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Spring 1-2016

ARTH 433.01: Ancient American Art

H. Rafael Chacon

University of Montana - Missoula, hrafael.chacon@umontana.edu

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THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. PLEASE CHECK MOODLE REGULARLY FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES.

TERM: Spring 2016

COURSE INFORMATION:

ARTH 433, Section 01, *Ancient American Art*, 3 credits, School of Art;

prerequisites: either section of the introductory art history sequence (ARTH 200 or 201) or consent of instructor

PROFESSOR INFORMATION:

H. Rafael Chacón, Ph.D.

Office Hours: M-TR, 11-12 AM, (Fine Arts 305B, x.2735, hrafael.chacon@umontana.edu). Messages may also be left in my School of Art Office mailbox (FA 205).

MEETINGS:

Tuesday and Thursday, 9:40-11 A.M.

Fine Arts 302

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND DESCRIPTION: This course is an investigation of the major urban and ceremonial centers of the Americas before 1492. It emphasizes the civilizations of Mesoamerica, Central America, the Caribbean basin, and the Andean empires of South America, as well as sites in North America. The course analyzes how the visual arts articulated an indigenous cosmology. It focuses on various strategies for reading the structure and meaning encoded in the layout of ritual centers, cities, stone sculpture, murals, ceramics, precious metals, and textiles.

FORMAT: I teach this course in a slide lecture format, but I also encourage open, frank, and fair discussion in the classroom. The syllabus below is arranged thematically and on a weekly basis. Discussions and debates often develop lives of their own and sometimes unfinished work spills over into the next session.

COMPETENCIES OR STUDENT-LEARNING GOALS IN ART HISTORY:

The following represent the course objectives of the art history and criticism curriculum:

- **Art History:** to gain a comprehensive and global view of the development of history and culture; to understand that art is a manifestation of intellectual history; and to study the various methodologies used to gain that knowledge.
- **Visual Literacy and Language:** to develop knowledge of visual language and the terminology needed for the analysis and discussion of works of art.
- **Technical Skills:** to learn the range of materials and technical applications employed by artists over time.
- **Critical Thinking:** to gain knowledge of and competence in critically analyzing visual images, past and present, and express their relevance to society through informed discourse, both verbal and written.

POLICIES:

Students will utilize Moodle for the syllabus and other course materials. **THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. PLEASE CHECK MOODLE REGULARLY FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

Requirements and Grading Policies:

Good performance in this class and in art history in general rests on the ability to develop a grasp of hundreds of images representing the creative output of a people during a specific period of time and to analyze the primary and secondary texts that illuminate their creative process. You are expected to engage the ideas that motivated and/or shaped their artistic endeavors, to stay abreast of the readings, and to share your thoughts and ideas with the class.

Attendance/Absence Policy:

I expect at least 85% attendance and occasional participation to earn a "C" and 95-100% participation with consistent and thoughtful contribution to class discussion for an "A".

Excused Absences:

What warrants an excused absence? A death in the family, a court or legal issue (for example: jury duty, parole meeting, court date, incarceration), an appointment for public benefits or entitlements that cannot be scheduled at any other time, or a severe health issue. What is a severe health issue? Being contagious (with flu or pink eye, for example), an incident that requires a visit to the emergency room or hospitalization, or having a medical condition requiring an immediate appointment that cannot be scheduled at any other day/time. Upon returning to class, the student must show documentation regarding the exact date of the absence (except in the case of family death). Absences due to a severe health issue can be excused only if, upon returning, the student brings a signed note from his or her attending health care provider (physician or RN, not a member of the secretarial staff) stating that the student was ill the day of the absence and sought medical attention. The note must include: the exact date of class missed and the actual signature of the attending physician or RN and his/her contact information.

Credit/No Credit Option:

When you matriculate in this class and register for a traditional grade, you make a contract with the professor to do your best and accept the grade assigned. I do not convert a traditional grade to credit/no credit and release a student from her contract unless I have evidence of an emergency, health crisis, or extreme personal situation in which the student cannot possibly finish the course assignments in the normal fashion. The possibility of failing the class or earning a low grade and lowering your overall GPA does not rise to that standard.

Drop/Add Forms:

As per the explanation in the previous paragraph, I do not sign drop/add forms after week 10 of the term.

TEXTS AND READINGS: The readings can be found in two books: Mary Miller, *Art of Mesoamerica* for the first half of the term and Rebecca Stone-Miller, *Art of the Andes* for the second half. Additional readings, mostly articles and portions of books, will be posted on Moodle. In the syllabus, readings are grouped on a weekly basis. Those

marked with an asterisk (*) are optional. I shall always let you know where we are on the syllabus, but stay abreast of the readings because you will be called upon in class and the texts will inevitably show up in quizzes.

QUIZZES: There will be three quizzes staggered throughout the semester. These quizzes combined are worth 30 % of your grade. All quizzes will have extra credit opportunities. **MISSED QUIZZES CANNOT BE MADE UP AND ABSOLUTELY NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL.**

RESEARCH PAPER AND PROJECT: This project is worth 50 % of your grade. The class will work in small teams (4-6 people) to accomplish a major hands-on project by November 2. Each one of you will write an individual research paper. See additional handouts for my grading criteria. The research paper will be due after mid-semester (week 9) and will be revised and resubmitted. **LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Grades:	Participation	20 %	200 points
	Quizzes (3)	30 %	300 pts.
	Research Paper/Project	50 %	500 pts.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Access/Special Needs/Disabilities:

If you have any access concerns, special needs, and/or learning disabilities, medical conditions, and/or physical impairments that may impede the successful completion of this course, please contact the office of Disability Services for Students (DSS) at x. 2243 (Lommasson Center 154) and speak with me as soon as possible.

Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code:

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at www.umd.edu/SA/VPSA/Index.cfm/page/1321.

Use of Cell Phones, Blackberries, and other Electronic Devices:

THE USE OF TAPE RECORDERS, CELLPHONES, CAMERAS, IPODS, LAPTOPS AND/OR RECORDING DEVICES IS ALLOWED IN THE CLASSROOM BUT UNDER STRICT CONDITIONS. ADDRESS ALL REQUESTS IN WRITING TO ME.

Disruptions and distractions in the classroom caused by cell phones and other electronic devices are not conducive to classroom learning. Please turn off all cell phones, Blackberries, I-phones, and other mobile devices or set them on vibrate prior to the start of class. Students failing to do so will be asked to leave class and may not be allowed to return to class that day at the instructor's discretion. However, if you are in the midst of an emergency, please communicate with me about your situation, immediately.

Cell phones shall not be used during testing. Students using a cell phone or any other electronic device during quizzes violate testing procedures and shall be dealt with according to the policies and procedures outlined by the University's Student Conduct Code. The use of I-pods, laptops, or other recording devices for note-taking is strictly forbidden unless you have received explicit written permission from me.

Research consistently shows that students who use electronic devices

for note-taking rather than traditional handwriting learn less and perform more poorly in college-level courses. See:
<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/>
<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/memory-medic/201303/why-writing-hand-could-make-you-smarter>
<http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/05/to-remember-a-lecture-better-take-notes-by-hand/361478/>

Syllabus

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Week 1

Introduction

1492: the Tainos of the Caribbean and the Europeans

Readings:

Bethel, "American on the Eve of Conquest,"
Elliott, J.H., *The Old World and the New, 1492-1650*, 1-53.
Arrom, Juan José, "The Tainos: Principal Inhabitants of
Columbus's Indies, 509-13.
Bray, Warwick, "The Chiefdoms of the New World," 535-38.
Montaigne, Michel de, "On Cannibals," *Essays* (1580), 207-17.*

Week 2

Mesoamerican Origins: the Olmec and West Mexico

Eliade, Mircea, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 20-65.
Miller, Mary, *Art of Mesoamerica*, 7-37 and 53-59.

TR, September 6, No Class

Week 3

The Great Empires: Teotihuacan

Miller, 65-82.
Carlson, JB, "Rise and Fall of the City of the Gods,"
Furst, P., "Morning Glory and Mother Goddess"
Kubler, "Iconographic Aspects..."
Heyden, "An Interpretation of the Cave in Teotihuacan"
Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, 382-85.*

Week 4

The Maya City States

Miller, 38-48, 59-65, 103-21, and 122-67.

Week 5

The Valley of Mexico: the Toltecs

Miller 170-95.

TR, February 25, QUIZ #1

Week 6

T, NO CLASS (BFA Review)

The Aztecs

Miller, 195-230.
Townsend, Richard, "The Renewal of Nature at the Temple of
Tlaloc, 170-85.*

TR, March 4, Term Project Assigned.

Week 7

T, March 8, Aztecs continued

TR, March 10, North American Connections

Snow, Dean, *The Archeology of North America*, 60-89.

Week 8

El Dorado: Metallurgy in Central and South America

Townsend, Richard and Carolina Valencia, "The Art of Gold in Ancient America."*

Muse, "Lost City"

Davies, "Keepers of the World"

Zuidema, Tom, "The Tairona of Ancient Colombia."*

Townsend, Richard and Rafael Chacón, "The Art of Gold in Ancient America," 18-21.*

Week 9

Andean Centers: Chavín de Huantar

Stone-Miller, Rebecca, *Art of the Andes*, 7-49.

Burger, Richard, "The Sacred Center of Chavín de Huantar," 265-77.*

Chavín Acoustics

Townsend and Chacón, "Art in Central America and the Andean Region," 1-4.*

T, March 22, Term papers due at the start of class. ABSOLUTELY NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS.

The South Coast of Peru: the People of Paracas

Stone-Miller, 50-82.

Townsend and Chacón, "Paracas, and "Textiles of South America," 4-11, 21-23.*

Week 10

Last week to sign Drop/Add slips.

T, March 29, QUIZ #2

TR, March 31, Nazca

Townsend, "Deciphering the Nazca World...," 116-39.*

Week 11

SPRING BREAK

Week 12

The North Coast of Peru: the Moche

Stone-Miller, 83-118, 162-70, and 172-76.

Donnan, Christopher B., "Deer Hunting in Moche Art: the Ritual Quest," 97-103.

The Altiplano of Peru and Bolivia:

Tiwanaku and Wari

Stone-Miller, 119-50.

Townsend and Chacón, "Tiwanaku" and "Wari," 13-15.*

Week 13

The Inka Empire

Stone-Miller, 181-218.

Morris, Craig, "Signs of Division, Symbols of Unity: Art in the Inka Empire," 521-28.

Townsend and Chacón, "Inca" 15-17.*

Week 14

T, April 26, Quiz #3

TR, April 28, Presentations begin.

Week 15

T, May 3, Presentations continue.

TR, May 5, NO CLASS.

Finals Week