COMMUNITY-BASED ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT IN MEXICO

Nicholas School of the Environment
ENV 975 ~
Classes: 8-9:30pm EST
Field Trip

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Course Overview

The state of Oaxaca in southwestern Mexico is an ideal place to observe community-based environmental management in action. Mexico’s system of common lands ownership and management (ejidos) provides a strong, legally recognized and politically viable framework for communal management of the environment. This combined with Oaxaca’s rich natural resource base, even richer traditions of indigenous governance practices, and a history of political organizing against government and corporate resource exploitation has meant that this region is a leader in innovative community-based management initiatives. From highly functional and vertically integrated community-based forest management ventures, to community-run ecotourism initiatives, to the communal production and sale of forest-based carbon offset credits, to cooperative management and marketing of shade grown, organic coffee, Oaxaca allows us to observe communal management of the environment under relatively “ideal” conditions, and to understand the many challenges to that must still be overcome.

Course Organization

Classes for the course will be held during the first half of the spring semester. We will meet virtually once a week Tuesday evenings 8-9:30pm EST using the web conferencing software Adobe Connect. These classes will be focused on introducing students to the general history of rural common property governance and resource politics and management in Mexico and to the specific history and current context of community environmental management in Oaxaca. These classes will be based on assigned readings and will include a combination of lectures, guest speakers and student presentations.
The field trip for the course will be held over Duke’s spring break (March 12-18, 2017) and one class period will be held after our return to reflect on lessons learned and to allow students to present their final reports. We will be based in the colonial city of Oaxaca de Juarez, the state capital, and will be travelling to visit communities in the surrounding countryside for day and some overnight trips. We will be meeting directly with the community leaders and councils responsible for making land use decisions and organizing their communities to collectively carry them out and also with the non-profit and government organizations that work with and support them.

Students will be assigned to a group that will focus on a particular topic (e.g. communal forestry, ecotourism, etc.). Each group will be responsible for delivering a presentation during the first half of the class, designing questions for related speakers during the field trip, and writing and presenting a final report at the end of the course.

**Requirements**

Admission is open to both on-campus and DEL MEM students, but is by application only. Spanish fluency is not required, but at least some facility with written Spanish is preferred. We will be visiting remote communities under sometimes less than comfortable conditions and, as much as we plan ahead, will likely need to make some alterations to our schedule as we respond to unforeseen obstacles. Therefore, it is a requirement that students be reasonably physically healthy, culturally sensitive, able to deal with some physical discomfort without complaint, and be very flexible in adapting to changes in plans or schedules. A current passport is also required.

Participation in the on-line class periods is an important component of your learning and in developing a sense of shared experience and knowledge with your instructors and classmates. Therefore, we ask that you email Sofia and Liz before the class begins if you are not going to be able to attend. 1 point will be deducted from your grade for each unexplained absence and 0.5 points for every explained absence.

**Course Evaluation**

Your grade in this course will be based on:

- 10% Participation in classroom discussions and Sakai Forum
- 20% Participation in field trip activities (*March*)
- 20% Pre-field trip class presentation (*Varies*)
- 20% Final group presentation (*March*)
- 30% Final group case study report (*April*)

**Course Materials**

Copies of most of the published papers that we will be will be available through library *e-reserves* and will be directly accessible through our Sakai site.
Honor Code

Duke University is a community dedicated to scholarship, leadership, and service and to the principles of honesty, fairness, respect, and accountability. Citizens of this community commit to reflect upon and uphold these principles in all academic and nonacademic endeavors, and to protect and promote a culture of integrity.

To uphold the Duke Community Standard:

- I will not lie, cheat, or steal in my academic endeavors;
- I will conduct myself responsibly in all my endeavors; and
- I will act if the Standard is compromised.

Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Presenters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 ~ Introduction to CBEM in Mexico</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Shapiro-Garza &amp; Tenorio Fenton</td>
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| Week 2 ~ Mexico: Economy, Politics, & Environment | *Come to class with one fun fact about Mexico’s history, politics or culture AND post it to the Sakai Forum with links to your sources.*  
| Week 3 ~ Mexico: Natural Resource Governance & Management | *Come to class with one fun fact about Mexico’s natural environment or resources AND post it to the Sakai Forum with links to your sources.*  
| Week 4 ~                                    | *Come to class with one fun fact about Oaxaca’s history, politics, environment or culture AND post it*                          |                         |
**Oaxaca: Natural Resource Governance & Management**

*to the Sakai Forum with links to your sources.*


**Week 5 ~ Community Forestry in Mexico**


*Optional:*

Bray, David Barton, Camille Antinori, and Juan Manuel Torres Rojo. 2006. *The Mexican model of community forest management: The role of agrarian policy, forest policy and entrepreneurial organization.* Forest Policy and Economics 8:470-484.

**Week 6 ~ Cooperative Coffee in Mexico**


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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Group #1</th>
<th>Student Group #2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field Trip March</td>
<td>Oaxaca, Mexico!!!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9 ~</td>
<td>BREAK – NO CLASS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9 ~ Final Presentations &amp; Reflection</td>
<td>Student Presentations and Discussion</td>
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