



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

STUDY ABROAD OFFICE

FedEx GLOBAL EDUCATION CENTER
CAMPUS BOX 3130
CHAPEL HILL, NC 27599-3130

T 919.962-7002
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studyabroad.unc.edu

August 29, 2018

Administrative Board of the College of Arts & Sciences

Dear Colleagues:

The Study Abroad Office submits for your approval a proposal for the establishment of a new program to be offered beginning **Summer 2019** and continuing annually.

Proposed Program: **UNC Mesoamerica through its Native Literatures & Cultures in Guatemala**

Proposed Program Location: **Antigua, Guatemala**

Faculty Program Leader: **Emilio del Valle Escalante, Dept. of Romance Studies**

Program Information

This proposed faculty-led program would be offered for **3+ weeks (3 credits)** during the **Summer** term.

Program Rationale: SPAN 374 is a critical study of past and present Mayan, Aztec, and other Native civilizations in Mesoamerica. Given that in the course we discuss and cover different topics related to Indigenous rights, hieroglyphic writing and codices, and material culture (e.g. Mayan/Aztec architecture and its meaning, Maya weaving, etc.), it would be extremely enriching for students to learn about these topics in situ. Guatemala represents the heart of Maya civilization, and it is the home of a millenarian history that is very alive: about 70% of the country's 16 million inhabitants are of Mayan descent. Students who take SPAN 374 in Antigua, Guatemala would greatly benefit from the experience. Antigua was once the capital city of all of Central America. The city is centrally located near many historical Mayan archeological sites that include Kaminal Juyu, Iximche, and Lake Atitlan, as well as several Mayan villages, coffee plantations, museums, and markets. Moreover, Antigua, Guatemala--declared a world heritage site by UNESCO in 1979--is a city that is friendly to tourists, and it is relatively safe, inexpensive, hospitable, and accessible in regards to restaurants, Internet cafe's, local hospitals and pharmacies.

Target Audience: Hispanic Literatures/Hispanic Linguistics/Global Studies/Latin American Studies Majors/Minors

SPAN 374 is an upper level three-credit course that, in addition to fulfilling Spanish major and minor requirements, also fulfills general humanities requirements that include Beyond the North Atlantic (BN) and Literary Arts (LA). The course has been offered in English (it can also be offered in Spanish) every third semester in the Department of Romance Studies, with a successful enrollment of between 17-22 students. Moreover, SPAN 374 complements UNC-CH's existing curricula and interest related to Mesoamerican Studies, as manifested with courses such as LING: Mesoamerican Writing Systems and ANTH: Ancestral Maya; the Institute for the Study of the Americas' Maya Yucatec Institute, the Duke-UNC-CH's Latin American Studies Consortium's K'iche' Maya program, and the American Indian and



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Indigenous Studies Program. In this sense, a SPAN 374 summer course in Guatemala could potentially attract students not only majoring or minoring in Spanish, but also in other disciplines across UNC. It would be of extreme interest to undergraduate students majoring in Global, Latin American and Indigenous Studies, as well as Anthropology, Sociology, and Linguistics who desire to deepen and enhance their knowledge about Mayan and Mesoamerican Studies. Indeed, taking SPAN 374 in Antigua would significantly help students connect their discussions about archeology, literary or linguistic studies to the specific experiences of Mayan Peoples in Guatemala.

Anticipated Number of Students: 10 – 15

Student Levels Allowed: Sophomore, Junior, or Senior

Program Learning Objectives: Would complement required readings and discussions with one day or overnight visits to historical and archeological sites around Antigua such as Iximche in Tecpan, Lake Atitlán, in Sololá (a historical site that is home to three Mayan Nations: Tzutuhil, K'iche', and Kaqchikel, Kaminal Juyu in Guatemala City, and a number of museums that hold important material culture collections, such as Ixchel Museum of the Indigenous Traje, or Mayan traditional dress, and the National Museum of Archeology and Ethnology. In addition, students would greatly benefit from discussions and conversations with local Mayan activists, scholars and writers who could potentially be invited to share their views about Mayan cultures with the students. In this sense, the course will allow students to experience Mayan culture firsthand and make concrete connections between the discussions and reading materials to the local culture and the population.

