happens to Traditional Knowledge and Use of Natural Resources When People Migrate? *Human Ecology* 34(1):99-131.

Vanwey, L., C. Tucker, and E. McConnell. 2005. Community Organization, Migration and Remittances in Oaxaca. *Latin America Research Review* 40(1):83-106

**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**

Earle, D and J. Simonelli. 2005. *Uprising of Hope: Sharing the Zapatista Journey to Alternative Development*. Walnut Creek: Altamira. Excerpt.

**Nov 16 Emergence and Impacts of the Zapatista National Liberation Front**

Readings TBA

**Nov 21 Special Topic & Activity**

<b>Nov 23: Thanksgiving Holiday</b>
-------------------------------------

**Nov 28 Project Presentations**

**Nov 30 Project Presentations**

**Dec 5 Synthesis and Summary**

**Dec 6 Final Paper Due by 11:59 pm**