

Ethnohistory of Native Peoples of Mexico and Central America, 1491 to the present

NAS 133b, Fall 2016

Tuesday-Thursday 10:00-11:50, Kerr #293 with

Professor Liza Grandia

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Hart Hall, 2nd floor #2419, 530-752-0357

Tuesdays, 2-4 pm & short consultations before/after class

Sign up at: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080f45a8aa2ca20-spring>

Course description

As noted by the catalogue entry, this course traces the ethnohistory of indigenous peoples of Mexico and Central America from the Spanish invasion to contemporary times. Also sometimes referred to as “Mesoamerica” or “Middle America,” this region is composed of diverse ecosystems, extraordinary ancient civilizations, and vibrant contemporary indigenous cultures and social movements. We will explore how common historical processes of Spanish colonialism have shaped the present, but also how indigenous people of the region have resisted this legacy and continued to thrive despite five hundreds years of state policies of ethnocide and assimilation. Special focus will be given to the ongoing Zapatista movement in Chiapas and pan-Maya organizing in Guatemala and Belize.

In the course, students will have an opportunity to contribute to unfolding research on environmental sustainability and development issues including subsistence maize production, trade and infrastructure programs, land tenure reforms, immigration, human rights, and social justice movements. Students will also be mentored in original research on a topic of their choice.

Fulfills GE credits: (Pre-Fall 2011) Social Science, Domestic Diversity, Writing Experience
(Fall 2011-onward) Arts and Humanities, Oral Skills, Social Science, Writing Experience

Note: NAS 133a is *not* a prerequisite. Anyone is welcome!

Course objectives

By the end of the quarter, students taking the course should be able to:

- ❖ explain how/why/when Mexico and Central America are grouped as a region of study and recognize basic geographical features of the region
- ❖ discuss linguistic and cultural diversity of pre- and post-Columbian indigenous societies & describe the impacts of Spanish conquest and colonization
- ❖ highlight major historical epochs connecting & dividing the region, & describe key moments of U.S. intervention
- ❖ comment on key cultural themes -- gender, religion, agriculture, language and writing systems
- ❖ understand both the political and cultural facets of Zapatista resistance and critiques of neoliberalism
- ❖ explore how a sampling of current problems of globalization (GMO corn, trade disputes, land grabs, immigration flows) manifest the aforementioned history of the region

Beyond these key topics, students will receive instruction & guidance on reading strategies, critical analysis, and oral & written articulation of intellectual ideas.

Course format

There will be two 2-hour class sessions each week that integrate lecture, discussion, small group activities, student participation, and films. I try to incorporate most of the readings into lecture/discussion, but regardless of whether they are addressed overtly or indirectly, you are still responsible for having read them and may be tested on the material. Be forewarned that my exams include many questions that you could *only* know if you did the readings. As a rule of thumb, per university credit policy, you should be spending an average of 8-10 hours a week outside of the classroom on your assignments, weekly class preparation, exam study, and research projects.

Required readings

There are **two required books**, which you can acquire at the campus bookstore or from another bookseller.

1. Grandin G, Levenson DT and Oglesby E. (2011) *The Guatemala Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. ISBN 9780822351078
2. Muñoz Ramirez G. (2008) *The Fire and the Word: A History of the Zapatista Movement*. San Francisco: City Lights Books. ISBN 087286488X

Many other required readings will be available on recycled paper in a **course packet available at Copy Maxx, 232 3rd Street in Davis**, and/or for treeless download on **Smartsite** (§). Look under under “Resources” and you will see the link to the Box folder. <https://ucdavis.box.com/s/mdjyvo0pmodbz4ju5yut4n0yxgtdncst>

Additional “**recommended**” readings may be posted by week/topic to Smartsite, but you will only be responsible for the reading material already listed on this syllabus.

I will post no more than one news item per week that you should read. You are also invited to join the class Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1582046408684617/>

Recommended: If you are interested in learning more about the professor’s research, you can start with links to her recommended publications on her webpage, <http://nas.ucdavis.edu/faculty/liza-grandia>, and/or you can read her most recent book: *Enclosed: Conservation, Cattle and Commerce among the Q’eqchi’ Maya Lowlanders* (2012) University of Washington Press, ISBN - 9780295991665 (paperback).

