



ANTH 131 - Mesoamerican Archaeology Course Outline

Approval Date: 12/09/2009

Effective Date: 08/10/2010

SECTION A

Unique ID Number CCC000449071

Discipline(s) Anthropology

Division Arts and Humanities

Subject Area Anthropology

Subject Code ANTH

Course Number 131

Course Title Mesoamerican Archaeology

TOP Code/SAM Code 2202.00 - Anthropology / E - Non-Occupational

Rationale for adding this course to the curriculum Changed to reflect WebCMS

Units 3

Cross List N/A

Typical Course Weeks

Total Instructional Hours

Contact Hours

Lecture 54.00

Lab 0.00

Activity 0.00

Work Experience 0.00

Outside of Class Hours 108.00

Total Contact Hours 54

Total Student Hours 162

Open Entry/Open Exit No

Maximum Enrollment

Grading Option Letter Grade or P/NP

Distance Education Mode of Instruction

SECTION B

General Education Information:

SECTION C

Course Description

Repeatability May be repeated 0 times

Catalog Description An archaeological survey of the ancient civilizations of Mesoamerica. The course includes studies of the Olmecs, the Maya and the Aztecs, with

particular emphasis on Maya civilization. Students will explore the major archaeological sites of Mesoamerica through both primary sources and current archaeological research.

**Schedule
Description**

SECTION D

Condition on Enrollment

1a. Prerequisite(s): *None*

1b. Corequisite(s): *None*

1c. Recommended

- ENGL 90 with a minimum grade of C or better

1d. Limitation on Enrollment: *None*

SECTION E

Course Outline Information

1. Student Learning Outcomes:

- Interpret the major archaeological sites of Mesoamerica and the cultural contributions of Mesoamerican peoples using the theories and methods of anthropology.
- Discuss the settlement of the Americas using evidence from the archaeological and ethnographic record.

2. Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Identify and distinguish between the Late Pleistocene, early Formative, Classic, and Post-Classic periods of ancient Mexico.
- Discuss the archaeological approaches and methods for interpreting the fossil record and cultural practices of pre-historic peoples.
- Differentiate between characteristics of the major archaeological sites of Mesoamerican chronological periods.
- Explain the aesthetic and cultural differences of the pre-historic peoples of Mesoamerica using archaeological evidence.
- Summarize the unique qualities of Mesoamerican indigenous languages, hieroglyphics and calendar.
- Examine the various hypotheses for the "decline" of early Mesoamerican civilizations.
- G.

3. Course Content

- Introduction
- Geography and Chronological Periods
- Dating techniques and archaeological sciences
- Early Hunters and Paleolithic North America
- Paleoindian migration theories
 - Clovis First, Solutrean Hypothesis, Microblade evidence, and Pacific theories
 - The role of mtDNA in theorizing about the earliest peoples
 - Discussion of alternative theories not supported by evidence
- Projectile points and stone tool technologies
 - Clovis and Folsom points
 - atlatls
 - microblades
 - choppers, scrapers, cores, etc.
- Phases of the Early Archaic (Diablo, Ajuereado, etc.)
- Plant domestication and cultivation

- a. teosinte hypotheses
 - b. maiz and early horticulture
- I. Tehuacan Valley Phases (El Riego, Abejas, etc.)
- J. Early Pre-Classic Farming and Early Village Life (San Jose Mogote, Tlatilco shaft-tomb art, etc.)
- K. Middle Pre-Classic (El Arbolillo, Zacatenco, etc.)
- L. Late Pre-Classic (Chupicuaro, Cuicuilco, Tetimpa, etc.)
- M. Early Civilizations- San Lorenzo and La Venta Olmec
 - a. Hierarchy
 - b. Religious states
 - c. Patterns of rule
 - d. Art/Archaeology
- N. Long-count calendar
 - a. Tres Zapotes, links with Maya and Aztec calendar systems
 - b. Chalcatzingo
- O. Monte Alban and Zapoteca (early phases)
- P. Classic Period - Teotihuacan
 - a. Archaeology of Teotihuacan
 - b. Art and religion in Teotihuacan
- Q. Yucatan and Maya cultures
 - a. Languages (Proto-Maya and the Mesoamerican Language Tree)
 - b. Popol Vuh and Chilam Balam
 - c. Yucatecan archaeology: The Ruta Puuc
 - d. Yucatecan archaeology: Tulum and Coba
 - e. Sites of Chiapas and Oaxaca
 - f. Sites of the Peten, Guatemala
 - g. Sites of Belize and Honduras
- R. Cacao and the Pochteca
- S. The Mesoamerican Ball Game
 - a. Links to the Popol Vuh
 - b. Archaeological evidence- Ballcourts of Mesoamerica
 - c. Archaeological evidence of Ball Game; gear, rules, etc.
- T. The Post-Classic- Toltec and Chichimecas
- U. Pre-Conquest Aztec, Mexica, Nuhua and Nahua peoples
- V. Aztec society and culture
- W. Aztecs in 1519
- X. Tenochtitlan and the Aztec empire
- Y.

4. Methods of Instruction:

Field Experience:

Lecture:

Other (Specify):

Other: Course is primarily lecture-based, with group fieldwork projects meant to stimulate interest in archaeology as both an academic discipline and a "real-world" career field. Students will use ArtStor regularly in this course.

5. Methods of Evaluation: Describe the general types of evaluations for this course and provide at least two, specific examples.

Typical classroom assessment techniques

Exams/Tests --

Quizzes --

Papers --
Oral Presentation --
Class Participation --

Additional assessment information:

Students may be evaluated based upon written and oral examinations, map quizzes, class discussion participation, written research papers, class presentations, and field reports.

For example:

1. A map quiz that covers the unique environmental regions of pre-Historic Mesoamerica;
2. A group presentation on an archaeological site that exhibits the notion of trade and/or slavery between Maya and Aztec peoples

Letter Grade or P/NP

6. Assignments: State the general types of assignments for this course under the following categories and provide at least two specific examples for each section.

A. Reading Assignments

Students will read textbooks and other supplemental reading assignments.

For example:

1. Read Chapter 5 in the Coe textbook and discuss in a one-page response whether you agree with the author's claim that the earliest Americans were part of the "Lost Tribes of Israel".
2. Read the handout on Paleoindian migration theories and discuss if Late Pleistocene climate could have affected stone tool development in the New World.

Students will practice the analysis of primary source materials and write analytical essays based on readings.

B. Writing Assignments

Students will practice the analysis of primary source materials and write analytical essays based on readings.

For example:

1. Seriation Exercise - arrange the pictures of pottery designs in a logical classificatory sequence and explain the rationale you used to do so.
2. Choose one site excavation from either the Ruta Puuc or the Peten and write a "news article" about it which includes the basic facts and a site map in addition to explaining what you find most interesting about it.

C. Other Assignments

Fieldwork and out-of-class museum exhibits are a crucial component of this course.

7. Required Materials

A. EXAMPLES of typical college-level textbooks (for degree-applicable courses) or other print materials.

Book #1:

Author: Coe, Michael
Title: Mexico: From the Olmecs to the Aztecs
Publisher: Thames and Hudson
Date of Publication: 2009
Edition: 6th

Book #2:

Author: Sharer, Robert J. and Traxler, Loa P.

Title: The Ancient Maya
Publisher: Stanford University Press
Date of Publication: 2005
Edition: 6th
Book #3:
Author: Schelle, Linda & Friedl, David
Title: A Forest of Kings
Publisher: William Morrow, New York
Date of Publication: 1994
Edition: 2 (revised)

B. Other required materials/supplies.