

MEXICAN FIELD STUDIES

Missions 3232-3 / Sociology 3232-3

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Building on an SNU-organized Work & Witness trip to Mexico over the New Year's holiday, this course provides a supervised cross-cultural educational experience. (For more information on the trip, go to: www.snu.edu/mexico)

Course objectives / goals

1. Expose students to actual field research, working with phenomena that are best observed within the context of their environment.
2. To give students practical hands-on cross-cultural experience in Mexico
3. To bring together missiological kinds of knowledge acquired in earlier coursework, and to apply this knowledge in an actual cross-cultural situation.
4. To have students express themselves clearly, logically, and concisely both orally and in writing.

Requirements — 2 Hours Credit

1. Read and report on a book on Mexico before the trip.

Preferred titles:

Condon, John C. Good Neighbors: Communicating with the Mexicans

Hess, J. Daniel. From the Other's Point of View

Mayers, Marvin K. A Look at Latin-American Lifestyles

Oster, Patrick. The Mexicans: A Personal Portrait of a People

Condon's book may be the best one. If none of these are available to you, find some other book on Mexico in a library and get it approved by the course professor. The report should be on one typewritten page. It should be turned in by the beginning of the trip.

2. Read the August 1996 issue of National Geographic. It is all on Mexico. Write a minimum two-page report (summary/reaction) on your reading.
3. Watch and write a half-page summary/reaction to two videos: Mexican Family Celebrations (Educational Video Network, 20 min.) and The Piñata.
4. While in Mexico, keep a daily impressions journal.

This is to be more than a simple diary; it is to be an introspective review. Write down each day what you saw or experienced that confirmed or deviated from reading you did before the trip. Your observations should note what you learned each day in cross-cultural living, including what you learned about yourself. There should be some notes about cultural contrasts. This journal, in final form, should be turned in within 3 weeks after the trip along with a 2-3 page post-trip reflection paper. In this brief paper, to reflect back on your reading and other study before you went to Mexico and what you actually experienced.

T Students seeking sociology credit should highlight in their journal insights relevant to that field.

T The journals of students seeking missions credit should highlight insights about religious experience in the Mexican context.

5. To give a little more structure to the field part of this educational experience, Dr. Culbertson will meet with you a couple of times in Mexico.

Requirements — 3 Hours Credit:

1. All of the above, with the final reflection/reaction/summary paper being at least 5 pages.
2. Two additional books to be read and reported on.
3. Watch and report on four of these six videos on Mexico:

Civilization in Chiapas	Mexican Youth Today
Mexico: The Land and the People.	The Piñata
Mexican Family Celebrations	100 Facts About Mexico

These videos are in the SNU media center. Write a one-page reaction/summary to these videos. Ideally, this viewing will also be done before the trip to Mexico.

If you live in another city, check a local public or university library for video material on Mexico. Find two films on Mexico (can be different from the two listed above) and write or call for approval from the course professor. Then, watch them and then write a one page summary/reaction on each one.

Note: Regardless of where you live, your own library can arrange to borrow books for you from the SNU library. To use this service, ask your library to do an “interlibrary loan.”

Grades: Grades for the course will be assigned on the basis of participation in the trip, timeliness of completion of written work, and the quality and insightfulness of the written work