Between July 3rd and 11th, 2014, Maria Fernandez took a group of thirteen COS students to Havana, Cuba for an artistic and cultural learning experience. In general, Study Abroad courses provide rich opportunities for students to directly engage with a culture different from their own. Havana, Cuba proved to be an ideal classroom. President Obama’s recent announcement that eases travel restrictions to Cuba has created a great interest in travel to the island nation. Travel to Cuba remains unavailable to most Americans, however, unless they travel as members of one of the previously-approved groups—business, journalism, or cultural exchange. Hopefully, the President’s announcement will make it easier for American students to study in Cuba. In this visual presentation, Maria will share her impressions of this dynamic country, as well as the thoughts and creative expressions of her students.

Maria Fernandez earned her M.A. in English and Creative Writing from CSU, Sacramento in 1989. She has also recently completed advanced interdisciplinary studies in the Humanities at CSU, Dominguez Hills. Her poetry has appeared in Moving Mountain and Jefferson Monthly, and she was a guest poet on NPR’s West Coast Live. Maria has been teaching at College of the Siskiyous since 1994.

The purpose of the COS Speakers Series is to provide a forum in which all members of the College of the Siskiyous faculty and staff can share insights into topics and activities that are of interest to them with the COS community and the general public. It is not meant to be used for the purpose of promoting a particular political or religious agenda. All presentations should be of interest to a wide audience and be consistent with the spirit of openness and inclusiveness that is central to the College’s mission.