I include a tentative course description, and program content with daily activities that could be covered in daily three hours and fifteen minutes' classes for two and a half weeks (e.g. mid May to early June).

I wish to mention that I am K'iche' Maya from Guatemala, and I have done extensive research on Mayan rights in Mesoamerica. I know the country very well, and I will be able to use my own professional networks to make connections with other Mayan scholars and activists and to gain entry to cultural sites for students. Complementing my own research and teaching experiences with that of other local scholars, along with our reading assignments, discussions and local field trips to Mayan villages, archeological sites and museums, will definitely make the course more impactful and rewarding for students.

Program Academics

Proposed Course Name/Number: SPAN 374. Mesoamerica Through Its Native Literatures

Course Description: SPAN 374. Mesoamerica through Its Native Literatures. 3 Credits. Literature of the Mayas, Aztecs, and their neighbors from the Pre-Columbian period to the present. Historical, cultural, and religious information with discussions of the complexity and variation of intercultural ways of life. A comparative approach includes the aesthetic similarities, differences, and rhetorical strategies employed by indigenous writers. Gen Ed: LA, BN. Grading status: Letter grade.

Romance Studies offers this course every third or fourth semester. It is not being offered this academic



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year since we plan to offer it via study abroad. In any case, teaching the course abroad in a period of two weeks, though intense, will bring a lot of great benefits to students since we plan to, among other things, visit famous archaeological sites that include Kaminal Juyu, and Tecpan, as well as two museums. In addition, we plan to have students meet a Maya hip hop artists, Tzutu Kan, a kaqchikel/k'iche' maya poet, Rosa Chavez, and a tzutuhil maya spiritual guide, Victoria Tubin. These experiential learning experiences, coupled with historical, literary and cultural readings will give students a broad and rich understanding of Maya cultures, past and present.

Description of Academic Instruction: Face to face in class interaction; field-based trips instruction

Description of Excursions/Activities: Would complement required readings and discussions with one day or overnight visits to historical and archeological sites around Antigua such as Iximche in Tecpan, Lake Atitlán, in Sololá (a historical site that is home to three Mayan Nations: Tzutuhil, K'iche', and Kaqchikel), Kaminal Juyu in Guatemala City, and a number of museums that hold important material culture collections, such as Ixchel Museum of the Indigenous Traje, or Mayan traditional, and the National Museum of Archeology and Ethnology. In addition, students would greatly benefit from discussions and conversations with local Mayan activists, scholars and writers who could potentially be invited to share their views about Mayan cultures with the students. In this sense, the course will allow students to experience Mayan culture firsthand and make concrete connections between the discussions and reading materials to the local culture and the population. Please see proposed itinerary/calendar

Course Prerequisites: NO

Degree Requirements? This proposed course will fulfill Gen Ed: LA, BN. Also serves as an elective course for Spanish majors/minors, Indigenous and Latin American studies majors/minors

Language Prerequisites: SPAN 261 or equivalent, or permission by the instructor

A proposed syllabus is included as an addendum to this proposal.

Faculty Program Leader Information

Faculty Program Leader Bio: Emilio del Valle Escalante (K'iche' maya) is originally from Guatemala. His teaching and research interest focus on contemporary Latin American literatures and cultural studies with particular emphasis on indigenous literatures and social movements, Central American literatures and cultures, and post-colonial and subaltern studies theory in the Latin American context. He has been concerned with contemporary indigenous textual production and how indigenous intellectuals challenge hegemonic traditional constructions of the indigenous world, history, the nation-state and modernity in order to not only redefine the discursive and political nature of these hegemonic narratives, but also interethnic or intercultural relations. His broader cultural and theoretical interests cluster around areas involving themes of colonialism as these relate to issues of nationhood, national identity, race/ethnicity and gender. His publications include: *Maya Nationalisms and Postcolonial Challenges in Guatemala*:



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Coloniality, Modernity and Identity Politics (School for Advanced Research Press, 2009; Spanish version by FLACSO, 2008), "Theorizing Indigenous Literatures" (Editor, A special issue of *A contracorriente* 2013), *U'k'ux kaj, u'k'ux ulew: Antología de poesía Maya guatemalteca contemporánea* (IILI, 2010), "Untying Tongues: Minority Literatures in Spain and Latin America" (with Alfredo Sosa Velasco, a special issue of *Romance Notes* 2010), "Indigenous Literatures and Social Movements in Latin America" (a special issue of *Latin American Indian Literatures Journal* [Spring 2008]). Del Valle Escalante's articles may be found in such venues as *Revista de Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana*, *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, *Mesoamerica*, *Studies in American Indian Literature*, *Revista Iberoamericana*, *Latin American Caribbean and Ethnic Studies*, *Procesos: Revista Ecuatoriana de Historia*, and *Revista de Estudios Interétnicos*.

Experience in Proposed Location(s): I visit the country every year. Most of my family lives there.

Experience Leading Student Groups: In 2006, while I was a faculty member at Penn State Lehigh Valley, I, along other colleague, lead a group of 15 students to Cuzco, Peru.

Program Location(s)

Proposed Location(s): Guatemala (level risk #2): Antigua, Guatemala

Location Rationale: Guatemala (level risk #2) represents the heart of Maya civilization, and it is the home of a millenarian history that is very alive: about 70% of the country's 16 million inhabitants are of Mayan descent. Students who take SPAN 348 in Antigua, Guatemala would greatly benefit from the experience. Antigua was once the capital city of all of Central America. The city is centrally located near many historical Mayan archeological sites that include Kaminal Juyu, Iximche, and Lake Atitlan, as well as several Mayan villages, coffee plantations, museums, and markets. Moreover, Antigua, Guatemala--declared a world heritage site by UNESCO in 1979--is a city that is friendly to tourists, and it is relatively safe, inexpensive, hospitable, and accessible in regards to restaurants, Internet cafes, local hospitals and pharmacies. Home stay with a family, for example, may not exceed \$300 per week and it may include all meals. Though the language spoken in Antigua is Spanish, along with other Mayan languages like Kaqchikel or K'iche', many people also speak English. The weather ranges from 60 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit. The flight from RDU to Guatemala City, with a connection via Miami, Atlanta or Houston, lasts between 4 and 4½ hours. Then, from Guatemala City to Antigua, the ride is about one hour. For more information about Antigua, Guatemala, please see: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/65>

Connections at the Proposed Location: SPAN 374: Mesoamerica Through Its Native Literatures could be taught in Antigua, Guatemala, either at Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Mesoamerica (CIRMA) [http://cirma.org.gt/glifos/index.php/P%C3%A1gina_principal] or at the University of Texas at Austin's Casa Herrera [<http://utmesoamerica.org/casa>]. UT Austin's Casa Herrea will provide host family accommodations for the duration of the program.

Health & Safety Information

Health Insurance: The Study Abroad Office coordinates with the Office of Risk Management Services to enroll student and faculty participants in international accident and health insurance through GeoBlue



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for the duration of the program.

Safety & Risk Information: Like in any other country, there may be potential safety risks that have been highlighted by US State department. Antigua Guatemala, though, is relatively safe, and with a very low level of crime frequency. Students will be ok if they follow some of the suggestions of the US State Department, like "Avoid walking or driving at night" by oneself, or "Do not display signs of wealth, such as wearing expensive watches or jewelry."

Study Abroad Office staff will continue to monitor events in the host country and the U.S. State Department Travel Advisories in accordance with the *UNC Policy Concerning Global Study, Travel, and Research*.

