

Spring 2-1-2019

ANTY 354H.01: Mesoamerican Prehistory

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MESOAMERICAN PREHISTORY, ANTY 354



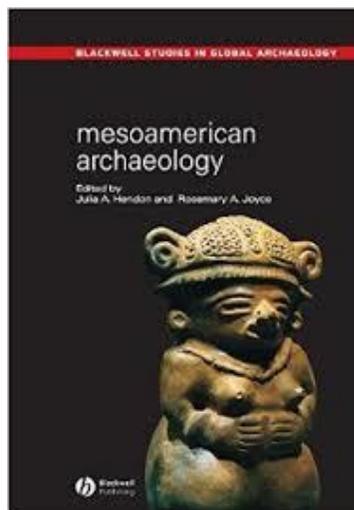
Temple I in the ancient Maya city of Tikal in present day Guatemala

Instructor: Jean Larmon; Office: Corbin 346; Office hours: Monday/Wednesday 11:00-1:00, or by appointment; E-mail: jean.larmon@mso.umt.edu

Purpose:

Mesoamerica is comprised of modern-day Mexico and northern Central America. This course introduces ancient Mesoamerica and the diverse civilizations that thrived within. Our exploration of Mesoamerican cultures will span 12,000 years of occupation, from hunter-gatherers, through the development of sedentary villages and cities, to the Spanish conquest. We will examine Olmec, Maya, and Aztec archaeological sites to better understand the development of Mesoamerican cultures. The course will first offer an introduction into the cultures of Mesoamerica, with the first five weeks taking a chronological approach to their development. This portion of the class will provide the framework to better understand the second half of the course. To dive deeper into Mesoamerican archaeology and culture, in the second portion of the semester we will explore the region topic by topic, including: ideology, political systems, economy, environment, agriculture, gender, trade, conflict, and “collapse”. Taking this approach to the class will both help you learn about the cultures of Mesoamerica and give you a better idea of the types of questions archaeologists ask and how those questions are answered. We will learn

about both the monumental and day-to-day lives of ancient Mesoamericans, as well as how we know about those things today.



Learning objectives:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the Aztecs, Maya, and other cultures that make up the Mesoamerican archaeological record.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of key topics of major interest and significance to archaeologists today
3. Demonstrate an understanding of key methods and theoretical perspectives that guide contemporary archaeology in Mesoamerica.
4. Gain an appreciation of the complexity and sophistication of large-scale Native American Societies.

Required text:

Hendon, Julia A., and Rosemary A. Joyce, 2003, *Mesoamerican Archaeology*. Blackwell Publishing. Several articles are also required, available from the Mansfield library; the PDFs are on Moodle for your convenience.

Tests and assignments:

There is one test, the midterm. It is worth 100 points. We will have a review session and go over the format of the test prior to test day.

There are two quizzes, each worth 50 points. These are to check your progress and understanding of the material at key points in the semester. The first will be a map quiz with some multiple choice. The second will be short answer, which might include multiple choice, true/false, matching, etc.

There is also a written assignment, due **April 19** examining a question or issue in Mesoamerican archaeology. Papers should be submitted in class on that Friday. There is also an associated 10 minute presentation about your paper. The paper will be worth 100 points and the presentation will be worth 50 points. I will give you more information on this final paper and presentation later in the semester.

Policies and Expectations:

Conduct: Students must act with academic integrity. Students are expected not to cheat, plagiarize, or give false excuses. To gain a better understanding of plagiarism, please look at the University of Illinois' [page on citing sources](#). Any academic misconduct in this class, including plagiarism, will be subject to an academic penalty (up to receiving a failing grade in this class) and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#).

Attendance and participation: Class attendance is crucial to gain mastery of the material. 40 points of your grade will be based on attendance and participation. You are expected to not only be present, but be engaged in class discussions and attentive to class lectures. You have one excused absence built into your grade. With appropriate documentation/explanation, additional absences can be excused. While participation throughout the course is important, it will be much more pertinent in the second half of the course, when there are some discussion based portions of class.

You can find general University of Montana policies [here](#), **including all information/deadlines regarding dropping the course**

Final Grades: The +/- system is not used in this class. 90-100% = A; 80-89% = B; 70-79% = C; 60-69 % = D; Below a 60% is failing.

Grading Scale

Category	Percent of Grade
Attendance/Participation	80 points
Quiz 1	50 points
Midterm	100 points
Quiz 2	50 points
Final Presentation	50 points
Final Paper	100 points
Total	430 points

Late Work: Without a valid excuse/documentation, late work *will not be accepted*. If you foresee an issue with any deadlines, quiz, or test dates, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can work something out.

Disability Accommodations: Students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodations in this course. To request course modifications please contact me as soon as possible. I am committed to ensuring your full participation and educational opportunity. I will work with you and Disability Services in the accommodation process. For more information, visit the [Disability Services website](#) at or call 406.243.2243 (Voice/TTY).

Incompletes: An incomplete will be considered only when requested by the student. At the discretion of the instructor, incompletes are given to students who missed a *portion* of the class because of documented serious health or personal problems during the session. Students have one year to complete the course; requirements are negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

I reserve the right to change and adapt readings, topics, and classroom activities to better meet the interests and flow of the class. If there are changes to the reading schedule, I will let you know in advance of the previous class session. A couple of times in the semester, I may request feedback from students and I am open to thoughts and discussions regarding topics they would like to spend more time with.



