

Summer Course Focused on Traditional Medicine

In 2017, **Dr. Terry K. Crowe** will teach the 14th course entitled 'Introduction to Traditional Mexican Medicine' in the beautiful southern state of Oaxaca, Mexico. This is a 10 day course plus 3 travel days. Most years she teaches this course with her partners who own Tierraventura. The purpose of this course is to learn views of health, wellness and illness from a different cultural perspective. Learning the special healing methods we will be exposed to takes years of focused study. Curanderismo is practiced on three levels: the material (including herbs, plants, candles, oils, incense, tinctures and amulets); the spiritual (the healer mediating the soul/energy of the person being healed); and the mental (the most difficult level on which the curandero(a) operates in which they channel mental energy to the person being healed). You will experience all three of these levels in Oaxaca.

The course will provide the opportunity for dialogue with at least 8 traditional healthcare providers/healers (curanderos/as). Students can participate in a traditional Limpia (ritualistic cleansing ceremony). Curanderos(as) use copal (an aromatic tree resin that has been used for ceremonies since the pre-Columbian Mesoamerican times) during ceremonies. The course will involve many different types of learning experiences. Formal presentations with demonstrations by traditional healers will be blended with discussion and hands-on experiences.

Several excursions including trips to 3 mountains areas and the jungle are part of the course. The first 5 days will be spent in the beautiful colonial capital city of Oaxaca. Participants will experience the warm hospitality of a Mexican home. We will be traveling to the mountains the 5th day where we will be staying in the mountains (2 locations) for 4 nights and at a family run coffee plantation in the jungle for 2 nights. Accommodations are modest and shared, yet clean and comfortable.

This is an interprofessional course taught under Latin American Studies (497-undergraduate, 501-graduate). Students from all disciplines join the course which is limited to 14 or 15 students. This is an academic course that requires engaged participation, reading and discussing 3 books, daily journaling, an academic paper with high standards and reading. Students can take the course for either 2 credits or 3 credits (requiring an extra credit of focused independent study related to the course). This course is taught in the summer (depending upon the year either in May, June or July). Since Occupational Therapy students in their second year have a summer course, they cannot enroll in the course. Usually students going to Fieldwork can take the course depending upon when the course is taught and when Fieldwork II starts. Students accepted to the course or interested in applying to Occupational Therapy are welcome to enroll in the course. The first 14 students who give the Coordinator a nonrefundable deposit are accepted in the course.

The cost of the course vary depending upon obtainment of grant funding. Typically the course fees are around \$1,200. UNM credit, airfare and some additional expenses are additional.

Course Objectives:

Students will:

- Examine traditional health care approaches in both urban and rural parts of Oaxaca, Mexico
- Understand the history of traditional medicine
- Learn about the healing properties of medicinal plants in multiple environments
- Observe/Participate in traditional healing practices
- Learn about social and economic determinants of health among the various cultures in Oaxaca
- Increase competency in cross-cultural communication and understanding by living with Mexican families both in urban and rural settings

Course Highlights:

- Predeparture sessions in April and May. If you cannot attend this session you will be required to meet with the instructor the first day of the course.
- Exploration of Oaxaca City (the capital of Oaxaca), 3 mountain areas and the jungle near the Oaxacan Pacific coast
- Focused discussion with several traditional Mexican healers, several in their homes
- Hands-on experience in the preparation of products made from local medicinal plants
- Observation/participation in a traditional healing session (Limpia)
- Live with a Mexican family in Oaxaca City for 5 nights
- Four nights staying in beautiful mountain cabins (Lachatao, San Jose de Pacifico)
- Two nights staying at a unique family owned Mexican coffee plantation in the jungle
- Exploration of medicinal plants growing in the valley, mountains and the jungle
- Readings and discussions with instructors and peers

For more information:

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