



ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY
GENERAL STUDIES COURSE PROPOSAL COVER FORM

Course information:

Copy and paste current course information from [Class Search/Course Catalog](#).

Academic Unit	<u>College of Liberal Arts and Sciences</u>	Department	<u>School of Human Evolution and Social Change</u>
Subject	<u>ASB</u>	Number	<u>337</u>
Title	<u>Prehispanic Civilizations of Middle America</u>		Units: <u>3</u>
Is this a cross-listed course? If yes, please identify course(s)	<u>No</u>		
Is this a shared course? Course description:	<u>(choose one) If so, list all academic units offering this course</u>		

Requested designation: (Choose One)

Note- a separate proposal is required for each designation requested

Eligibility:

Permanent numbered courses must have completed the university's review and approval process.
For the rules governing approval of omnibus courses, contact the General Studies Program Office at (480) 965-0739.

Area(s) proposed course will serve:

A single course may be proposed for more than one core or awareness area. A course may satisfy a core area requirement and more than one awareness area requirements concurrently, but may not satisfy requirements in two core areas simultaneously, even if approved for those areas. With departmental consent, an approved General Studies course may be counted toward both the General Studies requirement and the major program of study.

Checklists for general studies designations:

- Complete and attach the appropriate checklist
- [Literacy and Critical Inquiry core courses \(L\)](#)
 - [Mathematics core courses \(MA\)](#)
 - [Computer/statistics/quantitative applications core courses \(CS\)](#)
 - [Humanities, Fine Arts and Design core courses \(HU\)](#)
 - [Social and Behavioral Sciences core courses \(SB\)](#)
 - [Natural Sciences core courses \(SQ/SG\)](#)
 - [Global Awareness courses \(G\)](#)
 - [Historical Awareness courses \(H\)](#)
 - [Cultural Diversity in the United States courses \(C\)](#)

A complete proposal should include:

- Signed General Studies Program Course Proposal Cover Form
- Criteria Checklist for the area
- Course Syllabus
- Table of Contents from the textbook, and/or lists of course materials

Contact information:

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Department Chair/Director approval: *(Required)*

Chair/Director name (Typed):	<u>Alexandra Brewis Slade</u>	Date:	<u>9/13/2013</u>
Chair/Director (Signature):	_____		

Arizona State University Criteria Checklist for

HISTORICAL AWARENESS [H]

Rationale and Objectives

The lack of historical awareness on the part of contemporary university graduates has led recent studies of higher education to call for the creation and development of historical consciousness in undergraduates now and in the future. From one perspective historical awareness is a valuable aid in the analysis of present-day problems because historical forces and traditions have created modern life and lie just beneath its surface. From a second perspective, the historical past is an indispensable source of national identity and of values which facilitate social harmony and cooperative effort. Along with this observation, it should be noted that historical study can produce intercultural understanding by tracing cultural differences to their origins in the past. A third perspective on the need for historical awareness is summed up in the aphorism that he who fails to learn from the past is doomed to repeat it. Teachers of today's students know well that those students do not usually approach questions of war and peace with any knowledge of historic concord, aggression, or cruelty, including even events so recent as Nazi and Stalinist terror.

The requirement of a course which is historical in method and content presumes that "history" designates a sequence of past events or a narrative whose intent or effect is to represent such a sequence. The requirement also presumes that these are human events and that history includes all that has been felt, thought, imagined, said, and done by human beings. The opportunities for nurturing historical consciousness are nearly unlimited. History is present in the languages, art, music, literatures, philosophy, religion, and the natural sciences, as well as in the social science traditionally called History.

Proposer: Please complete the following section and attach appropriate documentation.

