

OSEA Summer Field School — MIRA2005

July 10 through August 17

Orientation

1. Arrival on Saturday and Sunday July 9 and 10. Settle in at the Luz en Yucatán Hotel (Calle 55, entre 58 x 60, behind the Parque Santa Lucia). The reserved rooms are: Nido, Cielos and Oso. Nido is the single for Sergio; option to change to Osito on July 14. Cielos is the two level triple on the 2nd floor in the front. Oso is a double on first floor in back behind the shared kitchen. Although Cielos and Oso have kitchenettes, you will be using the main shared kitchen for your breakfast.
2. Activities on Saturday night are open for early arrivals. Sunday during the day is open and participants are encouraged to enjoy the activities of the tourism event, Mérida en Domingo held in the center of town. Please take the opportunity to familiarize yourself with the spatial layout and organization of cultural life in Mérida during this time. This is something of a formal assignment that entails no formal guidelines except to follow your intuition and pleasure. Consider yourself a tourist who is in need of finding out what this city is about for tourists and tourism. This is an experiential, hands-on, interactive learning device. Although you are expected to gain on your own a substantial initial understanding of where things are and how to access them, there is no failure. That you HAVE an experience trying to find out is what will make this a “successful” assignment. No quizzes later, no anxiety about it. No worries. Keep your mind open and alert and flexible. And enjoy yourself! Quetzil and Cesar will be available for you to provide initial suggestions and some tips.
3. Caveat: Do pace yourself today (Sunday). We will have a full day of activities, even if informal and we do start early in the morning on Monday.
4. **First formal meeting at 4:30pm at the OSEA Miraflores Facility.** Orientation meeting from 4-8:30 pm. Break for evening meal as a group downtown and initial informal ethnographic observation of the evening activities of Mérida en Domingo. Guidelines for participant observation are provided for the evening. Expect to be “on” doing fieldwork until about 11 or later if you like or until you poop out and need rest.

Quick Notes:

OSEA Miraflores Facility is Quetzil Castañeda’s home and research center. There is a pool for participant use, there are work spaces available and rooms that can be used for study.

Miraflores (Quetzil) 929-8874	From US use prefix 011 [52]-(999) international prefix, country code and Mérida area code, respectively
Quetzil Cell phone 737-0311	from a Mérida landline or pay phone you must use 044-999 prefix. From an amigo Mérida cell phone dial only 737-0311
044-999-129-8387	Cesar Cell
011-52 (999) 924-0035.	The Luz en Yucatán Owner is Madeline Parmet, a US expat.
011-52 (985) 85-100-86.	Posada Olalde owners: Victor Olalde and mother Doña Monica, sister Lourdes and brothers Hilario and Isauro. Victor is Pisté’s cultural ambassador to OSEA
011-52 (984) 80 33724	Hotel Casa Tucan. Horst, a german, & wife (Russian) are owners
Assume that you cannot receive calls at the hotels except under emergency situations in which you need to be contacted in case of a crisis.	

Agenda for the Orientation Meeting on Sunday, July 10, 2005

1. Hand in all release forms to Cesar at orientation meeting on Sunday at OSEA Miraflores Center, who will review to ensure materials are complete
2. Self introductions of all participants and staff. Be prepared to give meaningful biographic statements about who you are, your goals, fears, dreams, interests, skills
3. Discussion of health, housing, roommates, meals, vegetarian meals, buses, seminar locations, and other logistics for Mérida and in general. Includes statement of norms of use of the OSEA facility
4. Presentation of the research and learning calendar, including modifications to the web published iteration. Crucial operating tenets of OSEA are presented: In fieldwork, structure is just a strategy. Flexibility is the only structure. Principle of adaptation and defining the situation. De Certeau's tactics of "making do."
5. Course syllabi and materials are presented and discussed. Address questions that arise about assignments, research, fieldwork, projects, studying, expectations, grading, etc.
6. Discussion of the norms of behavior in general and in each of the locations in which we will be residing and working in. Norms of comportment with each other as group and as individuals are also discussed. Including Issues of ethics, gender/sex identifications and dynamics, hierarchies of authority, expectations of self presentation.
7. Crucial tenets of OSEA ethics are presented: Respect everyone as a human being. Care for each other. Levinas' notion of substitution.

Monday Continuation of Orientation:

1. Ideologies and Idea(l)s of collaboration are discussed. Issues of individual research and group work, self-reliance, authorship, independence, and the mandate to care for each other. Sports metaphors of collaboration and training are presented: Football, Bicycling, Theatre, and others. Think of some, think about it.
2. Research Prospects and Plans are presented. Including norms of research activity, participation, norms for writing and documenting research. Coding of fieldwork and collected data.

An opening onto OSEA ethics

It is not that others do not exist. Others are everywhere. We too are others, each of us is an other. To overcome the Other—and all the fetishizations of alterity—therefore, does not mean to delude oneself in an illusion in which there are no others and no Other. Rather, it means to understand one self as an other, other among others. It means to feel that one is always other—observed, talked about, felt, experienced, talked to, and imagined as other—without erasing or eliding this ontological fact of existence. To be other without fear, without anxiety, without claims of self-righteousness and without worshipping honor, that greatest evil of individuals, is to begin along a path of a certain ethics. To live as an other, not as other nor othered, is to allow for that recognition to seep into your thinking, into your corporeality, into your very way of living, breathing, and dwelling in the world. To begin to act and think and feel with a sentient respect and care of the other is to allow this way of being within one's most profound intimacies—that intimacy of being prior to identity and language. With in/difference and the substitutability of one self for the other, the other for one's self, you live before identity, before language, and before the absolute. In this space that is not spatial, in this moment that is atemporal, in this proximity there is care and forgiving. Let one's self, one's ego and all the rights, honor and false privileges, dissolve and just be human. Just be human

Health

It is crucial that you pay attention to your body. You must drink about a gallon of water a day. That's about 3 liters a day of water and primarily water drinks (lemonade, Jamaica, jugos, sandia, etc.). Coffee and coke do not count. DO NOT TAKE any diarrhea medicine that STOPS you up – lomotil, lomotril. These are evil and will only prolong and hide your problems. Instead, if you start having this need: then eat some bananas. The small, sweet ones are especially good to help control movement. You must pay close attention to your stools when you get sick – note color, consistency, smell. These are factors that will help you inform a doctor if you do get a serious problem.

You need to eat chile with every meal. Just a little to help the whole digestive process and to complete the nutritional value of the food. Many students enter into cycles of constipation and then diarrhea because they do not eat chile or drink enough water. Then because they get dehydrated and lack minerals they get diarrhea. Imagine avoiding this. You can! You will lose the opportunity to tell stories to your friends years from now about the adventures of your bowels and body, but that's a cheap recompensation for having digestive suffering during the next six weeks. If you brought Emergen-C then take one packet a day. Take vitamin and mineral supplements – magnesium, potassium, and V-C are crucial. In lieu of supplements eat bananas daily but also eat something that counters the banana.

It is crucial that when you do start to feel bad, that you start pumping water. 80% of all problems begin because you have not treated your body with enough water, minerals, vitamins. Thus, you will need to also drink suero. This is serious business and you must take a positive attitude that is receptive to what the staff recommends to you to get healthy.