Course Syllabus  January 2007
Geography of the Yucatan Peninsula  Geography 475/510
The Department of Geography and Geology Study Abroad Program
Instructors: Debra Kreitzer and Dr. David Keeling
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Course Text - Assorted readings on the physical, human and environmental geography of Mexico and the Yucatan Peninsula (provided by instructor).

Geography 475/510 is an analysis of the cultural and physical landscapes of the Yucatan Peninsula and Mexico at large. Topics included cultural frameworks, transportation and tourism, environmental degradation, agricultural and urban impacts, regional imbalances, physical landscapes, and the impacts of globalization. There are no prerequisites associated with this course.

Course Requirements: Each student must participate fully in the study abroad program to the Yucatan Peninsula. They must also attend monthly meetings during the fall semester for orientation. Students must be on time for field trips and lectures and follow the rules and regulations of the program. Students must also complete a scientific journal detailing their geographic observations during the study abroad experience. Students will participate in a number of activities such as tours to ancient and colonial ruins to help them understand how history shapes the present; visits to local farms and communities to help them understand the local economy and social structure; and visits to both protected and environmentally degraded areas to help them understand the environmental issues facing Mexico and the Yucatan Peninsula.

Course Purpose: The purpose of this course is: (1) to introduce the student to basic geographic concepts; (2) to give the student an understanding of the geographic processes that shape the physical environment of the Yucatan Peninsula; (3) to give the student an understanding of the demographics, cultures, language, religions, political systems, and economies of the Yucatan Peninsula and Mexico (4) to understand how these concepts apply in the practical setting of Mexico.

Evaluation Process: Students will be evaluated on their knowledge and understanding of the geographic concepts discussed in lectures and readings as portrayed in their scientific journals. They will also be evaluated on their participation in group activities and lectures.

Grading Scale: 90 - 100% = A, 80 - 89% = B, 70 - 79% = C, 60 - 69% = D, 0 - 59% = F.

Lecture Topics Include but are not limited to:
1. Climate and Vegetation
2. Geomorphology of the Yucatan Peninsula
3. The colonial experience of Mexico and the Yucatan Peninsula
4. Economic Development of Mexico and the Yucatan Peninsula
5. Agriculture and Contested Space
6. Environmental Issues of Mexico and the Yucatan Peninsula
7. Globalization issues