

The UCSD Ethnic Studies Department Presents:

Indigenous Studies Distinguished Speaker Series

The Legacy and Contribution of Native American Studies at UC Davis: A Lived Experience of More than Thirty Years

Dr. Inés Hernández-Avila

Wednesday, May 4, 2016

3:00-4:30p

Cross-Cultural Center, Comunidad Room

Reception to follow

This talk will provide a personal reflection on my experience as a faculty member in Native American Studies (NAS) at UC Davis (UCD). I joined the faculty in 1989 as a tenure-track Assistant Professor, but I had already been teaching there as a lecturer since about 1986. Before that I taught at Deganawidah-Quetzalcoatl University (D-QU), the tribal college founded by the same individuals who established NAS at UC Davis, Jack Forbes, David Risling, Jr., and Sarah Hutchison. At the time, I was a board member of D-QU and I lived on campus in the dorms. In many ways, I think of D-Q University and NAS at UC Davis as the twins (and I am not alone in this assessment). One twin, D-QU, struggled from the beginning. The school had a rocky path throughout its existence and some times were better than others. The other twin, NAS at UCD, has been more fortunate. This talk will tell the story of hemispheric Indigenous Studies through an oral narrative of “the twins,” as well as my/our involvement with founding the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA). In addition I will discuss our role regarding issues of NAGPRA, and our ongoing project of honoring the original peoples of the land, the Patwin, for facing our current challenges.



Inés Hernández-Avila is Professor of Native American Studies at UC Davis, a scholar, poet, and visual artist. She is Nimipu (Nez Perce), enrolled on the Colville Reservation in Washington, and Tejana. She has served twice as chair of Native American Studies, 1996-1998, and 2010-2013. She is one of founders of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA). Her research interests are in the study of contemporary indigenous literature of the U.S. and Mexico, contemplative practice as it relates to ancient Nahuatl and other indigenous philosophical traditions, and contemporary indigenous expressions of personal and collective autonomy and creativity in the service of social justice. In 2009 she received the Academic Senate Distinguished Teaching Award at the Graduate and Professional level. She has been active in the Davis Division of the Academic Senate. She is a Co-Director of the UCD (Mellon funded) Social Justice Initiative (2013-2016). She regularly has taught Summer Abroad in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, with a focus on the Zapatistas and on contemporary Mayan writers and visual artists. Her most recent publication is *Entre Guadalupe y Malinche: Tejanas in Literature and Art* (University of Texas Press, February 2016), co-edited with Norma E. Cantú. In Fall 2015 she had a fellowship at the Humanities Research Institute at UC Irvine and was a member of the Residential Research Group on the “History of Mortality.”

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