Attendance and participation

It is a miracle that curiosity survives formal education. – Albert Einstein

The cure for boredom is curiosity. There is no cure for curiosity. – Dorothy Parker

Judge a man by his questions rather than by his answers. – Voltaire

Punctuality, participation, and a passion for learning will put you on the right path to the grade you want. If for some reason, you need to leave early, let me know before we begin and exit quietly. As a medium-sized class, attendance and participation is especially important, so come prepared to engage, discuss, and take notes, starting today! (The overview lecture can often be one of the most important.) If you are shy about spontaneous participation, you may want to write down some prepared comments or keep up with the news to make a point about current events.

How will I quantify participation? You will receive a score for 16 of our 18 sessions (everything but the first day, which allows you two excused absences, no questions asked. You get 1 point for showing up on time and 2 points for signs of active listening (taking notes, nodding, smiling, and demonstrating other signs of paying attention) [3 points = 48, plus 2 freebie points]. I will subtract all 3 points and then some for any instance of poor manners (surfing, chatting, tardiness, texting, falling asleep, or being disruptive in some other way).

In addition, as a “class citizen,” you should make a substantive public contribution at least 6 times in the quarter (5 points each). Some of you may talk and participate a lot more than this, which will be credited in my discretionary assessment (another 10 points, in other words, potentially the difference between a C & a B or a B & an A).

Evaluation

My courses are never graded on a curve. Everyone has the hypothetical opportunity to make an A, but by no means is this the default grade. Against the trend of grade inflation, I assess mediocre work in the B- to D range, not as an A minus. Your final point will be translated into letter grades according to this scale.

97-100 = A+	87-89 = B+	77-79 = C+	67-69 = D+
93-96 = A	83-86 = B	73-76 = C	63-66 = D
90-92 = A-	80-82 = B-	70-72 = C-	60-62 = D-

Grade petitions: I invest considerable effort into ensuring that my grading is fair and equitable and giving you detailed feedback. Hence, working harder and showing improvement over the quarter will more likely result in an overall grade bump than quibbling about an individual assignment. Any petitions must be submitted in writing within one week of the released grade, accompanied by a photocopy of the graded item (not the original).

If I've made a clerical mistake in your Gradebook entry, of course, please bring that to my attention ASAP via email and/or after class. After grades are submitted, UC Davis forbids professors from changing grades, so you'd be wise to double check accuracy before the last day of class.

Exams

- Midterm:** In class.... short answer and multiple choice, October 18 (200 points).
- Final exam:** There will be a closed-book, comprehensive exam on December 8 at 10:30 am (200 points)
- Geography quiz:** On the 3rd week of class, you will take a regional geography quiz (30 points).

Participation / assignments

- Class participation:** See above (50 points)
- Comment libreta/booklet:** Like the Maya people of Guatemala under Ubico, you will be responsible for maintaining your own "libreta" (booklet) of participation moments. Write the date and a one-sentence summary of what you said, asked, answered.... Announcements count. You can also share a news item at the beginning of class. If you are really shy, you can substitute a chat after class for one or two participation moments. Bring your booklets on the last day of class (30 points = 6 participation moments X 5 points)
- Get to know you form** (50 points): Download the form in Word or Pages and fill it out. Re-upload to "assignments" by Monday Jan. 12, 5 pm, so I know who is in the class. Please also share a photo and a one line description of yourself (major, year, connection to Mesoamerica) to the "Forum" section so we can all learn each other's names.
- Are you doing the reading?** I will give lightning quizzes 4 times in the quarter. You can drop one. Each is worth 10 points. (30 points).

Term paper

Students will compose an 8-10 page term paper (excluding bibliography) on a current challenge being faced by indigenous peoples in Mexico or Central America that is contextualized in relationship to the ethnohistory learned in the course. Suggested topics will be discussed the third week of class (e.g., Protestant missionizing, the Rios Montt genocide trial, genetically-modified corn in Central America, DR-CAFTA trade suits, territorial mapping, immigrant experiences in the Central Valley, etc). Students may also pursue independent topics with instructor permission (350 points, plus 50 for making milestone dates). You cannot earn an A on the paper without a clear thesis and a coherent structure that includes concrete evidence to support the argument.