ASU--[H] CRITERIA			
THE HISTORICAL AWARENESS [H] COURSE MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:			
YES	NO		Identify Documentation Submitted
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. History is a major focus of the course.	syllabus
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. The course examines and explains human development as a sequence of events.	"
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. There is a disciplined systematic examination of human institutions as they change over time.	"
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. The course examines the relationship among events, ideas, and artifacts and the broad social, political and economic context.	"
		THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE:	
		• Courses in which there is only chronological organization.	
		• Courses which are exclusively the history of a field of study or of a field of artistic or professional endeavor.	
		• Courses whose subject areas merely occurred in the past.	

Course Prefix	Number	Title	Designation
ASB	337	Pre-hispanic Civilizations of Middle America	H

Explain in detail which student activities correspond to the **specific** designation criteria. Please use the following organizer to explain how the criteria are being met.

Criteria (from checklist)	How course meets spirit (contextualize specific examples in next column)	Please provide detailed evidence of how course meets criteria (i.e., where in syllabus)
1	course focuses on the pre-history of Mesoamerica	see green highlights in syllabus
2	course concentrates on major processes of change witnessed archaeologically through four time periods	see yellow highlights in syllabus
3 & 4	The course will look at how the Aztecs & other groups emerged in a time of social, political & linguistic upheaval & look at competing explanations of important developments such as origins of agriculture & the formation of the earliest cities, states, and empires	see blue highlights

ASB 337: Prehispanic Civilizations of Middle America
Course Syllabus
Class Number 88155

Instructor: Prof. Ben Nelson
Digital Office Visits: by appointment, arranged via email
Email: bnelson@asu.edu

Teaching Associate: Hannah Reitzel Rivera
Digital Office Visits: by appointment, arranged via email
Email: hrrr@asu.edu

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the archaeology of Mesoamerica, one of the great regions of world civilization and home to some of the most intriguing native peoples of the Americas. They included hunters, farmers, merchants, seafarers, priests, metallurgists, astronomers, politicians, and warriors, living in small camps and huge cities and speaking a bewildering array of languages. Concepts as familiar to us as rank and as strange as human sacrifice were integral to these cultures. Most of the course is devoted to developments prior to European contact. The course concentrates on the major processes of change witnessed archaeologically through four time periods—the Archaic, Formative, Classic, and Postclassic, and across four major regions—the Maya area, central Mexico, the Valley of Oaxaca, and West Mexico. At the very end of this 8000-year sequence, the Aztecs and other groups emerged in a time of social, political and linguistic upheaval. We will look at competing explanations of certain important developments, such as the origins of agriculture and the formation of the earliest cities, states and empires.

Objectives

Upon completion of the course, you will know some Mesoamerican geographic regions, ethnic groups, and linguistic units, and will be able to characterize some major developmental periods, such as the Classic Maya. More importantly, you will be able to critically evaluate arguments about how life changed in the past. Instead of thinking of Mesoamerican archaeology as "a story" about the past, you should be able to see it as an activity in which we (including you) evaluate ideas about social, ideological, and environmental changes. Hopefully you will find satisfactory or partial answers to intriguing questions that interest you. For example, why did village life originate? How did people who lacked modern science learn to transform a grass with tiny, hard seeds into productive maize? Why did people subordinate themselves to the rulers of early states? Why did people believe that their deities required offerings of sacrificial blood in exchange for future security? Did people with such beliefs have equally unfamiliar concepts of sex and marriage? Why was writing invented? Can the costs of bureaucracy overburden a society and lead it to collapse? Did ancient societies destroy their natural environments? You will read, summarize, and evaluate arguments concerning these themes as well as many aspects of daily life.

Textbook, Readings and Video

Hendon, Julia A. and Rosemary A. Joyce (Eds.). 2004. *Mesoamerican Archaeology: Theory and Practice*. Blackwell, Malden, MA.

A few other articles are required reading as well (see below, following Course Schedule). Those that are journal articles can be downloaded through the ASU library system; the others will be available as PDF files through the course website in the appropriate Week module.

