

ANTHROPOLOGY 2232F-001
Special Topics in Regional Archaeology

Topic: Mesoamerica

Department of Anthropology

BRIEF COURSE OUTLINE
Fall 2021

Version date: July 20, 2021

Class day/time: Mondays 7:00-10:00 pm

Classroom: UC-1225

Instructor: Alec McLellan

Office: SSC-3328

Office hours: TBA

Email: amclel7@uwo.ca

Credit Value: 0.5

Requisites:

Antirequisites: none.

Prerequisites: Anthropology 1020 (formerly Anthropology 1020E), or one of Anthropology 1025F/G or Anthropology 1021A/B and one of Anthropology 1026F/G or Anthropology 1022A/B, or Anthropology 2100.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description:

In this course, we will focus on the study of Mesoamerican Prehistory from the first inhabitants of the New World (ca. 10,000 BC) to the arrival of the Spanish in the 16th-century AD. Readings and discussions will trace the developmental history of Mesoamerican peoples, such as the Olmec, Teotihuacanos, Toltecs, Zapotecs, Aztecs, and the Maya. We will explore new discoveries in the advent of agriculture, the growth of towns and cities, the construction of monumental public works, calendrics and systems of writing, administrative and marketing systems, urbanism, warfare and conquest, and decline and collapse of civilizations. The goal of this course is to introduce students to early complex societies and to understand their importance in present and future societies.

Course Materials:

- The course will consist of easily-accessible online journals and specific chapters from online books. Required readings are available in digital format through the "Course Readings" feature in the course OWL site. Here is a sample of the sources we will use in this course:

- Berdan, F. (2014). *Aztec archaeology and ethnohistory*. Cambridge University Press.
- Canuto, M. A., & Yaeger, J. (2000). *The archaeology of communities: a new world perspective*. Routledge, London.
- Carballo, D. M. (2016). *Urbanization and religion in ancient Central Mexico*. Oxford University Press.
- Cowgill, G. L. (2015). *Ancient Teotihuacan*. Cambridge University Press.
- Luzzadder-Beach, S., T. Beach, and N. Dunning. (2020). Wetland farming and the Early Anthropocene: Globally upscaling from the Maya Lowlands with LiDAR and multiproxy verification. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 1-13.
- Manzanilla, L. R. (2017). *Multiethnicity and migration at Teopanazco: investigations of a Teotihuacan neighborhood center*. University Press of Florida.
- Mixter, D. (2020). Community resilience and urban planning during the ninth-century Maya collapse: A case study from Actuncan, Belize. *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*, 30(2), 219-237.
- Nichols, D. L., & Pool, C. A. (2012). *The Oxford handbook of Mesoamerican archaeology*. Oxford University Press.
- Pool, C. A. (2007). Olmec archaeology and early Mesoamerica. *Cambridge University Press*.
- Rosenswig, Robert M., and Antonio Martínez Tuñón. "Changing Olmec trade routes understood through Least Cost Path analysis." *Journal of Archaeological Science* 118 (2020): 105146.

Evaluation:

Timeline and Summary of Assignments:

- Active Learning – 10%
- Quizzes – 10%
- Assignment 1: Essay Reference List – 15%
- Assignment 2: Essay Implications and Impact – 15%
- Essay – 25%
- Final exam – 25%

Active Learning - 10%

This mark is based on your attendance and participation in lectures and tutorials. A portion of your mark will be given for attendance in lectures and tutorials, but a majority of the grade is given for actively engaging with the subject matter by 1) raising questions during lectures and tutorials, 2) offering opinions and individual perspectives on lecture and tutorial topics, 3) engaging and respectfully discussing topics with your peers.

Quizzes - 10%

There will be an open-book, quiz to complete on OWL each week starting after Week 1. The purpose of the quizzes is to encourage you to do the readings so that you will be prepared for class discussions and to assess whether you have understood the main points of the readings. Quizzes will be open from Tuesday to Monday prior to the class. No make-up quizzes will be offered but the lowest quiz grade will be dropped, for a total of 10 quizzes counting toward your final mark. Each quiz will be worth 1% of your final mark.

Assignment 1: Essay Reference List – 15%

For this assignment, identify your topic and reference (at least) six scholarly sources that will support your research. Topics will be provided in the syllabus, but you may suggest your own with approval from the instructor. Reference style is up to you (e.g. SAA, MLA) but it must be consistent throughout the document. Marks are given for spelling and punctuation, but also for the relevance of the scholarly sources to the topic. You should try to incorporate new research, as well as specific scholarly examples (i.e. case studies) to support your choice in topic. Provide 1-2 sentences following the reference that describes how/why it is relevant to the topic.

The essay reference list assignment should be submitted on OWL by **Monday, September 27th, 2021**. The essay reference list must be 300-500 words and include a word count at the end. A marking rubric will be provided to you prior to the submission of the assignment.

Assignment 2: Essay Implications and Impact – 15%

This assignment should describe how the expertise, knowledge, analysis, discovery, or insight, presented in your essay could be put to a beneficial use, both inside and outside academia. Benefits inside academia could be: to the discipline and future scholarship, research methods or methodology, the curriculum, your research area, etc. Benefits outside academic could be: commercial activity, social enterprise, professional practice, public health, the quality of the environment, etc. For all career paths, it is important for students to be able to articulate the potential impact of their work. This is an opportunity to say why your research *matters*.

The essay reference list assignment should be submitted on OWL by **Monday, October 25th, 2021**. The essay implications and impact assignment must be 300-500 words and include a word count at the end. A marking rubric will be provided to you prior to the submission of the assignment.

Essay – 25%

The essay is based on the work you completed in earlier assignments (Essay Reference List and Essay Implications and Impact). Use the information you collected on your topic throughout the course to write your essay. You may draw directly from your past assignments to complete this assignment. I will provide topics in the syllabus of the course.

The essay assignment should be submitted on OWL by **Monday, December 6th, 2021**. The essay assignment must be 1800-2000 words and include a word count at the end. A marking rubric will be provided to you prior to the submission of the assignment.

Final Exam – 25%

The final exam will be in-person between **December 10th and December 21st**. The exam will be based on assigned readings, material presented in class, and videos. The exam will be composed of multiple-choice questions, short answer questions, and essay questions that will require you to refer to broader issues explored in the course.

Academic Statements and Policies

Seeking Special Accommodations:

No accommodations will be granted retroactively more than 10 days after an assignment's due date or a missed quiz. Please see your academic counsellor immediately if you will be seeking accommodations based on medical or compassionate grounds. A range of [support services](#) is available.

Statement on Essay Course Designation:

In order to pass an essay course, the student must exhibit some minimal level of competence in essay writing and the appropriate level of knowledge of the content of the course.

As essay-designated course, all three writing assignments and the final take-home exam must be submitted and three of the four must receive passing grades in order to pass this course.

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus.

If the conditions for an SRA are **not** met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students should contact their home Academic Counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

Statement on Plagiarism:

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing. It is also a scholastic offence to submit the same work for credit in more than one course. Plagiarism is a major [scholastic offence](#).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and [Turnitin.com](#).

Policy on Laptops and Cellphones in Class:

Laptops and other electronic devices are permitted for note-taking in class but if it is observed that students are on social networking sites, or using their devices for anything other than course activities, they will be asked to turn off the device and will not be permitted to use it for the remainder of the class. If you are causing distractions, you may be asked to leave. Be sure that all cellphones are turned off at the beginning of class.

Institutional Statements and Policies on Missed Deadlines and Accessibility:

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and medical accommodation. These policies are outlined in Western's academic policies by clicking on this link: [Western's academic policies.](#)

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