

Summer 2007

## Ethnographic Field Methods Class in Highland Guatemala June 22 to July 14

The University at Albany Anthropology Department will conduct its third annual ethnographic field methods class in the picturesque Maya Highlands of Guatemala.

The 2007 class will take place in Antigua and San Juan de Comalapa, giving participants an opportunity to compare Ladino and Maya communities.

This intensive class is organized to introduce students to a unique cultural setting, to provide them an opportunity to improve their Spanish skills, and to teach them how to do ethnographic fieldwork.



### Excursions / Activities

- \* Historical architectural tour of Antigua
- \* Ixchel, Maya weaving cooperative in San Antonio
- \* Participate in a Maya ritual ceremony, Kotz'i'j
- \* CIRMA, an international research center
- \* Iximche', Pre-Columbian Kaqchikel Capital
- \* Highland Maya markets

### Benefits of Participation

- \* Earn up to 9 credits
- \* Learn ethnographic methods
- \* Improve your Spanish skills or study a Maya language
- \* Live with Ladino and Maya Families
- \* Experience another culture
- \* Study ethnic relations

**Instructor: Dr. Walter Little is a cultural anthropologist in the University at Albany Anthropology Department. For the past 20 years, he has conducted ethnographic research in Antigua and Kaqchikel Maya regions of Guatemala. He is author of the book, *Mayas in the Marketplace* (2004, U Texas Press) and other publications.**

**Costs:** University at Albany tuition (plus university fees) and field school fees (estimated at \$900 per student. These fees include home stay and all meals except Sundays, transport to and from Antigua, all excursions.). Airfare is not included but can be arranged for the group through one of the travel agencies serving the university.

For more details contact Prof. Little: [wlittle@albany.edu](mailto:wlittle@albany.edu),

Office: A&S 245, Phone: 442-4718.

## Ethnographic Methods Field School in Guatemala, 2007

**Undergraduate: AANT 480 (3 credits) plus the option to take AANT 498A (1-6 credits)**

**Graduate: AANT 608 (4 credits) plus the option to take AANT 692 (1-6 credits)**

### Brief Course Description:

An intensive three-week field school in ethnographic methods will be based in Antigua and San Juan Comalapa, Guatemala and run from June 22 to July 14, 2006. Students may arrange extra days or weeks before or after these dates. The course provides advanced undergraduates and graduate students with instruction in ethnographic research methods. The aim of the course is threefold: 1) to give SUNY students a unique cultural experience abroad, 2) to teach them ethnographic field research methods by having them work on a research project and 3) to help students learn or improve their foreign-language skills, which can include instruction in Spanish or Maya languages. The course is organized in four parts: initial exercises on ethnographic field techniques, the practical application of those techniques, group sessions throughout the course for students to discuss fieldwork dilemmas, and short excursions to highland Maya towns.

Antigua has a relatively large English-speaking population of tourists, businesspersons, and retirees. Students proficient in Spanish will have more options and flexibility with regard to research projects, than those who do not speak Spanish. Students with good Spanish language skills have the option of taking Kaqchikel lessons.

Students are required to sign-up for AANT 480 (or AANT 608 if a graduate student). The course is limited to 14 students. For more information contact Prof. Walter Little, Arts & Sciences 245, 518-442-4718. [wlittle@albany.edu](mailto:wlittle@albany.edu) (e-mail is preferred).

**NOTE: In order to take the summer field methods class, students must take AANT 493/593 (1 credit) "Fieldwork in Mesoamerica: An Orientation".**

This is a short workshop that provides an overview of the social and economic contexts of an ethnographic field site in Mesoamerica. Emphasis is on the pragmatics of living in another cultural setting and preparing for an intensive ethnographic research project. Because the social, political, and economic conditions are very different than that of the United States, or even most tourism destinations, this class will brief students on the research site and discuss safety, cultural norms of behavior, and health concerns.

It will also brief students on Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocols and guide students in developing their research projects. Students can opt to participate in the ongoing research project below or develop their own specific research project. The latter are required to submit their project to the IRB for review.

This orientation class will be offered in the Spring 2007 semester. It is required for students participating in the summer field school and will be run as a workshop, which means it will only meet on a few select days during the term.

**Research Project: "Class, Ethnicity, and Race in a Heterotopic City: Politics and Social Space in Antigua, Guatemala"** is a research project that will study the local political processes, including the ability of vulnerable social groups to organize politically and affect change. It will build on previous years of research, which investigates non-Guatemalan tourists' opinions about Antigua. In addition to learning about tourists' opinions and the tourism industry and comparing them with the ways that tourist experience Antigua and interact with others. This year's project will take a more comprehensive look at the socio-spatial uses of Antigua by the people who live, work, study and visit there. The goal is to map out and describe how these varies people use the city and how that use corresponds to or varies from the predominant discourses of heritage tourism.