Item	Date	Description	Mode	Points
Exams & assignments				480
Introduction	1A - Friday, 9/23	<i>Get to know you form saved as: Surname, First, INTRODUCTION.doc(x)</i> <i>Photo saved as: Surname, First.JPG</i>	Form + photograph uploaded to § <i>Assignments</i> Photograph shared to § <i>Forums</i>	50
Geography quiz	2A - 9/27	See study map	In class	30
Midterm	5A - 10/18	Bring scantron.	In class	200
Final	11B - 12/8	Bring scantron.	In class	200
Paper				400
Topic due	5A - 10/20	One minute oral presentation + one written paragraph.	In class	20
Bibliography due	7A - 10/27	List sources. Must include 2 non-electronic sources you had to use the library to acquire.	Upload to Smartsite	15
Outline/thesis statement	9A - 11/19	One sentence thesis + paragraph outline.	In class	15
Draft (optional for peer review)	11/22	Bring a hard copy to class.		
Final paper	11A - 12/1	Use any bibliography format you like so long as it is consistent.	In class	350
Participation				120
Engagement	16 of 18 classes	Active learning	16 sessions *3, sign-in + 2 free points	50
Reading checks	3 of 4	4 quizzes, index card		30
	11A - 11/29	Class participation (5X, 6 points)	Reiterated in your booklet	30
		Overall	<i>my discretion</i>	10
	10B - 11/29	Remember to double check Gradebook for accuracy		~
Total				

Manners, rules, and rituals

- Chemical sensitivities.** Let's keep neurotoxins out of the classroom! **You are kindly requested to refrain from wearing perfume/cologne or other cosmetic product with heavy synthetic odors**, including scented laundry products (detergents, softeners, dryer sheets). For sensitive and immune-compromised individuals (including the professor), these affect memory and ability to concentrate.
- Plagiarism** and cheating will not be tolerated. The teaching team will refer any cases of academic dishonesty to Student Judicial Affairs and you will receive a zero for the given assignment or test, likely resulting in a failing grade in the course. *Note: turning in the same work for two or more classes is a serious form of plagiarism.* For tips on avoiding other plagiarism problems, see: <http://cai.ucdavis.edu/aip.html>
- No cell phones**, texting or web surfing, please. This is distracting to people around you and people behind you in the lecture hall. If you are caught disrupting lecture in any way, you will lose your "lecture engagement" points.
- Make a friend.** If you miss class, ask a fellow classmate for notes or handouts.

5. **Emails:** Students are expected to read emails that are addressed to the class through the Smartsite listserv. The professor will never, ever look at the chat room, so please use this to ask your classmates questions not worth bothering Dr. Grandia. Take advantage of space in class and sections to ask public questions. If you have a serious question, do ask! Someone else probably has the same question.
6. **Faculty email.** Working against digital distraction, I try to treat email like regular postal mail, checking it thoroughly only once a day and prioritizing messages by urgency and importance for no more than a 7-day turn around time. Please speak to me *in person* for any substantive questions either in office hours (see 1st page) or right after class for quick matters.
Note: I do not accept assignments by email! Seriously I will delete them! I am not your secretary, nor your printer.
7. **Names.** In pedagogical contexts, I go by **Professor Grandia and/or Dr. Grandia**, in person and/or in writing. Let me know your name! Please remember to introduce yourself if you speak up in lecture (as I hope everyone will).
8. **Office hours.** TAs have open office hours. Prof. Grandia has online [sign-ups](#) by 15 minute increments. If you lose this link, it will be posted to Smartsite announcements or you can navigate to it from her departmental webpage, too. Bring a pencil and paper! And, please always feel free to ask her questions after class.
9. **Special needs or concerns.** Any student with documented special learning needs or concerns should speak with the professor during the first two weeks of the quarter about any accommodations needed. Gentle reminders near the exams are appreciated.
10. **Missed /early exams.** Note the date of exams on your calendar now and make travel plans accordingly. There will be no early exams. Make-up exams are significantly harder, as they have fewer choices.
11. **Slides.** To encourage better listening and note-taking, please know that my pedagogical policy is NOT to post lecture slides on Smartsite (with occasional exceptions). No adversary, supervisor, boss, or any other figure of authority in your future professional life is going to take notes for you. One of the essential skills of college is learning to take dynamic, memorable notes. If you are having trouble doing so, I encourage you to ask questions, read online tips about note-taking, talk with me after class, raise your hand and ask me to repeat or request that I slow down, use the Chatroom to query other students, organize study groups, or whatever else you need to do to learn the material.
12. **Illness/conflicting appointment.** Life happens. You have one excused section absence, no questions asked, so if you are contagiously ill, please stay home and get better.
13. **Technicalities.** Please turn in digital assignments in compatible software, Microsoft Word formats (.doc or .docx) or inline. The instructions will be clear on Smartsite. The 2nd paper is due in hard copy.
14. Any **revisions to the syllabus** that are announced in class will take precedence over this document. Any added or substituted material will always be posted to Smartsite (you won't need to purchase anything new). *Note: I do not accept assignments by email! Seriously I will delete them! I am not your secretary, nor your printer.*