You will be required to watch the video, “Breaking the Maya Code” (2008, 1 hr 56 minutes) to complete part of the course. Unfortunately, this video is unavailable through the ASU libraries. You can watch it streaming on your computer via Netflix, using one of three options:

1. An existing subscription
2. A free trial subscription
3. A one-month streaming-only subscription (\$8)

Please prepare to watch this video ahead of when it is due by knowing which Netflix option you plan to use.

Technical Requirements

Online courses are very different from traditional instruction. Students are expected to check the course site and their ASU email every day for updates, assignments, and course communications. Students must have regular access to a computer with reliable internet access in order to watch lectures and videos, download readings from the course and ASU library websites, and complete course activities such as exercises and exams. The following are operating system and browser configurations that have been tested with all course materials. Those that are listed as ‘recommended’ have been fully tested and are the best options. The one that is listed as ‘required’ **must** be used to successfully complete the course.

- Recommended operating systems: Windows 7 or later, Mac OS X 10.6 or later (Snow Leopard, Lion, Mountain Lion or later)
- Recommended browser: Google Chrome (latest version, free for download at chrome.google.com), works on PC and Mac
- Required plugin: Flash (get it at get.adobe.com/flashplayer)
- Recommended minimum resolution: 1280x800

Communication and Questions

There are three basic ways to ask questions and get answers in this class.

1. Hallway Conversations. Most course questions should be posted to the discussion board under the ‘Hallway Conversations’ menu of the course. Appropriate topics include study questions, assignment details, due dates, and other general course

questions. These kinds of questions, which do not contain private information, should be posted to the Hallway Conversations discussion board rather than emailed. The instructor and TA will check Hallway Conversations frequently, and students are encouraged to answer one another's questions. If students email the instructor or TA with questions appropriate for the Hallway Conversations board, they will be asked to post them there so that all students can benefit from each other's questions and answers.

2. Email. Any questions containing personal or private information should be emailed to the instructor or TA. These include questions related to disability accommodations, grades (other than general grading policy), and late assignments/make-ups.
3. Digital Office Visits. You are always welcome to contact the instructor and/or TA to schedule digital office hours. Sometimes questions are hard to explain concisely in writing, so often a short meeting (via Skype or Google Hangout) can save you work and confusion!

Grading

Item	Points Each	Maximum Points	Weighting	Contribution to Final Grade
1. Exercises + VFT Activities (18)	1	18	1.5	27%
2. Weekly Quizzes (15)	1	15	-	15%
3. Discussions (5)	2	20	0.50	10%
4. Reading Response (1)	100	100	0.03	3%
5. Exam 1 (1)	100	100	0.10	10%
6. Exam 2 (1)	100	100	0.15	15%
7. Exam 3 (1)	100	100	0.20	20%
Total				100%
Extra Credit Pretest	1	1	-	1%
Extra Credit Reading Response	100	100	0.03	3%
Total with Extra Credit				104%

Explanation of Grading

More than most classes, this one depends on your participation. The philosophy behind the course combines experiential learning with learner-centered instruction, and the course is designed for people of different learning styles to be able to score well. Consequently there is a range of activities. You are likely to fare well if you participate, and cannot do well without participating.

1. Exercises + VFT Activities (18)

- a. Exercises and VFT Activities are worth **27% of your final grade.**

- b. When an Exercise is listed on the course schedule, you will find instructions and forms in the appropriate Week module. Typically, exercises consist of reading material, pictures and/or maps, and other information that you use to complete a worksheet. You will hand in completed exercise worksheets digitally via Dropbox. They will be checked via Turnitin, which is an anti-plagiarism software, before grading, so please be sure that your work is your own.
- c. When a VFT (Virtual Field Trip) Activity is listed on the course schedule, you will find instructions on how to access the activity in the appropriate Week module. In this class, we use the Teotihuacan Virtual Field Trip, which was filmed and photographed at one of the largest archaeological sites in the New World. This exciting environment allows you to interact with an actual archaeological site while learning material relevant to class objectives. The VFT is hosted at <http://vft.asu.edu/VFTTeoH5T/panos/tmoTopH5main/tmoTopH5main.html>.
- d. Credit for Exercises and VFT Activities is based on effort to complete each item in a thoughtful manner. Exercises and VFT Activities are typically scored pass/fail, although sometimes half credit may be given.
- e. You should keep a copy of your exercise answers for study, as we use exercises when writing exams. You may also want to take notes as you progress through VFT Activities.
- f. Please see the “Notes” section of the syllabus to learn about late or missed work.

