

# FROM THE CRACKS

## FAIR TRADE VIRTUAL COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING FROM ECUADOR

FUNDACIÓN PACHAYSANA



# PACHAYSANA

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The Pachaysana Institute (*Fundación Pachaysana*) is an international collective of educators, teaching artists, development specialists and community organizers who seek to bridge the divide between community and international development, as well as between local and global education. An Ecuador-based non-profit organization, Pachaysana has spent the last six years creating the “Fair Trade – Decolonial Education Model,” which it carries out through study abroad and community-based education programming in rural and urban communities of the Amazon and Andes. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we adapted our learning model for an intercultural and international online community. This online program has become a permanent offering that continues to break down barriers, allowing program participants to unlearn systemic and embodied injustices while creating together in community.



## INTRODUCTION

### "From the Cracks"

The public health crisis has disrupted our ways of “doing education,” exposing deep cracks in our higher education institutions; and the grassroots movement to end systemic racism, supported by many students, faculty and administrators, is revealing even more cracks. These fractures to our system intersect and it is now clear that none of us will return to an old “normal.”

Pachaysana sees these disruptions as opportunities to re-imagine international and intercultural learning, and we have created a virtual program that is born “from the cracks.” With members from our partnering Ecuadorian communities and students from our partner institutions in the US, this program reimagines intercultural learning and community engagement by using a “decolonial” framework and interactive, arts-based educational methods to plant seeds of change in the cracks, inspiring the [radical learning, healing and dreaming that these times demand from us.](#)

# HOW IT WORKS

This program has a flexible structure. Our partners can contract one or both of the following courses exclusively for their students (the "*adjunct*" model) or promote the program to their students as part of the "direct enrollment" model.

In all models, tuition includes a significant investment into our local community partners. We channel funds into several community programs: honorariums for local community educators, technology stipends that provide internet services for a period of six months to local Ecuadorian community educators, and a community project fund for the local community that is participating in the given course. Communities decide how they want funds invested.



## COURSES

The two courses are taught in English by Pachaysana faculty with a local knowledge component from community-based educators in Ecuador. The local educators make videos (in Spanish with English subtitles) that invite us into their communities where they take us on a learning journey. Each video includes interviews with other community members, community-based activities and several interactive assignments. They examine big human questions related to identity and systemic injustice, integrating epistemologies and voices from the Global South.

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### IDENTITY AND PACHA

This *content-based* course asks students to challenge their identities by broadening their epistemological and ontological lenses to see their individual and collective lives as interrelated with local and global ecologies. To synthesize this complicated process, we take advantage of our virtual exchange and examine *Pacha* as an interconnection between "place" and "space," challenging students to rethink who they are from the Kichwa triadic interpretation of ecology: our immediate territory (*llakta*), our surrounding natural environment (*allpa*), and our pluriversal space (*pacha*).

### CRITICAL INTERCULTURALITY AND "DECOLONIZING" EDUCATION

Any effort to decolonize our education must include *what, how, where, and with whom* we learn. This *content-based* course address decolonization through the lens of Critical Interculturality, integrating readings from Indigenous and Latin American scholars and including grassroots workshops led by local Ecuadorian community members. Using interactive methods, we will explore challenging concepts, including "Decolonization is not a Metaphor," Epistemic Justice, Border Thinking and Embodied Methodologies, identifying pathways from the "functional" to the "critical."

# "FROM THE CRACKS" TEAM

## DANIEL ACOSTA



**Instructor and Community Coordinator:** A communication specialist, community activist and defender of Mother Earth, Daniel's mission is to work with children and youth, helping to bring them into a more intimate relationship with the earth, agriculture and the protection of seeds. He lives in Santa Teresa de Pintag where his community projects crossover between art, liberation pedagogy and agro-ecology.

## CHELSEA VITERI



**Instructor and Program Director:** Born and raised in Quito, Ecuador, Chelsea completed her undergraduate (Theatre) and graduate (Community Development and Planning) studies at Clark University. She has worked with youth from diverse communities, utilizing artistic expression as a means to create community and foster creativity, implementing diverse mediums such as documentaries, poetry, theater and music. Her current research explores the cross-section of hip hop and gender in Quito.

## DANIEL BRYAN



**Instructor and Executive Director.** An educator, activist and artist, Daniel specializes in the use of participatory theatre as a means of education, empowerment and development. Originally from the United States, he has lived the last 20 years in Ecuador. He is a Fellow at the Baker Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies at Juniata College, and regularly lectures at universities and conferences across the United States. He holds an MA in Education from the University of Tulsa and an MFA in Theatre from UCLA.

## TESTIMONIALS



"Pachaysana's online programming was perfect for my graduate seminar, engaging students in a variety of participatory activities... hands on activities connected to student interests in culture, environment, and sustainable development in Latin America. Most highly recommended!"

Gregory Knapp – Assoc. Prof.  
and Director, Sustainability  
Studies, UT-Austin

"Even though I'm 'alone' in my dorm, I feel joyful and connected. *Identity and Pacha* proves that classroom material can cause real embodied shifts. It's amazing that even over Zoom, I can feel such community, care, and love from my classmates. I can't fully express how grateful I am for this course"

Angie Fike – Student,  
Wesleyan University

"Online classes with Pachaysana are project based. You don't just sit in a lecture, you create your own material and work in small groups. My favorite part was 'Zoom Theatre,' where we created these crazy, elaborate productions with costumes, scene transitions, the whole deal."

Will Sanders – Student, Clark  
University

[Click here for more Testimonials](#)



## FAQs

### For College Partners

- **"Adjunct" model flexibility:** Partners can
  - Design the calendars and schedules
  - Change the designated language of instruction
  - Determine the synchronous to asynchronous breakdown.
- **Transcripts:** All courses are accredited by Juniata College. Students receive an official Juniata transcript at no cost.
- **Costs:** \$8,500 for one course, \$16,000 for two courses
- **Enrollment Caps:** Colleges can enroll up to 16 students per course. For each student beyond 16, we may assess a per-student surcharge
- **Other courses:** Spanish-language *Theatre for Social Change* and *Storying and Re-Storying* courses are available per request.
- **Independent Studies and Internships:** English and Spanish-language virtual internships and independent studies are available upon request.
- **Workshops & Webinars:** We also lead a variety of experiences on diverse topics, from 1-hour interventions to semester-long trainings.



### For Students

- **Credit verification:** Consult with your college or university to see if "From the Cracks" will be accepted for credit. Be sure to tell them that students will receive an official transcript from Juniata College, an accredited college in Pennsylvania.
- **Costs:** One course for \$1,500 or two courses for \$2,800
- **Application:** There is a short application for students at [www.pachaysana.org](http://www.pachaysana.org) under **"Fall 2021 Programs"**
- **Fees and payments:** There are no application fees or deposits required. Payment for the program should be made approximately one month prior to the start of the course(s).
- **Spanish-language courses.** Please write us to ask about courses taught in Spanish. Students should have taken four semesters of college-level Spanish, or agree to a video conference call in Spanish to demonstrate proficiency.
- **How is Zoom used in the courses?** We encourage students to view our [Rehearsing Change Online video](#) to get a feel for our program.



## Contact Us

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