

**CHICANA/O STUDIES 147S: Indigenous Healing & Biodiversity in Latin America (5 units)**  
**UC Davis Quarter Abroad Fall 2020**  
**Oaxaca, Mexico**

Course Description

The course focuses on the intersection of western and traditional healing practices in Latin America and the role of the natural environment in creating sustainable health delivery systems. Analysis is provided of the major health issues attributable to public health risk factors and environmental degradation in Latin America. These include the impact of water access and use to the health of communities. In addition, we analyze the impact of the environment and cultural belief systems on the emergence of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, drug resistant TB; food-borne bacteria such as salmonella and tropical diseases such as dengue, chagas, and malaria. Assessment of comparative health policies identifies current cultural and environmental strategies in Latin America to tackle emerging illnesses within the context of existing health care resources, systems, public health infrastructure, and treatment modalities. This course includes a field-work component. Students will participate in health promotion brigades in Oaxaca City and vector control brigades in Puerto Escondido.

Course Weekly Activities:

Lectures will intersect with material presented in CHI 21S & CHI 145S Oaxaca City- Meeting with Professor on Selected Fridays at 5 PM in Becari Language School and in Puerto Escondido.

Activities include:

1. Orientation week: learning about Oaxacan culture and traditional medicine
2. Visit to the Sierra Norte and learning from traditional medicine doctor and *curanderas*
3. Meeting with traditional midwives (*parteras*) in Puerto Escondido and engage in health promotion brigades and vector control brigades.
4. Lectures by Drs. Chavez and Flores and guest speakers on traditional medicine and its role in contemporary biomedicine.

Required Texts

1. de la Torre, Adela and Antonio Estrada. *Sana, Sana Mexican Americans and Health*.
2. Chabram-Dernersesian, Angie and Adela de la Torre. *Speaking from the Body: Latinas on Health and Culture*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2008.
3. Course Reader

Course Evaluation

Students will be required to meet with the faculty member to discuss the readings and develop the individual term/research paper required for this course (sample papers available on canvas). The final grade will be determined as follows:

1. PARTICIPATION in health brigades, visits to Curanderas/Parteras, activities in Sierra Norte 20 pts.
2. Meeting with faculty 10 points
3. Outline of Research Paper with Detailed Bibliography 10 points (Due November 12<sup>th</sup> 5 p.m. in Puerto Escondido)
4. Final Research Paper 60 points (10 page double-spaced minimum, not including reference page. (12 point font) due November 30.

Total Points Possible 100 points

See chi 21 Syllabus for details of activities.

**FINAL PAPER Due November 30<sup>th</sup> 5 p.m.**

This paper must address an environmental problem in Oaxaca (air pollution, water access, vector borne diseases), what policy changes could/should be made to address the problem, and what successful strategies you observed during your stay in Oaxaca.

-or-

Provide an analysis of traditional healing practices and traditions you observed and read about in Oaxaca and your views regarding the contribution these practices and traditions could make to allopathic medicine.