2. Presentations and Weekly Quizzes (15)

- a. Online presentations (lectures) constitute one of the most significant sources of information in the course for exams and other assignments. They are similar to classroom lectures except that you “attend” on your own schedule (within the week they are assigned) and can go back to review portions of the lecture as many times as you like.
- b. You receive credit for “attending” presentations via weekly quizzes, which are worth **15% of your final grade**. Each quiz will be available to be taken for credit for one week. After that, you will be able to use the quiz for practice but cannot any longer take it for credit. This policy is to assure that you stay on schedule with the rest of the students and can benefit from discussions as they happen.
- c. Online presentations will become available on a weekly schedule. To locate a presentation, simply click on the appropriate Week module on the lefthand menu of the course site, and scroll to the Lecture/Video section. The online presentations will be available for review after the week their quizzes are due.
- d. You must watch the video “Breaking the Maya Code” as part of your course assignments. This video is available on Netflix, so you can watch it with a free trial membership, pay \$8 for one month of Netflix subscription, or use your existing subscription to watch it. Unfortunately, the video is not available through the library.

- e. Please see the “Notes” section of the syllabus to learn more about late or missed work.

3. Discussions (5)

- a. Discussions are worth **10% of your final grade**.
- b. You will be assigned five (5) discussions during the course. They are based on five major time periods we cover in the course—Archaic, Formative, Classic, Epiclassic, and Postclassic—and the key activities that took place during each.
- c. To receive credit for a discussion, you will be required to answer a question or set of related questions in the relevant discussion board and make a thoughtful reply to at least one other student.
- d. Discussions are worth four points each, with points awarded for responsiveness to the question, clarity, thoroughness, and originality. Deductions will be made for lack of civility. A good discussion contribution should deal directly with the question raised and not introduce unrelated information, be carefully written, bring specific evidence to bear on the issue, and be your own thinking, not simply a statement that you agree with someone else. Needless to say, your contribution should be civil. Should any response not treat others and their ideas respectfully, it will be graded down.
- e. To access a Discussion, simply click on the appropriate Week module in the course site and scroll down to the Discussion section. Not all Week modules have a Discussion. Please see the course schedule for more information.
- f. Please see the “Notes” section of the syllabus to learn more about late or missed work.

4. Reading Response (1)

- a. The reading response is worth **3% of your final grade**.
- b. You must sign up for a reading during the first week of class via the Reading Response discussion board; no more than ten students may write about any particular reading. Please limit your response to 500 words.
- c. Credit will be based on how well you:
 - i. Describe the main arguments of the reading. Arguments are what the author is trying to convince you, even if they do not seem controversial. What is the author trying to get across?
 - ii. Identify the data presented to support the author’s arguments. What evidence does the author offer to back up her/his arguments?
 - iii. Critically assess whether you agree with any conclusions (and why). Was the evidence presented sufficient? Why or why not?
- d. Reading responses will be handed in via Dropbox and checked with Turnitin, an anti-plagiarism software. They are due by December 6, 2013 at 11:59pm. Please be sure that your work is your own.
- e. Please see the “Notes” section of the syllabus to learn more about late or missed work.

