

ANT 324L/LAS 324L: Daily Life in Mesoamerica

Fall 2018

Unique numbers.: 31685, 39720

Instructor: Enrique Rodríguez

Classroom: RLP 0.112

Class hours: T, Th 2:00—3:30

Office: SAC 4.144

Office hours: T 11:00—12:00

Email: See email instructions on page 2.

In this course we will study the daily life of people in Mesoamerica, from the earliest inhabitants in the region to the myriad ways that Precolumbian life and archaeology affect the lives of people today. We will examine production strategies, agriculture, cooking, household life, burial practices, beautification, the life of children, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and many other aspects of daily life. We will pay close attention to variation and continuities through space and time in Mesoamerica, and between different Mesoamerican cultures. We will study a variety of archaeological sites ranging from the small rural site of Chan in Belize, to the giant city of Teotihuacan in Mexico, from Joya del Cerén (buried in volcanic ash) to Tenochtitlan (buried under modern Mexico City), and many others. While we will study daily life as a worthy object of study in and of itself, we will also examine the relationship between daily life and broad political and economic patterns, including the formation of ranked societies, warfare, and empire-building.

Goals of the course:

1. To provide an introduction to daily life in ancient Mesoamerica.
2. To increase student literacy in archaeology by creating an understanding of how archaeological evidence and theory are used in building models about life in the past.
3. To learn about the role of material culture in everyday life, the economy, and politics in ancient Mesoamerica.

Students with disabilities: Any student with disabilities should talk to me as soon as possible so that we may make arrangements that will make for a better learning experience and that will allow the student to show his or her abilities fully.

Classroom rules:

1. NO cellphones, laptops, newspapers, or calculators in class or during exams.
2. You may not record lectures or take photographs during lecture. Recording of any of my lectures will be considered academic dishonesty and result in academic penalties for the students involved.
3. Academic dishonesty will be dealt with according to University rules. We will talk about issues related to academic dishonesty in class.

Grading and other class policies: Successful completion of this course will require learning from readings, lectures, Power Point presentations, in-class exercises, and film. Topics covered in the readings and in the classroom will, at times, be entirely different. Graded materials for this class consist of a short paper, an in-class presentation of your short paper, and three non-cumulative exams. In addition, I will take attendance during the in-class presentations, and attendance will be graded. I will provide instructions for the short paper early during the semester.

Due to privacy concerns, I will not give grades to students over the phone or via email.

Students may discuss their exams with me individually. Students who request that I re-grade their exams must present their request in writing. If I agree to re-grade their exam, students should be aware that their grade might suffer if I find errors that I did not find on my first grading. Therefore, students are advised to make sure they have specific reasons why their grade should improve before they challenge their grade.

I do not post lecture notes on the Internet. I may post PowerPoint presentations on Canvas or another University-approved service. In addition, the audio of classes will be recorded and made available by the University. I will provide more information about that as soon as I have it.

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------------|-----|
| 1. | Short paper (3 to 4 pages long): | 10% |
| 2. | In-class presentation: | 10% |
| 3. | Attendance during presentations: | 10% |
| 4. | Exam 1: | 20% |
| 5. | Exam 2: | 25% |
| 6. | Exam 3 (non-cumulative): | 25% |

Textbooks and other readings:

1. Robin, Cynthia 2013 *Everyday Life Matters: Maya Farmers at Chan*. University Press of Florida. REQUIRED. Available at the University COOP.
2. There will be several readings available on Canvas, and they are required.

Email rules:

1. Email if you have a medical emergency that will prevent you from making it to an exam. No need to email if you will miss class, unless you miss more than two weeks of class due to a major emergency.
2. Email me if you need to see me in office hours but you have a time conflict with a class. I will be glad to make an appointment. Otherwise, you may just show up during office hours.

3. Email if I ask you to email me.
4. Do not email to continue class discussion; please use office hours. Also, if you have a question about the material, please bring it up in class. Other students might benefit from it.
5. Do not use email to turn in assignments or to send attachments unless I specifically ask you to do so.
6. My email is: chanfle@austin.utexas.edu. Before you click "send", make sure that your email complies with rules 1-5 above. Click "send".

SCHEDULE

Week I (August 30): General introduction to Mesoamerica and the class

Week II (September 4, 6): Introduction to Mesoamerica, part II

Archaic and Formative periods

Readings:

1. Smith, Michael E. and Marilyn A. Masson 2000 Introduction: Mesoamerican Civilizations. In *The Ancient Civilizations of Mesoamerica*. Edited by Michael E. Smith and Marilyn A. Masson, pp. 1-14. Blackwell, Malden. On Canvas.
2. Robin, Cynthia 2013 *Everyday Life Matters: Maya Farmers at Chan*. University Press of Florida, Gainesville. Pp. 1-11.

