This course will trace cultural developments in Mesoamerica over the past 12,000 years from hunting and gathering lifeways, through the rise of complex societies, to the Spanish conquest. We will examine the emergence of and interactions between the Olmec, Zapotec, Teotihuacanos, Maya, and Aztec. We will also discuss Mesoamerican people’s understanding of themselves and their world as expressed in art, architecture, literature, and other material culture. New approaches, theories, and recent discoveries in the field of Mesoamerican archaeology will be examined.

By the end of this course, you should:
- be familiar with the major ancient cultures of Mesoamerica
- have an appreciation of the longevity, diversity, and complexity of Central American societies
- understand the means by which archaeologists construct meaningful arguments about the past
- have completed an independent review of a specific topic in Mesoamerican prehistory

Required Text


***Available for purchase at the bookstore***

Additional required readings (listed in the course schedule below) will be available on reserve and/or electronically.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class Attendance and Participation   10%
Class attendance is mandatory. You will receive credit for attendance and active participation. This is an upper-division course, and you will be expected to participate in class discussions. I also encourage you to raise questions and offer comments during lecture at any time.

Your participation grade also includes attentive listening. Therefore, I ask that you silence and leave in your bags ALL electronic devices including cell phones, iPods, and computers. You may miss up to two (2) class meeting times without penalty.

Online Quizzes    20%
Throughout the term, I will post brief, timed, online quizzes relating to the material covered in class and in your readings. You will receive partial credit simply for taking each quiz. Typically, the quizzes will be available for 5 to 7 days. There will be no make-up quizzes. You may miss two (2) quizzes without penalty.

Short Research Paper    20%
Each of you will write one short research paper on a topic of your choosing (see schedule for due date). This will require independent library research incorporating books, professional journals, and other types of sources as warranted. I will provide specific guidance when the paper assignment is made. Late papers will be graded down one full letter grade each day that they are late.

Midterm Exam   20%
Both the midterm and final exams will be based on material from the lectures, exercises, and readings. They will be mixed format with standardized and short answer questions. To each exam, you may bring one sheet of paper with your study notes. No other items (books, electronic devices, etc.) should be within reach during the tests. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated, and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct (www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/conduct).

Final Exam   30%
The final exam will follow the format of the midterm. The questions will address material covered since the midterm. The final is not cumulative. There is NO make-up exam for the final.

Special Accommodations
Please contact me as soon as possible if you require any special assistance or accommodation to participate fully in this class. You must also contact the university’s office:

Office for Students with Disabilities
University Hall 102, tel. (817) 272-3364
website < http://www.uta.edu/disability/>
email osd@uta.edu

I will do everything I can to assist you, but it is your responsibility to contact the university and to notify me of your needs!
**COURSE SCHEDULE**

You are expected to read the assigned chapter sections *before* the class time devoted to that topic. Your ability to absorb the lecture material and to participate meaningfully in class depends upon your timely completion of the assigned readings.

**WEEK 0**

**Thurs (8/26)  Introduction to the Course**
Reading: No reading

**WEEK 1  (8/31, 9/2)**

Introduction to Mesoamerica
Reading: Evans, Ch 1 and Ch 2 (pp. 45-60)


**WEEK 2  (9/7, 9/9)**

Mesoamerica’s First Inhabitants
Reading: Evans, Ch 2 (pp. 61-70)


**WEEK 3  (9/14, 9/16)**

Agricultural Transformations
Reading: Evans, Ch 3


**WEEK 4  (9/21, 9/23)**

Sedentary Life in the Initial Formative
Reading: Evans, Ch 4


**WEEK 5  (9/28, 9/30)**

The Precocious Olmec
Reading: Evans Chs 5 & 6

WEEK 6  (10/5, 10/7)  
Developments Outside the Olmec Heartland  
Reading: Evans, Ch 7  

WEEK 7  (10/12, 10/14)  
Tues (10/12)  Midterm Review  
Thurs (10/14)  ***Midterm Exam***

WEEK 8  (10/19, 10/21)  
The Rise of Corporate States: Monte Alban  
Reading: Evans, Ch 8  

WEEK 9  (10/26, 10/28)  
The Rise of Divine Kings: The Maya  
Reading: Evans, Ch 9  

WEEK 10  (11/2, 11/4)  
Teotihuacan and Its Sphere of Influence  
Reading: Evans, Ch 10  

WEEK 11  (11/9, 11/11)  
The Classic Maya World  
Reading: Evans, Chs 11 and 12  

WEEK 12  (11/16, 11/18)  
Collapse and Reorganization  
Reading: Evans, Chs 13 and 14  
WEEK 13  (11/23, 11/25)
Dawn of a New Era: The Postclassic
Reading: Evans, Chs 15 and 16

Thurs (11/25)  Thanksgiving – No Class

WEEK 14 (11/30, 12/2)
The Aztec Empire
Reading: Evans, Chs 17-19
• Nichols, Deborah (2004). The Rural and Urban Landscapes of the Aztec State. H&J, Ch. 11.

***Short Research Paper DUE, Friday 12/3***

WEEK 15 (12/7, 12/9)
The Conquest
Reading: Evans, Ch 20

FINAL EXAM: Thursday, December 16, 2010
2:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Syllabus Changes
Any element or elements of this syllabus may be changed or amended by the instructor in consultation with the members of the class. Any changes will be discussed in class and posted online.
Important University Policies

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Contact the Financial Aid Office for more information.

Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Academic Integrity: The University of Texas at Arlington deems academic dishonesty to be a completely unacceptable mode of conduct that will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University. According to the UT System Regents’ Rule 50101, §2.2, "scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts." Documented instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct ([www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/conduct](http://www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/conduct)) for review and resolution.

Student Support Services Available: The University of Texas at Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. These resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals to these resources, students may contact the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107 or visit [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources) for more information.

Electronic Communication Policy: The University of Texas at Arlington has adopted the University “MavMail” address as the sole official means of communication with students. MavMail is used to remind students of important deadlines, advertise events and activities, and permit the University to conduct official transactions exclusively by electronic means. For example, important information concerning registration, financial aid, payment of bills, and graduation are now sent to students through the MavMail system. All students are assigned a MavMail account. **Students are responsible for checking their MavMail regularly.** Information about activating and using MavMail is available at [http://www.uta.edu/oit/email/](http://www.uta.edu/oit/email/). There is no additional charge to students for using this account, and it remains active even after graduation from UT Arlington.