5. Exams (3)

- a. Exams are worth a total of **45% of your final grade**, broken down in the following way: Exam 1 (10%), Exam 2 (15%), and Exam 3 (20%).
- b. Each exam will be available for 72 hours, starting at 12:00am MST on the opening day and ending at 11:59pm MST on the closing day. During this time, you will have one 75-minute period to complete the exam. You may not pause exams and return: each must be completed in a single session. It is the student's responsibility to know when exam periods occur.
- c. Exams will be scored on a 100-point scale. Each exam counts for progressively more credit than the last, in order to help acclimate you to the style and pacing of the exams.
- d. Question types include matching, map identification, multiple choice, and image identification questions. These have different point weightings.
- e. Exams are not cumulative.
- f. Please see the "Notes" section of the syllabus to learn more about late or missed work.

6. Readings (14)

- a. Readings are not graded, except for the one Reading Response, but you must complete readings in order to be prepared for the graded assignments in this course, including exercises, quizzes, discussions, reading responses, and exams.
- b. To find course readings, simply click the appropriate Week number in the lefthand menu of the course site and scroll to the Readings section.

7. Extra Credit (2)

- a. You will receive one extra credit point for taking the Pretest on the regular schedule (first week). This will **add 1% to your final grade** if you complete it.
- b. You may submit one additional Reading Response for up to three points of extra credit. This will **add up to 3% to your final grade**. The extra credit Reading Response will be turned in and graded according to the same policies as the regular Reading Response, except that you must make special arrangements with the instructor or TA to choose a reading.

Academic integrity

The work that you submit must be your own; a finding of academic dishonesty can have serious consequences for your course grade and your future. You are expected to be familiar with ASU's academic integrity policy, found at http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/studentlife/judicial/academic_integrity.htm.

Notes

1. Disability Accommodations. If you need disability accommodations for this class, please contact the instructor via email as soon as possible. Information regarding disability is confidential.
2. Religious Holidays. If exams conflict with your religious holidays, please contact the instructor as early as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made.
3. Late or Missed Work. It is the student's responsibility to know due dates. Exercises, VFT activities, quizzes, discussions, reading responses, and exams must be submitted by the due date in the appropriate location unless specific exceptions are made.
 - a. Alternate Arrangements. If you know ahead of time that you will be unable to meet a course due date, contact the instructor and TA as early as possible to schedule an alternate due date.
 - b. Make-ups. Make-ups for missed work are given only in the event of unforeseen, compelling, and documented circumstances such as serious illness.

Course Schedule

Module	Assignment	Available	Due
Week 1	Lecture: Introduction to Course Objectives	8/22	9/1
	Lecture + Quiz: Mesoamerican Cultural Traditions	8/22	9/1
	Pretest	8/22	9/1
	Reading: Chapter 1 – Joyce		9/1
Week 2	Lecture + Quiz: Foraging, Collecting and Agricultural Traditions	9/2	9/8
	Exercise: Archaic Technological Change	9/2	9/8
	Reading: Evans 2008, Blake 2009		9/8
	Discussion: The Archaic Period and the Origins of Agriculture	9/2	9/8
Week 3	Lecture + Quiz: Early Ceremonial Centers	9/9	9/15
	Exercise: Reading the Surfaces of Formative Period Sites	9/9	9/15
	Reading: Chapter 2 – Clark		9/15
Week 4	Lecture + Quiz: Shared Styles	9/16	9/22
	Exercise: Recognizing Olmec Style	9/16	9/22
	Reading: Chapter 3 – Lesure		9/22
Week 5	Lecture + Quiz: Mesoamerican Political Complexity	9/23	9/29
	Exercise: Significance of Shaft Tombs	9/23	9/29
	Discussion: The Formative Period and the Rise of Complexity	9/23	9/29
Week 6	Exam 1	9/30	10/1
	Lecture + Quiz: Introduction to Classic Period	9/30	10/6

