ARCL 0031  Archaeology of Mesoamerica
Term I, 2019-20
Year 2 module option, 0.5 Unit, 15 credits
Wednesdays 9 – 11a.m. Room 612
Prof. Elizabeth Graham
e.graham@ucl.ac.uk
Room 614, phone: 0207 679 7532

First Essay: 2,500 words, due 20 November 2019
Second Essay: 2,500 words, due 23 January 2020
Class study sheets due (more or less) weekly. Not marked but 5% deducted from final mark if 8 of 10 not submitted.

ZotZ says target dates for return of essays 2 weeks from submission.
Olmec head from the site of Villahermosa in Mexico, on the Gulf Coast.

Wall sculpture from the site of Lambityeco in Oaxaca. The relief is Zapotec, but the site was also occupied by the later Mixtec.

Line drawing of a stone lintel with a glyphic inscription, providing both dates and historical information, from the site of Yaxchilan in Mexico.

A page from the Aztec (Mexica) Codex Boturini.

A mural fragment from an apartment compound at Teotihuacan, Mexico.

OFFICE SCHEDULE 2019-20
- Mondays normally working at home.
- Regularly in classes on Wednesdays and Fridays, 9 to 11.
- Otherwise available unless sign on my door states otherwise (e.g., meeting in the office, off on an errand, etc).
- Wednesday afternoons are the days for occasional departmental meetings.
1 Overview

This course introduces you to Mesoamerica, one of the world’s culture areas in which urbanism and states arose. The best known peoples of this region are the Aztecs and the Maya, but there are hundreds of others. I hope to familiarise you with the geography of the region, the variety of environments, agriculture, foods, languages, cultures, and achievements. Remarkably, many of the languages and traditions are alive and well in this region, and cultural continuity is strong.

Week-by-week summary

Week 1, 2nd October: INTRODUCTION - Mesoamerican traits, regional divisions, & chronology.
Week 2, 9th October: Culture areas, environments, Palaeoindian, Archaic
Week 3, 16th October: Domesticates, Initial and Early Formative
Week 4, 23rd October: Terminology, Middle Formative
Week 5, 30th October: Late & Terminal Formative
Week 6, 4th to 8th November: READING WEEK
Week 7, 13th November: Teotihuacan
Week 8, 20th November: Teotihuacan, cont’d.
Week 9, 27th November: The Classic Maya
Week 10, 4th December: Collapses and the Rise of Postclassic centres
Week 11, 11th December: The Aztecs and the Spanish Conquest

Basic text and other resources

Required readings are drawn from the following text: **Evans, Susan Toby, 2004, 2008, 2013 Ancient Mexico and Central America: Archaeology and Culture History. London: Thames and Hudson.**
Editions were published in 2004, 2008 and 2013. Other required or recommended readings supplement the text and are designed mainly to help you with the essay questions.

- The library availability of this book is as follows: **Institute library:**
  - 2004 edition, 1 copy on 1-week loan; 2008 edition, 2 copies on 1-week loan; 2013 edition, 2 copies, 1 in the Institute library and one in the SLC Archaeology library. There seem also to be 2 copies available for 2-day loans (INST ARCH DF 100 EVA); 1 copy available for 3-hour loan at the issue desk (ISSUE DESK IOA EVA 5)
- Purchasing the text (any edition) is strongly recommended. It is up-to-date, extensively illustrated, and the references will be extremely helpful to you in writing your essays. Chapter names and numbers are identical in the 2004 and 2008 editions. On Amazon, the 2004 edition is offered for as low as about £3; copies of the 2013 edition can be obtained for under £30.00.

KEY web resources for this course:

- [www.famsi.org](http://www.famsi.org) On-line publications on a range of Mesoamerican topics.
- [www.mesoweb.com](http://www.mesoweb.com) Reports by Mesoamerican scholars as well as a range of other resources.

Journals: **Latin American Antiquity; Ancient Mesoamerica; Antiquity; Cambridge Archaeological Journal; Arqueología Mexicana; Mexicon.**

Methods of assessment:

- **First essay:** 2,500 words, due 20 November. **50%**
- **Second essay:** 2,500 words, due 23 January 2019. **50%**
- **TOTAL** **100%**

Class study sheets: Due more or less weekly, not marked but 5% deducted from final mark if not submitted.

Teaching methods: **Illustrated lectures are combined with a question-and-answer format. The class is registered on Moodle.**

Workload in terms of breakdown of hours spent on course:

- Lectures/discussion = 20 hrs.
- Private reading = 80 hrs.
- Required essays = 40 hrs.
- TOTAL = 140 hrs.

Prerequisites: None other than your first-year courses.
2 Aims, Objectives and Assessment

**Aims:** I have two primary aims: 1) That you will see value in learning from Mesoamerican cultural traditions and historical experience; 2) That you will learn to be critical about the ways in which archaeologists, other academics, film makers, popular writers, and the media in general synthesise and make sense of information about the civilisations of Mesoamerica, or about ancient civilisations generally.

