
PRE-COLUMBIAN ART OF MESOAMERICA

Texts (at Circle Center Bookstore, unless otherwise noted)

- Required: Mary E. Miller, The Art of Mesoamerica (3d. ed.)
M. Miller and K. Taube, The Gods and Symbols of Ancient Mexico and the Maya
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- Barnet, S. A Short Guide to Writing About Art (8th ed)
Electronic reader (available via Blackboard or UIC library website)
- Recommended: National Geographic Society Map: The Mesoamericans (Dec. 1997)
National Geographic Society Map of Middle America (Oct. 1968)
(If not at UIC bookstore, a few may be available at N. Fagin Books, 459 N. Milwaukee, 312 829-5252, nfagbo@aol.com)

Course Requirements

Attendance/Participation	10%
Quiz 1	10%
Quiz 2	10%
Mid-term	20%
Paper	25%
Final exam	25%
 TOTAL	 100%

AH 274 is a survey of the arts of the indigenous peoples of Mexico and northern Central America before the Spanish conquest (ca. 1500 B.C. - 1521 A.D.). During the course of the semester we will learn to recognize differences in artistic style between cultures as well as to track how cultures influenced each other, to identify major sites and monuments, to gain a basic understanding of prehispanic writing systems, and to reconstruct the history of Mesoamerican culture from the Olmecs through the Aztecs.

Students are expected to attend all lectures: there will be slides in every class, and not every image will be in the textbooks or Blackboard. Videos will also occasionally be shown. Furthermore, much of the information provided in the lectures will not be duplicated in your readings. If you must miss class, you are responsible for obtaining class notes and any other information provided by the instructor, and for seeking illustrations in your texts, reserve books, and online on Blackboard or elsewhere. AH 274 documents will be available on Blackboard for those enrolled in the class, and students are expected to run off the appropriate handouts each week and bring them to class. Additional required readings will also be available online in the electronic reader. There will also be illustrations of sites and objects pertinent to each section of the course and information on good web sites. Please check the AH 274

Blackboard site frequently for important announcements, news features, etc. Also please make sure that your UIC email account is active or have emails going to the UIC account forwarded to the account you use to insure that I can contact you easily.

The quizzes will include slide identifications and short answers (fill in the blank, multiple choice, etc.). The mid-term and final will also have longer essay questions. The mid-term and quizzes will be given **approximately** where indicated on the syllabus: the exact date and content to be covered will be announced at least one week in advance. The final exam date (see below) is not flexible: I cannot provide makeups to accommodate vacation plans, classes or critiques scheduled during examination week, other tests scheduled at times not in the timetable, etc. See me as soon as possible if you discover a conflict (two exams officially scheduled in the timetable at the same time).

NOTE THAT MAKE-UP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN ONLY IN THE CASE OF A REAL EMERGENCY AND ONLY IF THE INSTRUCTOR OR AH OFFICE IS NOTIFIED NO LATER THAN THE DAY OF THE EXAM. DOCUMENTATION OF THE ABSENCE MAY BE REQUIRED.

Term papers will be on Mesoamerican objects in the Art Institute. A list of suggestions will be provided by the instructor. You must submit your choice of object in writing to me no later than TUESDAY OCTOBER 10. After that date, the remaining objects will be assigned by the instructor to those students who have not indicated a choice. The paper will be short (5-8 pages of text), and include a visual analysis of the object in question as well as evidence of research. It is due at the beginning of class on TUESDAY NOVEMBER 21. No late papers will be accepted after the day of the final without PRIOR permission of the instructor. Further instructions on the paper will be provided later in the semester.

Please do not leave papers or notes under my office door or in the racks outside my office: take them to the AH office on the 3rd floor of Henry Hall, and ask the staff member there to date and initial assignments before placing in my mailbox. Any paper without such a signature and date will be considered as accepted at the time and day I find it, irrespective of when it was actually handed in. I do not accept term papers by email.

Honors students will complete an additional short assignment. Students seeking graduate credit will be expected to complete the same tests as the undergraduates, prepare a longer, more complex paper not based on a museum object, and generally perform at a higher level.

Prof. V. Miller
AH 274

Fall 2006

Instructor's Office Hours

Office: Henry Hall 211

Phone: (312)413-2467 main office: 996-3303

email: vem@uic.edu

Hours: Thursday 10-12 or by appointment (If I am not in my office during office hours, look for me in the Slide Library in Jefferson Hall, through the passageway next to my office).

Although I welcome students at other times, please do not stop by unannounced right before class. I will be glad to meet with students who cannot make my office hours at another mutually convenient time.

Class meets in 107 Henry Hall, 3:30-4:45 TTH

SYLLABUS

Week 1

August 28-September 1

Introduction to Mesoamerica

Week 2

September 4-8

Olmecs

LAST DAY TO ADD A COURSE IS SEPTEMBER 8

Week 3

September 11-15

Olmecs outside the heartland

West Mexico

Week 4

September 18-22

West Mexico

Week 5

September 25-29

QUIZ 1 (exact day TBA)

Teotihuacan

Week 6

October 2-6

Video: Mexico's Great Pyramids (Tuesday)

Teotihuacan

LAST DAY TO DROP A COURSE IS OCTOBER 6

Week 7

October 9-13

PAPER TOPICS DUE TUESDAY OCTOBER 10

Classic Veracruz

Week 8

October 16-20

MID-TERM (exact day TBA)

Classic Maya: Introduction

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Week 9

October 23-27

Classic Maya: architecture

Video: Ancient Mysteries: the Riddle of the Maya (Thursday)

Week 10

October 30-November 3

Classic Maya: sculpture

Classic Maya: painting

Week 11

November 6-10

Terminal Classic and Early Postclassic: Northern Maya

Week 12

November 13-17

Early Postclassic: Tula

Late Postclassic Oaxaca: Mixtecs

QUIZ 2 (exact day TBA)

Week 13

November 20-24

Late Postclassic: Aztecs

NO CLASS THURSDAY NOVEMBER 23

PAPER DUE TUESDAY NOVEMBER 21

Week 14

November 27-December 1

Late Postclassic: Aztecs

Video: Aztecs: Inside the Hidden Empire (Tuesday)

Week 15

December 4-8

Late Postclassic: Aztecs

Spanish Conquest

FINAL EXAM: WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 13, 3:30-5:30