Module	Assignment	Available	Due
	Central Mexico		
	VFT Activity: Labs 1 & 2	9/30	10/6
Week 7	Lecture + Quiz: Nature of Rulership at Teotihuacan	10/7	10/13
	Exercise: Feathered Serpent Pyramid Burials	10/7	10/13
	VFT Activity: Labs 3 & 4	10/7	10/13
	Reading: Chapter 4 – Sugiyama, Chapter 5 – Manzanilla		10/13
Week 8	Lecture + Quiz: Daily Life at Teotihuacan	10/14	10/20
	Exercise: Obsidian Workshops at Teotihuacan?	10/14	10/20
	VFT Activity: Lab 5	10/14	10/20
Week 9	Lecture + Quiz: Introduction to Classic Maya	10/21	10/27
	Video: Breaking the Maya Code (part 1)		10/27
	Exercise: The Mesoamerican Ballgame	10/21	10/27
	Reading: Chapter 6 – Robin, Houston & Inomata 2004		10/27
Week 10	Video + Quiz: Breaking the Maya Code (part 2)		11/3
	Exercise: Maya Writing: Reading the Piedras Negras Stela	10/28	11/3
	Discussion: Classic Period Political Economy	10/28	11/3
Week 11	Lecture + Quiz: Collapse and Reorganization	11/4	11/10
	VFT Activity: Lab 6	11/4	11/10
	Reading: McAnany & Gallareta Negrón 2010		11/10
	Exam 2	11/6	11/8
Week 12	Lecture + Quiz: Doing Archaeology in West Mexico, Epiclassic-Terminal Classic Transformations	11/11	11/17
	Exercise: Living with the Ancestors	11/11	11/17
	Reading: Nelson et al. 1992		11/17
	Discussion: Collapse and Epiclassic Transformation	11/11	11/17
Week 13	Lecture + Quiz: Distant Interaction: Mesoamerica and the American Southwest	11/18	11/24
	Exercise: Mesoamerican-Southwest Connections	11/18	11/24
	Reading: Crown & Hurst 2010		11/24
Week 14	Lecture + Quiz: Postclassic Mesoamerica	11/25	12/1
	Exercise: Aztec Poetry and Codices	11/25	12/1
	Reading: Chapter 11 – Nichols		12/1
Week 15	Lecture + Quiz: Spanish Colonization and Indigenous Response	12/2	12/8
	Exercise: Aztec Tribute	12/2	12/8
	Reading: Chapter 12 – Hendon		12/8
	Discussion: Postclassic-Colonial Imperialism and	12/2	12/8

Module	Assignment	Available	Due
	Resistance		
	Exam 3	12/9	12/11

Readings (in addition to textbook)

Blake, Michael

2009 Dating the Initial Spread of *Zea mays*. In *Histories of Maize in Mesoamerica: Multidisciplinary Approaches*, edited by J. E. Staller, R. H. Tykot and B. F. Benz. Left Coast Press, Walnut Creek, Calif.

Crown, Patricia L. and W. Jeffrey Hurst

2009 Evidence of Cacao Use in the Prehispanic American Southwest. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 106(7):2110-2113.

Evans, Susan T.

2008 Archaic Foragers, Collectors, and Farmers (8000-2000 BC). In *Ancient Mexico and Central America*, pp. 71-98. Thames and Hudson, London.

Houston, Stephen D. and Takeshi Inomata

2009 The Classic Period. In *The Classic Maya*, pp. 105-127. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England.

McAnany, Patricia A., and Tomás Gallareta Negrón

2010 Bellicose Rulers and Climatological Peril? Retrofitting Twenty-First-Century Woes on Eighth Century Maya Society. In *Questioning Collapse: Human Resilience, Ecological Vulnerability, and the Aftermath of Empire*, edited by P. A. McAnany and N. Yoffee, pp. 142-175. Cambridge University Press, New York.

Nelson, Ben A., J. Andrew Darling and David A. Kice

1992 Mortuary Patterns and the Social Order at La Quemada, Zacatecas. *Latin American Antiquity* 3(4):298-315.