Health Information: Some risks may include: flu, or zika virus. It is recommended to buy water from the store, and clean your food appropriately.

Required Vaccinations (if applicable): According to the CDC, no vaccinations are required, but some are recommended, like the flu shot. Please see: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Guatemala.html>

Health, safety, and security information will be presented to students during the required pre-departure orientation.

Conclusion

A letter of support from the home academic department is included in as an addendum to this proposal.

We are happy to provide any additional information necessary for your review of this program. Thank you for your time and your support of global opportunities for Carolina students.

Sincerely,

Jason A. Kinnear
Interim Associate Dean of Study Abroad

August 24, 2018

To whom it may concern:

I write this letter in support of my colleague Emilio del Valle Escalante, who is proposing to conduct a Global Minimester course on the cultural history of Mesoamerica, SPAN347, in Antigua, Guatemala in summer 2019.

Especially since we hired Emilio in 2007, the Department of Romance Studies has steadily increased its offerings on the indigenous cultures of the Americas, focused especially on South and Central America. SPAN347 is integral to that growing part of our curriculum. Conducting the course in Guatemala, where students will have direct contact with contemporary Mayan culture and artifacts from its history, is a valuable addition to these offerings, something I hope we can do regularly in the future. As Emilio suggests in his letter, no one is better suited to teaching this course than he is, both because he is a well-recognized scholar in the field of Mesoamerican studies and because he is K'iche' Maya from Guatemala and thus has intimate knowledge of the region and culture. Given his strong commitment to teaching, combined with an active research program, this is an excellent opportunity for Emilio to continue his career development, as well as to enhance the diversity of student experience at UNC.

I fully support Emilio's proposal for this study abroad project. If I may answer any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours,



Hassan Melehy
Interim Chair, Dept. of Romance Studies
Professor of French and Francophone Studies
Adjunct Professor of English and Comparative Literature
hmelehy@unc.edu

SPAN 374: Mesoamerica. Past and Present **(Summer course in Antigua Guatemala)**

Professor: Dr. Emilio del Valle Escalante
Phone: 919-962-2059
Email: edelvall@email.unc.edu

Course description and objectives: This interdisciplinary course in Guatemala aims to offer students a general cultural history of Mesoamerica from the Pre-Columbian period up to the present. We will particularly concentrate on the Maya People's in Guatemala, offering a unique experience to students by combining and complementing rigorous academics with field trips to archeological Maya sites that include, Iximche and Lake Atitlan; visits to museums, and other cultural activities that may include lectures and discussions with local Mayan activists, artists, students and scholars. The course has five central objectives: 1) to critically analyze and discuss Mesoamerican texts in order to better understand their historical, cultural and religious underpinnings 2) to critically explore the complexity, variation, and intercultural ways of life of the Maya peoples as represented in their literatures and other cultural manifestations (architecture, textiles, spirituality, etc.) 3) to understand Maya textual production in their specific social and historical context through an interdisciplinary and comparative approach 4) to disclose the aesthetic similarities, differences and rhetorical strategies employed by indigenous writers to inscribe their memory and culture at various moments in the hegemonic histories of the Mesoamerican region 5) and to connect Maya literature and culture to contemporary indigenous rights movements such as the Speaking cross, the Zapatistas and the Maya movement.

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Have knowledge of the significant contributions that Maya Peoples have made for science, math, technology, spirituality, culture, architecture and the arts;
- Understand the specific cultural and political differences between Maya civilization and other Native Peoples in Mesoamerica (e.g. linguistic, spiritual, cultural, political);
- Describe and understand daily life, social structure, and the economy of the Maya Peoples at different historical moments in Mesoamerica;
- Understand gender relations in Pre-colombian times, and how they have changed since the Spanish invasion, and after Independence;
- Learn about the Maya contemporary experience, and their diverse cultural manifestations in the arts.

