

ANTH 133
Cultural Development in Mesoamerica
TR 3:30-4:45 HSSB 1174



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*Olmec Colossal Head, Monument 8 from San Lorenzo (1500-1000 BC).
Museo de Antropologia in Xalapa, Mexico.*

I. Course Description

This class is a survey course in the prehistory of Mesoamerica, which includes Mexico and Central America, from the earliest settlement of the region by hunter-gatherer-fishers up through the Spanish conquest. We will cover various topics of broad anthropological interest including the domestication of plants by humans; the transition to agriculture and settled village life; the emergence of social inequality; the rise and collapse of chiefdoms, states, and empires; and the impacts of colonialism in the region. We will consider these topics primarily through the lens of archaeology, which focuses on the study of material remains left by human activities. In addition to tracing the (pre)history of Mesoamerican cultures, we will consider how archaeologists have arrived at their interpretations of the Mesoamerican past via the archaeological record. We will also address issues that have captured popular imagination in recent years, including the end of the world, the Maya collapse, human sacrifice, and others. This course concludes with a consideration of contemporary communities in Mexico and Central America.

II. Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Situate past Mesoamerican cultures in time and place
- Understand how archaeology informs our understandings of past environmental and social issues
- Have a grasp of theories regarding the origins of agriculture and the rise of complex societies
- Evaluate the impact of archaeological research on contemporary stakeholder communities in Mexico and Central America

III. Required Materials

- Coe, Michael D., and Rex Koontz. *Mexico: From the Olmecs to the Aztecs* (Seventh edition, 2008). Thames and Hudson. ISBN: 978-0-500-28755-2 (available at the campus bookstore, on amazon.com, and on 2-hour library reserve).
- Additional course readings posted to the course Gauchospace page.
- iClicker generation 1 or 2 (available at the bookstore).

IV. Assignments and Grading

Your final grade will be figured from the following components and scale, detailed below:

Grading Components:

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|--------------------|-------------|
| • i>clicker points | 10% |
| • Midterm | 30% |
| • Research Paper | 25% |
| • Final Exam | 35% |
| • Total | 100% |

Grading Scale:

A+ = 97-100	C+ = 77-79
A = 93-96	C = 73-76
A- = 90-92	C- = 70-72
B+ = 87-89	D+ = 67-69
B = 83-86	D = 63-66
B- = 80-82	D- = 60-62
	F = 59 and below

Lecture attendance is key to success in this course. **i>clickers** will be used in a variety of ways during lecture periods: to survey the class, to get opinions on current topics, and to test reading and lecture comprehension. We may not necessarily use i>clicker in every class period, but you should bring your device and be prepared to use it at any time, including dates scheduled for guest lectures or film screenings. Please register your device at the start of the quarter on Gauchospace. Your i>clicker scores will be posted on Gauchospace throughout the quarter; please inform your TA, Toni Gonzalez, as soon as possible if you have technical difficulties. It is your responsibility to ensure that your i>clicker is registered and working properly.

The **midterm and final exams** will be based on the lectures (including guest lectures), readings, and films and will consist of multiple choice and short answer/essay questions. Dates for the exams are listed in the course schedule below. Exams must be taken on the dates indicated; make-up exams will only be given to students with well-documented reasons. Due to university policies, there will be no make-up options for the final exam, so please plan accordingly and contact me or your TA as far in advance as possible for any potential extenuating circumstances.

You will be required to write a **research paper** based on a Mesoamerican archaeological case study of your choosing. A more detailed prompt will be posted to Gauchospace. You will submit an **abstract** of your paper topic to Gauchospace in advance for review by the TA, which will be worth 5% of the total paper grade. The paper should be 5 double-spaced pages and will be due in hard copy on the date listed in the course schedule. The paper should incorporate course content as well as outside research. Papers will be graded based on content, clarity, and grammar. Late papers will be marked down 5% every day they are late. Please notify me or your TA in advance if you anticipate any issues turning the paper in by the due date for a valid/documented reason.

Grades will be made available throughout the quarter on Gauchospace.

ACADEMIC CONDUCT AND INTEGRITY

It is expected that students attending the University of California understand and subscribe to the ideal of academic integrity, and are willing to bear individual responsibility for their work. Any work (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill an academic requirement must represent a student's original work. Any act of academic dishonesty, such as cheating or plagiarism, will subject a person to University disciplinary action. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, looking at another student's examination, referring to unauthorized notes during an exam, providing answers, having another person take an exam for you, etc. Representing the words, ideas, or concepts of another person without appropriate attribution is plagiarism. Whenever another person's written work is utilized, whether it be a single phrase or longer, quotation marks must be used and sources cited. Paraphrasing another's work, i.e., borrowing the ideas or concepts and putting them into one's "own" words, must also be acknowledged. Plagiarism is not limited to books or articles, but includes web-based materials, including Wikipedia.

<https://judicialaffairs.sa.ucsb.edu/AcademicIntegrity.aspx>

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Providing academic accommodations to students with disabilities is a shared responsibility of the campus. Students with disabilities are responsible for ensuring that the Disabled Students Program (DSP) is aware of their disabilities and for providing DSP with appropriate documentation. DSP is located at 2120 Student Resource Building and serves as the campus liaison regarding issues and regulations related to students with disabilities. The DSP staff works in an advisory capacity with a variety of campus departments to ensure that equal access is provided to all disabled students.

