We will delve into the mysteries of Olmec culture, the oldest known civilization in the Americas. Do the colossal heads at Tuxtla indicate an African presence in ancient Mesoamerica? We will follow our exploration of Olmec civilization and culture with an intensive study of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery in Mexico. We will visit San Juan de Ulua one of the primary gateways to the west for African slaves, colonial era plantations, and Yanga, a free Black or "maroon" community that sheltered escaped slaves.

Please visit http://veracruz.unm.edu for more information about the variety of cultures and communities that we will visit on this remarkable trip through the State of Veracruz!!!

**Tentative Itinerary**

**TRAVEL DAY :: (Tentative Date - 10 June 2010)**
Arrive in Villahermosa.

Day 1 :: Villahermosa – Explore Olmec Culture in Parque La Venta

Day 2 :: Explore Olmec Culture in Santiago de Tuxtla and Tres Zapotes.

Day 3 :: Boat tour of the volcanic lake at Catemaco, hike through Nanciyaga Ecological Park, visit the breathtaking falls of Eyipantla.

Day 4 :: Travel to the colonial city of Tlacotalpan for a Fandango featuring Son Jarocho – Arrive in Veracruz.

Day 5 :: Visit the Museum of Anthropology, in the garden city of Xalapa. Explore the breathtaking waterfalls of Texolo and coffee plantations of Coatepec.

Day 6 :: Tour the City of Veracruz and surrounding areas. We will spend time at San Juan de Ulua Fortress, one of the Western Hemisphere's most active slave-trading ports. Participate in Cultural Tour featuring Son Montuno.

Day 7 :: Yanga – Explore the Afromestizo village of La Matamba (from the Angolan Kingdom of Matamba), Yanga, and Mataclara. Yanga was one of the first settlements of free Africans in the Western Hemisphere. Travel to Chichaki.

Day 8 :: Participate in indigenous ceremony (Temazcal). African Dance class at Chichaki.

Day 9 :: Visit the ruins of Quihuixtlan and the archaeological zone of Zempoala en route to Tamiahua. We will spend several days in one of the most fascinating Afromestizo communities in Mexico. We will explore the beauty and cultural riches of Tamiahua where
we will briefly immerse ourselves in Afromestizo culture and history. After exploring one of Mexico’s largest lagoons as it empties majestically into the Gulf of Mexico, we will haunt the beaches and tour the rivers that surround this beautiful fishing community. Meeting with school children, their teachers, as well as community members; we will discuss folkways ranging from African fishing techniques to preparing Afromestizo cuisine!

Day 10 :: Morning – Classes on the History of the African Diaspora.
Afternoon – Tour Lagoon and African Fishing Techniques

Day 11 :: Market Day – Morning – Classes on the History of the African Diaspora. Afternoon – Tour La Playa

Day 12 :: Morning - Classes on Slavery in Colonial Mexico. Afternoon - Visit Tuxpan, Sugar Cane Plantation, and the Fidel Castro Museum

Day 13 :: Visit the breathtaking pyramids of Tajin and see the world renowned flying dancers of Papantla. Afternoon Classes

Day 14 :: Morning – Classes on Contemporary Issues in Afromestizo Culture. Afternoon – Tour Rivers and Streams. Evening - Class on Afromestizo Culture and Cooking Techniques


Day 16 :: Research Service Learning Project

Travel Day :: Travel to Tampico - Return to the U.S. (Tentative Date – 27 June 2010)

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