Nahuatl is known as the language of the Nahua or Mexica peoples of Central Mexico. One of the 63 living indigenous languages officially recognized by the Mexican government, it is spoken today by nearly 1.7 million people. Classical Nahuatl was spoken in Tenochtitlan (Mexico City) and spanned the Aztec Empire.

The course is taught by native speakers from the Instituto de Docencia e Investigación Ethnológica de Zacatecas (IDIEZ) in Mexico through real time distance-learning video conferencing. IDIEZ instructors teach modern Nahuatl spoken in the Huasteca Veracruzana region of Mexico. Nahua culture, history, and modern-day life are at the center of Nahuatl language instruction at UNM.

“Learning Nahuatl throughout my master’s program has enabled me to gain a better understanding of Nahua cosmovision. My experience at the University of New Mexico would not have been the same without the opportunity to study an Indigenous language. Moreover, this experience has enhanced my perspective towards decolonizing practices and Indigenous movements in Mexico. By learning Nahuatl, I was also able to connect with my Indigenous heritage and improve my reflexivity as a Hispanic woman studying in the U.S.” Testimonio from Fatima Esmirna Del Angel Guevara, MA LAS (2020).