<http://dsp.sa.ucsb.edu/>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Campus Learning Assistance Services (CLAS): CLAS offers students help with writing, test taking skills, and time management. Register for CLAS sessions online at clas.sa.ucsb.edu.

Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS): CAPS offers individual therapy, group counseling, workshops, and seminars, along with opportunities to de-stress and ways to cope with academic anxiety. Available on a crisis walk-in basis, as well as by appointment and by phone after-hours. To reach the Counseling Services office, please call 805.893.4411.

V. Gauchospace and Email Policies

You can access course materials online on Gauchospace (<http://gauchospace.ucsb.edu>), including the course syllabus, PDFs of course readings, course powerpoints, exam study guides, the research paper prompt, etc. It is your responsibility to check your email and Gauchospace regularly for course updates.

Feel free to contact me via email with general questions about the course. For many questions, you can contact the TA for the course, Toni Gonzalez (tonigonzalez@umail.ucsb.edu). If you have detailed questions, especially with regards to exams, the research paper, etc., please come to our scheduled office hours or make an appointment to see either Toni or myself, as we will not be able to provide lengthy responses over email. Please note that I will not answer questions over email pertaining to the exams/paper less than 24 hours before the due date.

I strongly recommend that you email me from your UCSB uemail account or directly from Gauchospace. Please do not email from personal email addresses such as Yahoo or Hotmail, as I frequently have issues with those ending up in my spam folder. If you do not receive an email response from me within a 24-48 hour timeframe, please follow up with me for that reason!

VI. General Course Policies

You are expected to arrive on time and stay in class during the entire lecture period. The practice of reading outside material, talking to others, sleeping, texting, viewing media on smartphones/tablets, using headphones in class, etc. is not permitted. These actions are distracting to your instructor and others in class. All cell phone ringers must be turned off during class. Laptops can be used during class only if they are used to take notes.

If you are having personal issues that may affect your academic performance, please come talk to me **in advance** so that I can work things out with you in any way I can. Please email me, come to my office hours, or schedule an appointment to meet. I always strive to be accessible, approachable, and understanding. I am happy to help in any way that I can!



*Stela 1 from La Mojarra (2nd century CE).
Museo de Antropología in Xalapa, Mexico.*

VII. Course Schedule

The course schedule below lists weekly topics, assigned readings, guest lectures/film dates, and exam/paper due dates. You should complete readings by (or before) the lecture period listed on the course schedule. You can expect to follow this schedule but please note that some items are subject to change. Any changes to the course schedule will be announced in lecture, emailed, and/or posted to Gauchospace.

WEEK	DAY	DATE	SPECIFIC TOPIC/ ASSIGNMENTS	READINGS
1	Tues	4/4	Introduction to Mesoamerica	
1	Thurs	4/6	Geography, Ecology, and Visiting Archaeological Sites	Coe and Koontz Ch. 1
2	Tues	4/11	The Paleoindian Period	Coe and Koontz Ch. 2
2	Thurs	4/13	The Archaic Period	Coe and Koontz Ch. 3
3	Tues	4/18	The Archaic in the Southern Mexican Lowlands (Guest Lecture Prof. Barbara Voorhies)	Voorhies and Kennett 2011 (GS)
3	Thurs	4/20	The Initial Formative Period	Coe and Koontz Ch. 4
4	Tues	4/25	The Rise of the Olmec (Early and Middle Formative Periods)	Coe and Koontz Ch. 5
4	Thurs	4/27	The Formative Sierra de los Tuxtlas (Guest lecture Prof. VanDerwarker)	VanDerwarker 2005 (GS)
5	Tues	5/2	Formative/Classic Transition in Oaxaca	Joyce 2004 (GS)
5	Thurs	5/4	NO CLASS (Community Matters event, students encouraged to attend)	
6	Tues	5/9	MIDTERM EXAM	
6	Thurs	5/11	Classic Period Teotihuacan	Coe and Koontz, Ch. 6
7	Tues	5/16	The Classic Maya	Coe and Koontz, Ch. 7
7	Thurs	5/18	Evaluating Maya "Collapse" PAPER ABSTRACT DUE (GS)	McAnany and Gallareto Negrón 2010 (GS)
8	Tues	5/23	Film: <i>Cracking the Maya Code</i>	Coe and Van Stone 2005 (GS)
8	Thurs	5/25	Subterranean Space and Sacred Landscapes in Mesoamerica (Guest lecture Toni Gonzalez)	Moyes and Brady 2012 (GS) MacLeod and Puleston 1978 (GS)
9	Tues	5/30	Post-Classic Toltec and Rival States	Coe and Koontz, Ch. 8, 9
9	Thurs	6/1	The Aztec Empire in 1519 PAPER DUE IN LECTURE	Coe and Koontz, Ch. 10 Brumfiel 2001 (GS)
10	Tues	6/6	The Colonial Period in Mesoamerica	Coe and Koontz, Epilogue
10	Thurs	6/8	Course wrap-up/ The Contemporary Maya (Guest lecture Shelley LaMon)	Rus and Rus 2014 (GS)
Exam Week	Thurs	6/15	FINAL EXAM	