Week III (Sept. 11, 13): The Olmec and the Mesoamerican ballgame

Readings:

1. Grove, David 1998? The Olmec. In *Olmecs. Arqueología Mexicana*. Pp.12-23. Posted on Canvas for your Technicolor pleasure.
2. González Lauck, Rebecca B. 1998? La Venta: A great Olmec City. In *Olmecs. Arqueología Mexicana*. Pp.42-47. Posted on Canvas for your Technicolor pleasure.
3. Cyphers, Ann 1998? The Colossal Heads. In *Olmecs. Arqueología Mexicana*. Pp.48-55. Posted on Canvas for your Technicolor pleasure.
4. Hill, Warren D., & Clark, John E. 2001 "Sports, gambling, and government: America's first social compact?" *American Anthropologist* 103(2): 331-345. On Canvas.

Week IV (Sept. 18, 20): Introduction to the Classic Period

Readings:

1. Robin, Cynthia 2013 *Everyday Life Matters: Maya Farmers at Chan*. Chapter 5.
2. Rathje, William L. 1971. "The Origin and Development of Lowland Classic Maya Civilization" *American Antiquity* 36(3):275-285. On Canvas.

Week V (Sept. 25, 27): *Exam 1 on September 27*****

No readings due this week. Be prepared for the review and the exam.

Week VI (Oct. 2, 4): Everyday life in the Classic period

Readings:

1. Robin, Cynthia 2013 *Everyday Life Matters: Maya Farmers at Chan*. Chapter 6.

Week VII (Oct. 9, 11): Everyday life in the Classic period, part II

Readings:

1. Robin, Cynthia 2013 *Everyday Life Matters: Maya Farmers at Chan*. Chapters 7, 8.
2. Webster, David, Nancy Gonlin, and Payson Sheets 1997 Copan and Ceren: Two perspectives on ancient Mesoamerican households. *Ancient Mesoamerica*. Vol. 8, No. 1 (Spring 1997), pp. 43-61. On Canvas.

Week VIII (Oct. 16, 18): Everyday life in the city

Readings:

1. Manzanilla, Linda R. 2017 Teotihuacan Apartment Compounds, Neighborhood Centers, and Palace Structures. In *Teotihuacan: City of Water, City of Fire*. Edited by Matthew Robb, pp. 94-101. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and University of California Press. Available on Canvas.
2. Carballo, David 2017 Daily Life in Teotihuacan's Southern Periphery: The Tlajinga District. In *Teotihuacan: City of Water, City of Fire*. Edited by Matthew Robb, pp. 124-129. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and University of California Press. Available on Canvas.

Week IX (Oct. 23, 25): Food

First round of in-class presentations, PRESENTATIONS ON THURSDAY.

Readings:

1. Wyatt, Andrew R. 2002 The Food and Cuisine of Precolumbian Mesoamerica. In *The Encyclopedia of Food and Culture*. William Woys Weaver, Ed. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

Week X (Oct. 30, Nov. 1): *Exam 2 on Nov. 1*****

No readings due this week. Be prepared for the review and the exam.

Week XI (Nov. 6, 8): The Aztec empire

Readings:

1. Smith, Michael E. 2008 The Aztec Empire. In *The Aztec World*. Edited by Elizabeth Brumfiel and Gary Feinman. Abrams. Pp. 121-136. On Canvas.

Week XII (Nov. 13, 15): Comparing households and gender norms in Mesoamerica

Second round of in-class presentations, PRESENTATIONS ON THURSDAY

Readings:

1. Brumfiel, Elizabeth 2008 Aztec Women: Capable Partners and Cosmic Enemies. In *The Aztec World*. Edited by Elizabeth Brumfiel and Gary Feinman. Abrams. Pp. 87-104.
2. De Lucia, Kristin 2008. Looking Beyond Gender Hierarchy: Rethinking Gender at Teotihuacan, Mexico. Available on Canvas.

Week XIII (Nov. 20): Gender norms Thanksgiving week. We will have class on Tuesday, but not on Thursday, of course.
 READINGS TBA

Week XIV (Nov. 27, 29): Sacrifice and more

Third round of in-class presentations, PRESENTATIONS ON THURSDAY.

Readings:

1. López Austin, Alfredo, and Leonardo López Luján 2008. Aztec Human Sacrifice. In *The Aztec World*, edited by Elizabeth M. Brumfiel and Gary M. Feinman, pp. 137-152. Posted on Canvas for your Technicolor pleasure.
2. Brumfiel, Elizabeth M. 2000 Figurines and the Aztec State: Testing the Effectiveness of Ideological Domination. In *The Ancient Civilizations of Mesoamerica*. Edited by Michael E. Smith and Marilyn A. Masson. Pp. 468-482. On Canvas.

Week XV (Dec. 4, 6) *Exam 3 on December 6*****

No reading assigned for this week. Focus on the exam.