



Place-Based Learning in the Arizona Borderlands

Inside U of A-Funded Scholarship

March 4, 2025
12:00 – 1:00pm



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Land Acknowledgement



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Event Introduction



Amy Kimme Hea, Ph.D.

Acting Co-Director, CUES (Spring/Summer 2025)

Senior Associate Dean, Academic Affairs & Student Success, College of Social & Behavioral Sciences

Professor, English

Advisory Board Member, CUES



Speaker & Panelists



Jennifer Jenkins, Ph.D.

CUES Distinguished Fellow

Professor, Southwest Studies Center

Professor, English

College of Social & Behavioral Sciences



Michael Brescia, Ph.D.

Curator, Ethnohistory, Arizona State Museum

Professor, History

College of Social & Behavioral Sciences

Professor, Law

James E. Rogers College of Law



Hsain Ilahiane, Ph.D.

Professor, Middle Eastern & North African Studies

College of Social & Behavioral Sciences

Professor, W.A. Franke Honors College



Kathryn Gallien, Ph.D.

Independent Scholar, Latin American & Gender Studies,

Center for Latin American Studies

Querencia

Querencia

(que-ren-cia)

(n) A place where one feels safe, a place from which one's strength of character is drawn; a place where one feels at home.

Barry Lopez. *The Rediscovery of North America*. 1992.



Author photo, Santa Fe, NM, 2024

Space, Place, and Identity

*Arizona Borderlands:
a palimpsest of Indigenous,
Spanish, and Anglo cultures,
spanning 3,000 years*

But...

Pandemic isolation and the
explosion of **digital information**
led to **increased screen-based
learning**



Place-Based Learning

- Based on immersive practices of Study Abroad
 - Experiential pedagogy: feet on the ground
 - Eyes, ears, and hearts open
 - Leaving one's comfort zone
- Honors the history, geography, cultures, arts, and peoples of *this* place
- Builds affinity for *this* place through 'study a-near'

Research Questions

- Does Place-Based Learning **increase student affinity** for Place?
- Does Place-Based Learning **affect student choices of major, minor?**
- Does Place-Based Learning **affect student employment choices** after graduation?

Can Querencia keep students in Arizona?

And..

How does Place-Based Learning methodology affect **faculty approaches to content** in their undergraduate courses?

The Plan

- Year One: planning site visits and content modules
 - Faculty expertise from across the School of Global Studies (LAS, SW Studies, MENAS, Geography, Anthropology) and History
 - * collateral benefit: collaboration among SGS faculty for a replicable field school model across and within sibling disciplines
- Year Two: pilot courses
 - Fall: Junior-level course
 - Spring: First-year course with Fall students as mentors
- Year Three: evaluation and assessment

Topoi (chronological)

- Indigenous Arizona
 - Hohokam and O'odham sites
- Spanish *Entrada*
 - Tumacacori, Anza Trail, San Xavier del Bac, Mission Garden
- Anglo, Black, and Asian Settlers
 - Ft. Lowell, Camp Naco, Tombstone
- Ecology and Adaptation
 - Desert Lab, San Xavier Farm, Borderlands Restoration Network in Patagonia
- Borders and Frontiers
 - Nogales, AZ, Titan Missile Museum

Sample course module

Ancient Arizona: Hohokam presence

○ Reading:

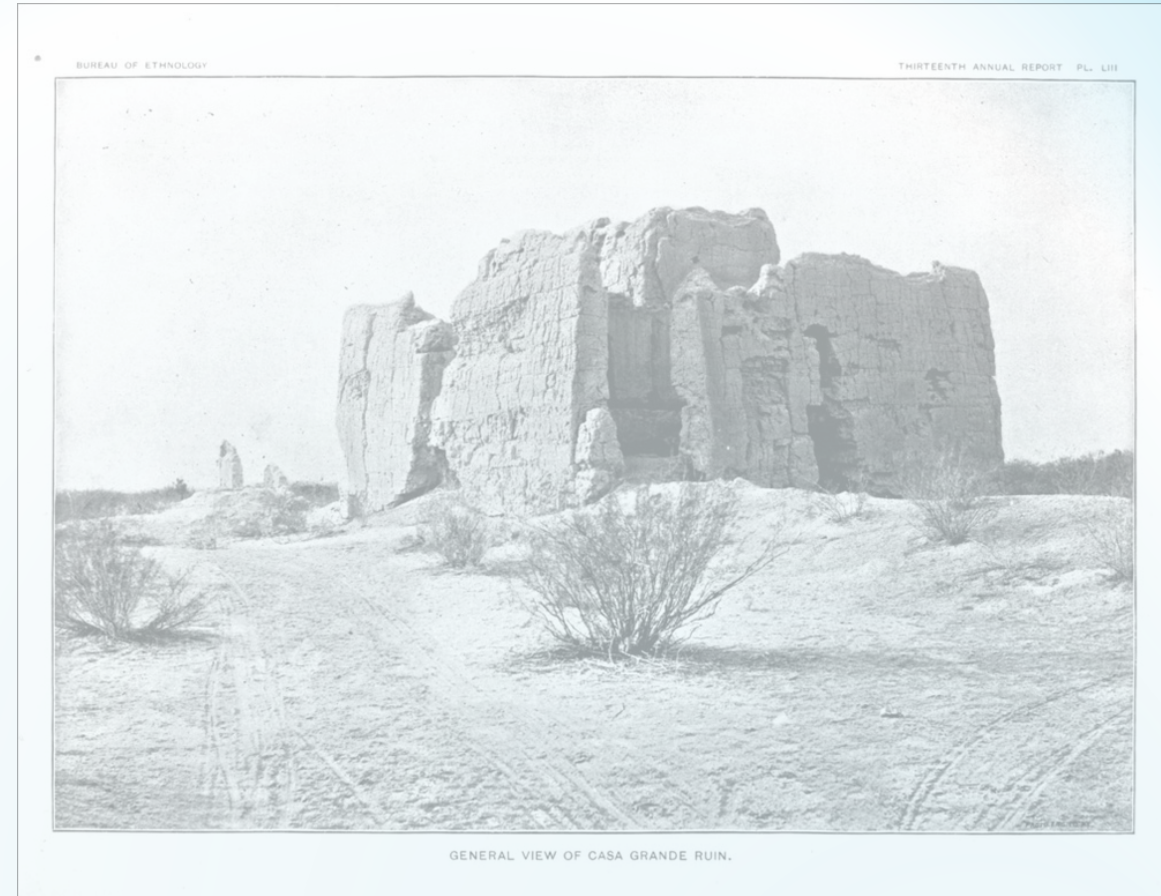
- Donald Bahr, Julian Hayden, et al,
The Short, Swift Time of Gods on Earth

○ Visits:

- University Ruin, Tucson
- Casa Grande National Monument
- Huugam Ki, Chandler

○ Resources

- Salt River Project Photo Archive
- Julian D. Hayden photograph collection, UA Special Collections



Data Collection: Students and Faculty

- Surveys at beginning and end of course about knowledge of Place
- Qualitative responses to site visits and readings
- Self-assessment of changes in perspective
- Multimedia projects to convey content absorbed, incorporating first-hand observation, multisensory responses, and archival materials

Panel: Blending Expertise and Place

- Dr. Michael Brescia
 - Spanish Influences and Water History
- Dr. Hsain Ilahiane
 - Islamic influences in Colonial New Spain
- Dr. Kathryn Gallien
 - Student Experience and Gender in the Borderlands



Value of Applied Pedagogy

*“... **place-based learning can be a vehicle for learning other academic content.** ... five themes in place-based education [...] can be adapted to different settings: **cultural studies; nature studies; real-world problem-solving; internships and entrepreneurial opportunities; and induction into community processes.** In all of these areas, regardless of the setting, our ultimate goal is to **transform the way that students interact with their world** as well as their willingness to ‘promote a more just and sustainable world.’”*

E. Langran and J. DeWitt (2020). *Navigating Place-Based Learning: mapping for a better future*. Palgrave.



Q&A



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CUES Distinguished Fellowships:

Nominations due March 31, 2025

Read more & view office hours >>>



Upcoming CUES Events

[View CUES Events](#)



April 2, 12-1PM

Featuring Brian Mayer, CUES Distinguished Fellow
College of Social & Behavioral Sciences

April 30, 1-3PM

Featuring members of the 2022 CUES Spanning Boundaries Team
BIO5 Institute | W.A. Franke Honors College |
College of Architecture, Planning & Landscape Architecture