Required texts:

- Pdfs and other materials under "Resources" in Sakai

Evaluation

Participación	20%
10 daily reports (2% each, 1pg. long)	20%
1 cultural analysis assignment (4pgs)	10%
3 Quizzes	30%
Final Exam	20%

TOTAL **100%***

**See details below*

Class Participation (20%) This component takes into account a number of variables including, but not limited to: 1) your willingness to participate, 2) your cooperation in group and pair work, 3) your attendance. Attendance is necessary to facilitate discussion and participation. You will be evaluated on your performance. You will be allowed **ONE** unexcused absence. **Every subsequent absence will result in a reduction of 2% points from the final grade for each unexcused absence.** Unexcused absences are those in which the student does not justify his/her absence with an INSTITUTIONAL note (e.g. from a doctor or a hospital, or religious activity). Tardiness will also be penalized. Two tardy arrivals will equal an absence.

Participation brings the following benefits:

1. Helps students explore diverse perspectives
2. Increases student's awareness of and tolerance for ambiguity or complexity.
3. It helps students recognize and investigate their assumptions.
4. It encourages attentive, respectful listening.
5. It helps students connect to the topic
6. It develops the capacity for clear communication of ideas and meaning
7. It develops habits of collaborative learning
8. It leads to transformation

10 one page reports (20%) Based on the readings, discussions, museum or archeological visits, you will be given a question by the Instructor where you will need to offer a reflection on a specific aspect related to Maya culture. Some questions may include: offer a discussion of gender relations in Maya communities as discussed in an assigned reading; what is the significance of cacao in Maya civilization, among others. These assignments are to be between 300-350 words long; typed, using times new roman 12" font, and submitted to sakai, under "Assignments".

1 cultural/literary analysis assignment (10%) Based on our discussions of Mayan literature and the arts, you will be asked to offer a literary/cultural analysis of specific texts that may include: a literary piece, a textile, a painting, etc. Such analysis will be guided by a research question offered by the instructor on a specific theme. For example, Maya women's rights past and present. How are they similar or different? What are some of the challenges they face in contemporary society? Or Architecture: Offer a critical analysis of a Maya temple in Iximche, and compare it to another one of your choice. For your topic, you must first meet with the instructor in order to discuss possible topic, sources, etc. The assignment is to be 750-800 words long, typed, double spaced, using times new roman 12" font.

Tentative schedule.
Most of our classes will take place at Casa Herrera in Antigua Guatemala.
Schedule is subject to change.

Class # and Date	Class time	Topic Text/Assignment	Class related activities	Other	Daily contact hours
1. 05/14	9am – 11:15pm 12-1pm (Antigua, lecture)	Introduction to the course: What is Mesoamerica? Who are the Olmecs, Mayas, Aztecs, Purepechas, Otomies, Zapotecs? Film: “The Maya, Aztec, Olmec” (Ancient Americans, 60min) Homework. Readings: Mesoamerican Civilization (Webster and Evans) “Food of the Gods: Cure for Humanity? A Cultural History of the Medicinal and Ritual Use of Chocolate” by Dillinger et.al.	Walk around Antigua Guatemala to learn about it’s Maya kaqchikel history		3hr 15min
2. 05/15	9:00 am– 12:15pm	Discussion of Webster and Evans, and Dillinger et.al. Homework: Reading: “Pre-Columbian Food Ways in Mesoamerica” (Staller and Carrasco)	Visit to: <i>Choco museum</i>	Reflection paper 1 due: 5pm	3hr 15min
3. 05/16	9am – 12:15pm	Discussion of Staller and Carrasco, and Quiz #1 Homework: “Mesoamerican Lit. in the Colonial Period” (<i>The Legacy of Mesoamerica</i>) Excerpts: <i>The Popol Wuj,</i> <i>The kaqchikel Chronicles</i>	Visit the local market in Antigua	Reflection paper 2 due: 5pm	3hr 15min
4. 05/17	9:00am – 11:00am 1:00 – 2:15pm (museo visit, and lecture on Maya Colonial Lit.)	Discussion of Mesoamerican Literature Homework: Matthew Restall, <i>The Invasion of Guatemala</i>	Visit: <i>Museo Popol Vuh</i>	Reflection paper 3 due: 5pm	3hr 15min