Reading guide

Readings should be completed for the date on the table below. You would be wise to keep up. Please don't complain about the amount of reading. This is an upper division course at a world-famous university! One of the most portable skills you can acquire from your undergraduate education is good writing. You cannot become a good writer without being a good reader. Not so long ago, most college students were expected to read a book a week in every course. You have been assigned less than half of that — at an average of 90 pages a week. These are carefully curated selections. I invest an unusual amount of time balancing the quality and quantity and price of the readings. It lightens towards the end to give you time to work on your research papers. Some weeks you have more pages than others (e.g. the Zapatista book), but those tend to be easier texts to read, so the time should be roughly the same. Pace yourself, take notes as you complete each piece, and get a reading buddy.

Many of the readings are excerpted from some excellent textbooks that are now out of print and would have cost you a pretty penny to acquire. These chapters were carefully selected to help you learn basic history necessary for understanding cultural change and continuity in the Mesoamerica region over the last five centuries and the lasting legacies of the Spanish invasion and early colonial period. They may also be useful reference texts for your research papers:

- Helms Mary W. (1975) *Middle America: A Culture History of Heartland and Frontiers*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.
- Wolf Eric R. (1959) *Sons of the Shaking Earth*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Carmack Robert M., Janine Gasco, and Gary H. Gossen. (1996) *The Legacy of Mesoamerica: History and Culture of a Native American Civilization*, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Restall, Matthew, Lisa Sousa, and Kevin Terraciano. 2005. *Mesoamerican Voices: Native-Language Writings from Colonial Mexico, Oaxaca, Yucatán and Guatemala*. New York: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 0-521-01221-X

Legend:

♣ Selection from one of the required books. For the Grandin book, I abbreviated the chapters alongside the pages since we will sometimes skip around.

§§ Article or chapter found on Smartsite or in the course packet
[page] — in brackets are the total pages, give or take one.

1B	9/22	Introduction	None, acquire your books. Upload your "Introduction" form by Friday 5 pm.	0
2A	9/27	Mesoamerican peoples and civilizations	♣Restall, all Ch. 1, 7 pages in Kindle sample §§ Sons of the shaking earth, 1-21 [21] §§Bonfil Batalla, Guillermo. 1996. <i>México Profundo: Reclaiming a Civilization</i> . Austin: University of Texas Press. pp. xv-xxi, preface and Intro, [25]	27
I. Colonialism & Resilience				
2B	9/29	Spain & Spanish invasion	§§ Helms, "The Reconquista," 127-30 [3] §§ Helms, "Exploration and Conquest," p. 135-47 [12] §§ Carmack et. al., 122-53 [31] ♣Grandin, Invading 39-50; Great was the stench 62-65; Good government 65-69 [18]	57
3A	10/4	Language and literature	§§ Restall: Ch. 2 (11-20) [10] ♣Grandin: I intro 11-14; Breaking 19-23; Vos sos 156-59; La chalana 172-75 [13] * Map quiz in class.	23
3B	10/6	Colonial - political economy	§§ Mintz, <i>New Lords of the Land</i> , pp. 176 201 [26] ♣Grandin: For the eyes 68-70; All Sorts 77-81; Fugitive indians 94-100, Ladino 129-32 [17]	43
4A	10/11	Land, agriculture, encomienda	§§ Helms, "Evolving a Colonial Policy," pp 148-67 [19] §§ "Land and Society," pp. 168-91—[23] §§ Recommended - Mintz and Wolf, "From Haciendas to Plantations" [33]	42
4B	10/13	Religion, syncretism everyday resistance	♣Grandin: Chocolate 86-93; Taste of history 160-61 [9] §§ Ruz, Mario Humberto, "Maya Resistance to Colonial Rule," 33-39 [6]	15
5A	10/18	Midterm		0