PLEASE Turn off you phone or mute the ringer, and *stow it away!* **I will initially allow computers in class for note taking; however, if I notice that students are visiting unrelated websites or distracting others, I will no longer allow computers and all notes will have to be taken by hand.**

TOPIC SCHEDULE

	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Week 1 (Jan 7-11)			Syllabus Day
Week 2 (Jan 14-18)	Intro to Archaeology/ Ethics	Cultures of Mesoamerica—The earliest traditions	Cultures of Mesoamerica—The earliest traditions
Week 3 (Jan 21-25)	MLK Jr. DAY	Cultures of Mesoamerica—Oaxaca and the Olmec	Cultures of Mesoamerica—Olmec
Week 4 (Jan 28-Feb 1)	Cultures of Mesoamerica—Maya	Cultures of Mesoamerica—Maya	Cultures of Mesoamerica—Teotihuacan
Week 5 (Feb 4-Feb 8)	Cultures of Mesoamerica—Aztec	Cultures of Mesoamerica—Aztec/wrap-up	GUEST LECTURE
Week 6 (Feb 11- Feb 15)	Origin Stories	Origin Stories (Popol Vuh movie)	Map Quiz 1
Week 7 (Feb 18-Feb 22)	PRESIDENT'S DAY	Ideology	Ideology— <i>case study</i>
Week 8 (Feb 25-Mar 1)	Midterm Study Session	Midterm	Movie—TBD
Week 9 (Mar 4-Mar 8)	Political System— <i>Case study</i>	Social Inequality — <i>Case Study</i>	Household and Economy
Week 10 (Mar 11-Mar 15)	Household and Economy— <i>Case Study</i>	Gender in Mesoamerica	Gender in Mesoamerica and <i>Case Study</i>
Week 11 (Mar 18-Mar 22)	Environment/Landscape; Agriculture	Landscape/Agriculture— <i>Case study</i>	MOVIE?
Week 12 (Mar 25-Mar 29)	SPRING BREAK		
Week 13 (Apr 1-Apr 5)	The Calendar, Math, Writing	The Calendar, Math, Writing— <i>Case study</i>	Quiz 2
Week 14 (Apr 8-Apr 12)	Trade/Long-distance contact	TBD	Final Paper/Pres. Group work
Week 15 (Apr 15- Apr 19)	Conflict	Collapse or Survival	Colonialism
Week 16 (Apr 22-Apr 26)	Final Presentations	Final Presentations	Final Presentations

Week 17 (Apr 29- May 3)	FINALS
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READING SCHEDULE—THESE ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITH ADEQUATE NOTICE

	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Week 1 (Jan 7-11)			Syllabus Day
Week 2 (Jan 14-18)	http://theconversation.com/rights-of-the-dead-and-the-living-clash-when-scientists-extract-dna-from-human-remains-94284 Text: Chapter 1	Text :Chapter 1 Early cultures of Ency. Entry	Early cultures of Ency. Entry Text: Chapter 2
Week 3 (Jan 21-25)	MLK Jr. DAY	Text: Chapter 2	The Olmec and Their Contemporaries
Week 4 (Jan 28-Feb 1)	Classic Period of Mesoamerica, the Maya	Text: Chapter 6	Text: Chapter 4
Week 5 (Feb 4-Feb 8)	Postclassic Cultures of Mesoamerica	Text: Chapter 11	NO READING— Guest Lecture
Week 6 (Feb 11- Feb 15)	Origin Stories Popol Vuh pages 50-287	Origin Stories (Popol Vuh movie) No reading☺	Map Quiz 1
Week 7 (Feb 18-Feb 22)	PRESIDENT’S DAY	Text: Chapter 10	Text: Chapter 10; Lucero 2018
Week 8 (Feb 25-Mar 1)	Study for Midterm	Study for Midterm	Movie—TBD Online??
Week 9 (Mar 4-Mar 8)	Feinman 2017	Text: Chapter 5	Tringham 1991; De Lucia 2017
Week 10 (Mar 11-Mar 15)	De Lucia and Overholtzer 2015	Worlds of Gender: Chapter 6	De Lucia 2008; Halperin 2017
Week 11 (Mar 18-Mar 22)	Text: Chapter 7	Harrison-Buck 2012	No reading☺
Week 12 (Mar 25-Mar 29)	SPRING BREAK		
Week 13 (Apr 1-Apr 5)	Wichmann 2006 http://www.famsi.org/research/pitts/index.html	Milbrath 2017	Quiz 2

Week 14 (Apr 8-Apr 12)	Text: Chapter 3 Nichols et al. 2009	TBD	Final Paper/Pres. Group work
Week 15 (Apr 15- Apr 19)	No reading☺	Pool and Loughlin 2015 Hoggarth and Awe 2015	Text: Chapter 12 FINAL PAPER DUE
Week 16 (Apr 22-Apr 26)	Final Presentations	Final Presentations	Final Presentations
Week 17 (Apr 29- May 3)	FINALS		