5. 05/18	9:00am – 11:00pm 12:00 – 1:15pm (museo visit and lecture)	Discussion of Restall Homework: Modern Mesoamerican Literature (<i>The Legacy of Mesoamerica</i>) Kaqchikel Maya Literature: Luis de Li3n, Francisco Morales Santos,	Visit: <i>Museo Luis de Li3n</i>	Reflection paper 4 due: 5pm (Note: No class on 05/19 . Free day)	3hr 15min
6. 05/20	9:00 am– 12:15pm	Discussion of Modern Maya Literature Quiz #2 Homework: Reading: Mesoamerican religion: <i>Views of sacrifice</i> . “The Eclipse” by Augusto Monterroso, “The Night Upside Down” by Julio Cortazar, “Chac Mool” by Carlos Fuentes, and scenes from <i>Apocalypso</i> (dir. By Gibson), <i>The Other Conquest</i> (dir. By Carrasco) and <i>Erendir3</i> (Dir. By Mora-Barlett)		Reflection paper 5 due: 5pm	3hr 15min
7. 05/21	10:00am – 1:15pm	Discussion: Views of sacrifice. Homework: Reading: “Weaving and Cosmos Among the Tzutujil Maya of Guatemala” (Prechtel and Carlsen)	Visit to Iximche. (Bus leaves at 8:30am)	Reflection paper 6 due: 5pm	3hr 15min
8. 05/22	9:00 – 11:00 1:00 – 2:15pm	Discussion of Prechtel and Carlsen Homework: Readings: Memory without History. Who Owns Guatemala’s Past?” (Smith) <i>I, Rigoberta Menchú</i> (Excerpts) Poems by: Humberto Ak’abal, Rosa Ch3vez and Sabino Esteban Francisco	Visit to: <i>Museo Ixchel del Traje Indígena en Guatemala</i>	Reflection paper 7 due: 5pm	3hr 15min
9. 05/23	9:00 am– 12:15pm	Discussion of Guatemala’s civil war. <i>Discovering domingo</i> (Doc. 57min) Homework: Maya Diaspora. Leon Fink’s <i>The Maya of Morganton, NC</i> (Introduction, and Chapter one)		Reflection paper 8 due: 5pm	3hr 15min

10. 05/24	9:00 am– 12:15pm	Discussion of Guatemala’s civil war, cont. (Maya Diaspora) Quiz #3 Homework: Mayan Folktales: Folklore from Lake Atitlan (Excerpts), Calixta Gabriel’s <i>Cosmovisión y espiritualidad maya</i> (Excerpts)		Reflection paper 9 due: 5pm	3hr 15min
11. 05/25	2pm – 5:15pm	The cosmovision of Lake Atitlan Homework: “Women and Gender in Mesoamerica” <i>(Legacy of Mesoamerica)</i> Poetry: Maya Cu Choc, Manuel Tzoc, Briceida Cuevas Cob	Excursion to Lake Atitlan Departure: 8:30am (3hr drive) Visit: Casa Flor Ixcacao in San Juan la Laguna		3hr 15min
12. 05/26	9am – 12:15pm	Discussion: Maya women’s rights and Queer Poetics Maya Hip Hop: A discussion with Tzutu B’aktun Kan		Reflection paper 10 due: 5pm	3hr 15min
13. 05/27		Boat ride at Lake Atitlan? Return to Antigua		Cultural assignment due: 5pm (Note: No class on 05/28. Free day)	
14. 05/29	9am – 12:15	Final reflections to the class, and review of final exam			3hr 15min
15. 05/30	9:00am – 12:15pm	Final exam	<i>Farewell dinner: (Posada Don Rodrigo, 6:30pm)</i>		
05/31	Departure day: Guatemala – USA				