II. Liberalism, Modernization, Militarization				
5B	10/20	Independence & Liberalism	<p>§§Helms, Railroads and Revolutions 233-43; Banana and Coffee, 244-58 [24]</p> <p>♣Grandin: Caffeinated modernism 107-110; Land, labor 117-24, Accustomed...obedient 133-43; Conquest tropics 144-49 [25]</p> <p>* Topic due.</p>	50
6A	10/25	Revolution(s), Mexico to Nicaragua...	<p>§§Carmack et. al. 238-58 [20]</p> <p>♣Grandin: Ten Years 197-200; A New Guate 206-11; Pablo Neruda 211-13; Most Precious 217-20 [14]</p>	35
6B	10/27	Indigenismo and development	<p>§§Carmack et. al. 266-70 [4]</p> <p>§§Helms, Two Faces of Mexico 259-81</p> <p>§§Bonfil Batalla, Guillermo. 1996. <i>México Profundo: Reclaiming a Civilization</i>. Austin: University of Texas Press. 107-120</p> <p>♣Grandin: Anthropology discovers 185-91</p> <p>* Bibliography due.</p>	46
7A	11/1	US imperialism & the Guatemala civil war	<p>♣Grandin: Enemies 226-29; Operation PBSUCCESS 230-37; Sabotage 238-41; A Plan 242-45; We are officers, 249-50; Denied 356-61; Guate and Vietnam, 269-70; Roads intro 281-86; A Clandestine 287-94; Whose Heaven 295-301; Execution 319-26; Guerilla 335-39; We Rose 340-41; Declaration 349-51; Intent intro 361-66; San Francisco 373-77; We Cannot Confirm 378-85; Exodus 395-402; Assistance 421-26; We are civilians 427-30; Time to Get 431-40</p>	99
7B	11/3	Rigoberta Menchú	<p>§§Menchú, selections, 1-20, 91-101, 118-21 242-47 [40]</p> <p>♣Grandin: Acts of Genocide 509-12 [3]</p> <p>§§Arias, Arturo, ed. 2001. <i>The Rigoberta Menchú Controversy</i>. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. pp. 3-28 [25]</p>	68
8A	11/8	Reckonings - Rios Montt	<p>♣Grandin: Acts of Genocide 386-95, Unsettled peace intro 441-44; What is reconciliation 450-53, Promised the earth 454-60; Atrocity 463-68; Filóchofo 487-89 [28]</p> <p>§§ Jones, Secrets in the bones</p> <p>§§ Reichard, Finca Zepur article</p> <p>§§ Gonzalez, "Searching for Peace and Justice in Guatemala"</p> <p>§§-Recommended, <i>Open Society</i>, Judging a Dictator: The Trial of Guatemala's Rios Montt, 1-21 & skim ruling [20]</p>	48
II. Neoliberalism, corporate power				
8B	11/10	Zapatista uprising	<p>♣<i>Fire and the Word</i>, 1-47, 101-124, 277-335</p>	135
9A	11/15	Autonomy....	<p>♣<i>Fire and the Word</i>, 125-272</p>	150
9B	11/17	No class...	<p><i>Work on your papers</i></p> <p>* Thesis + paragraph outline due by Saturday 11/19 by 5 pm.</p>	

10A	11/22	NAFTA, CAFTA, and the immigration “crisis”	<p>§§Grandia, Liza. 2012. <i>Enclosed</i>, Chapter 6, pp. 175-202</p> <p>§§Varese, 1991, Think Locally, Act Globally, <i>NACLA XXV(3): 13-17</i>.</p> <p>§§Cultural Survival, Welcome to Oaxacalifornia [12]</p> <p>♣Grandin: Intro 1-9, Death by deportation 585-88, Architecture, 595-600; Maya Morgantown 607-12; Enraged 589-90</p> <p><i>*Draft paper due if you want a peer review.</i></p>	51
11A	11/29	Plunder redux	<p>♣Grandin: VIII intro 501-4; Pan Maya movement, 513-6; Authorized Indian, 517-22; Solidarity 537-40; IX intro 545-48, New men 569-70; For sale 576-8, Vast rainforest 579-84</p> <p>- <i>Please read on Ayotzinapa and recent protests in Mexico....</i></p> <p><i>*Participation booklets due.</i></p>	25
11B	12/1	Wrap up & film	<p>No reading! Turn in your papers...Bring your participation booklets</p> <p>FILM: TBD</p> <p><i>* Papers due.</i></p> <p><i>* Double check accuracy of Smartsite, to date.</i></p>	0
—	12/8	Final exam on Thursday at 10:30 am	<i>Multiple choice, bring a scantron.</i>	