ENVS 437I Summer. 2022. International Business and Environmental Sustainability in Mexico: San Miguel de Allende’s food and water cultures, histories, activism

This program asks the following questions, which we will be exploring throughout:

What are major forces behind wealth and poverty in Mexico?
Is globalization the most powerful explanation of central Mexico’s rise?
Is regional development in Mexico sustainable?
What role does food and culinary history play in Mexican culture, politics, and development?

There are three stages to this experience:

1. Pre-trip: Many course readings are to be completed prior to departure. Students complete two workshops (5 hours) in spring quarter 2022 by Tim Costello and Travis Tennesen of the WWU Center for Service-Learning.
2. Trip: While in San Miguel de Allende, students complete at least 35 hours of lecture (including daily language class) and at least 30 hours of laboratories, field trips, and service learning; itinerary will be posted on course IPE/GLP website. Be sure to read the behavior policy below! Our service learning project is through Caminos de Agua.
3. Post-trip: You will need to complete two fieldtrip experience papers as well as a final paper. Find these assignments, and their due dates, in Canvas. In addition, you will write a self-assessment, including a post-service questionnaire.

Student behavior policy:

Students are not to go out at night unless accompanied by Gigi. Do not go out by yourself at any time. Even if you are of drinking age, intoxication is prohibited. One violation is unsafe. You can be sent home – see the file Faculty Led Codes of Conduct for details. Specifically, this is covered by:

Participants are expected to refrain from traveling in areas, or at times, where travel is considered unsafe by the host country government and/or program representatives. U.S. State Department travel warnings and advisories should be referred to for information relevant to U.S. citizens. U.S. State Department website: http://travel.state.gov/travel/warnings.html

Pre-Trip: Service learning introduction and short-answer essay exam on course readings. Service learning is a powerful teaching and learning methodology, which delivers key curricular and social outcomes. The pre-trip workshops prepare students to connect thoroughly university work with field experiences and service. Part of our pre-trip work will include articulating questions relevant to our service
project with Caminos de Agua. The service project consists of building a water catchment system in Pozo Ademado (Northern Guanajuato state).

COURSE CONTENT AND SAMPLE READINGS (PRE-TRIP)

MEXICO’S FOOD HERITAGES

THE COLOMBIAN EXCHANGE
In which we discuss Vavilov centers of food crop diversity, food crop domesticates in specific world regions, and the global movement of food
J. Carney and R. Rosomoff, In the Shadow of Slavery: Africa’s Botanical Legacy in the Atlantic World (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), chapters 1, 2, 10 in 397H and 3,4,5,6 for 397I.
Mintz, S. Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History, Chapters 1, 2, 4.
also: Rice in Mexico: (http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=nTU5zfGp6gQ)

FOOD AND IDENTITY

MEXICO TODAY – NAFTA, THE ENVIRONMENT, CHANGES AND CHALLENGES
“Rainwater Harvesting,” Caminos de Agua. http://caminosdeagua.org/rainwater-harvesting/ [this is the group leading our travel and work in the campo – make sure you’re familiar with what they do!]
COURSE CONTENT (IN SAN MIGUEL, and sample readings)

COLONIALISM, NEOLIBERALISM & GENOCIDE

LAND-REFORM, REVOLUTION, CAPITALISM & NARCO-CORRUPTION

EXPORT AGRICULTURE, GROUNDWATER EXTRACTION & MIGRATION
Interview with Elizabeth Velasco (2017).

ORGANIZING, EMPOWERMENT & REVOLUTION
COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Attendance, participation in Canvas (as evaluated and assessed in Canvas modules) pre-departure and in Mexico…………………………………………………………………. 15%
Pre-departure short-answer essay exam (upload to Canvas) and workshop quick-writes*……………………………………………………………………………….20%
Daily quick-writes (integrating readings and lectures in Mexico)………………25%
Field trip paper #1** (3-page double spaced) ………………………………5%
Field trip paper #2** (3-page double spaced) ...............................5%
Culminating paper (integrating material and incorporating service learning, 12 pages double spaced, excluding Lit Cited, due 1 week after return)………………………………………………………………………………25%
Self-assessment, including a post-service questionnaire………………….5%

*Example of short-answer essay exam questions:

Be prepared to write about: The importance of maize, beans, squash, chiles (supplemented with, nuts, seeds, fish depending on region)

“Logged Forests and Lost Seeds: The Sierra Madre” (Ch 10 in Where our Food Comes from

Explain precisely why mountainous regions have such high biological and cultural diversity. What kind of diversity? Consider: Seedling isolation and pressures (reticulate evolution), accessibility (to whom, for what), Zapotec traders of seeds, wild teosinte and teosinte-enriched maize and genetic diversity, guayale, plant harvesting and seed saving as a moral act, distribution of white-seeded cultivars that are now distributed by the State to Tarahumara and Tepehuan farmers, logging and development and opium poppies and marijuana.

** For each of the selected trips, write a 3-page, double-spaced paper on how your field observations reflect the globalization and rise of central Mexico for contemporary foodsheds. As much as possible, use the course readings and other relevant work to enrich your understanding and inform your writing.