

## **SP25.02: Whither Aztlan: An Internship in Filmmaking and Community Organizing**

### **Overview**

This project involves the creation of a documentary, *Whither Aztlan*, which traces the myth of Aztlan from its origins in pre-Colombian history to its role in contemporary political resistance movements. Through interviews with leaders in the Xicano and Indigenous movements, and analysis of archival materials, the film connects the historical significance of Aztlan to current struggles for indigenous sovereignty and anti-colonial action. By exploring this evolution, the documentary reveals Aztlan as a symbol and catalyst for social change. The intern will support this work by assisting with research, sourcing archival materials, and helping to organize interviews.

### **What the student will DO and LEARN**

In this internship, the student will support the development of the *Whither Aztlan* documentary by participating in research, archival organization, and interview coordination. The intern will gain hands-on experience in documentary production, learning how to conduct historical research, manage interview logistics, and handle culturally sensitive topics. Working closely with community leaders and scholars, the student will learn how to document and contextualize social movements and explore the role of media in mobilizing political activism. This role is ideal for students looking to develop skills in both research and film production while gaining insight into political resistance and indigenous sovereignty.

### **Additional benefits**

Beyond direct experience with documentary production, the internship offers the student several additional benefits. The intern will develop a deeper understanding of indigenous sovereignty, Xicano national identity, and anti-colonial activism, gaining valuable context for studying social justice. By working with scholars, activists, and leaders from diverse communities, the intern will expand their professional network, potentially opening doors to future collaborations in academia or social justice work. Exposure to community-driven narratives and the responsibility to handle sensitive material with respect and accountability will strengthen the intern's skills in ethical research, cultural competence, and storytelling.

### **Additional qualifications**

The ideal candidate should have strong research and organizational skills, with an interest in documentary filmmaking, indigenous studies, or social justice. Familiarity with archival research, media production, or data management tools (e.g., Google Workspace, Airtable) would be beneficial. The intern should also demonstrate cultural competence, particularly in working with Chicana/o/x and indigenous communities, and have an openness to learning about sensitive historical and political topics.

### **Time commitment**

5 hrs/week for 30 weeks