**Objectives:** On successful completion of this course:
- You should be aware of the major environmental zones of Mesoamerica, the resources distinctive to these zones, and the range of human-environmental relationships.
- You should have a basic understanding of the rise of urbanism across Mesoamerica.
- You should have some familiarity with the art and architectural styles of Mesoamerica.

**Learning outcomes:** On successful completion of this course you should:
- Be explicitly aware of how archaeologists acquire, assess, and interpret data.
- Be able to assess theoretical approaches critically (e.g., climate change, cultural evolution, niche construction)
- Have acquired a range of research and writing skills.
- Have learned how to integrate ideas from a variety of sources.
- Be assiduous in the practice of source citation.

**Word counts**

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Penalties will only be imposed if you exceed the upper figure in the range. There is no penalty for using fewer words than the lower figure in the range: the lower figure is simply for your guidance to indicate the sort of length that is expected.

In the 2019-20 session penalties for overlength work will be as follows:

- For work that exceeds the specified maximum length by less than 10% the mark will be reduced by five percentage marks, but the penalised mark will not be reduced below the pass mark, assuming the work merited a Pass.
- For work that exceeds the specified maximum length by 10% or more the mark will be reduced by ten percentage marks, but the penalised mark will not be reduced below the pass mark, assuming the work merited a Pass.

**Coursework submission procedures**

- All coursework must normally be submitted **both as hard copy and electronically** unless instructed otherwise (However, bulky portfolios and lab books are normally submitted as hard copy only.)
- You should staple the appropriate colour-coded IoA coversheet (available in the IoA library and outside room 411a) to the front of each piece of work and submit it to the red box at the Reception Desk (or room 411a in the case of Year 1 undergraduate work)
- All coursework should be uploaded to Turnitin by midnight on the day of the deadline. This will date-stamp your work. It is essential to upload all parts of your work as this is sometimes the version that will be marked.
- Instructions are given below. Please note that the procedure has changed for 2019-20, and work is now submitted to Turnitin via Moodle.
1. Ensure that your essay or other item of coursework has been saved as a Word doc., docx., or PDF document. Please include the module code and your candidate number on every page as a header.

2. Go into the Moodle page for the module to which you wish to submit your work.

3. Click on the correct assignment (e.g. Essay 1).

4. Fill in the “Submission title” field with the right details: It is essential that the first word in the title is your examination candidate number (e.g. YGBR8 Essay 1), Note that this changes each year.

5. Click “Upload”.

6. Click on “Submit”.

7. You should receive a receipt – please save this.

8. If you have problems, please email the IoA Turnitin Advisers on ioa-turnitin@ucl.ac.uk, explaining the nature of the problem and the exact module and assignment involved. One of the Turnitin Advisers will normally respond within 24 hours, Monday-Friday during term. Please be sure to email the Turnitin Advisers if technical problems prevent you from uploading work in time to meet a submission deadline - even if you do not obtain an immediate response from one of the Advisers they will be able to notify the relevant Module Coordinator that you had attempted to submit the work before the deadline.

Maya jaguar figurine from a residential house platform, Lamanai, Belize.

Drawing by Louise Belanger

3 Schedule and Syllabus

The following is an outline for the course and identifies required (Χ) and recommended () readings for each week. Information is provided on locations of these readings in the UCL library system, on our Moodle site for the course, or via the online reading lists. In most cases in the following outline I include information on the location of the book or journal from which each article is derived, so you can also locate the reading by going to its source. I can sometimes provide a link directly to the source. The recommended readings are also meant as a guide to your essays.

WEEK 1: 02 October Introduction: Mesoamerican traits, regions, chronology

Recommended but required by next week:

Χ Evans Chapter 1: 'Ancient Mesoamerica, the Civilization and its Antecedents'.

WEEK 2: 09 October Cultural regions, environments, Palaeoindian and Archaic periods

Required:

Χ Evans Chapter 2: pp. 61-70, Mesoamerica’s first inhabitants
Χ Evans Chapter 3: 'Archaic Foragers, Collectors, and Farmers (8000-2000 BC)'.
Χ Study Sheet 1.

WEEK 3: 16 October Mesoamerican domesticates, Initial and Early Formative periods

Required:

Χ Evans Chapter 4: 'The Initial Formative (c. 2000-1200 BC)'.
Χ Study Sheet 2.

Recommended for 'Peopling the New World' and the Palaeoindian period [Copy to borrow also in tray on my door.]


Recommended for the Archaic and Early Formative periods [Copy to borrow in tray on my door.]

**More sources on Peopling the New World, Palaeoindian**

- Gonzalez, Silvia, David Huddart, Isabel Israde-Alcántara, Gabriela Domínguez-Vázquez, James Bischoff and Nicholas Felstead (2015), Paleoindian sites from the Basin of Mexico: Evidence from stratigraphy, tephrochronology and dating. *Quaternary International* 363: 4-19. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.quaint.2014.03.015](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.quaint.2014.03.015)

**More sources on the Archaic and Early Formative**

- Rosenswig, R.M.. 2014. A Mosaic of Adaptation: The archaeological record for Mesoamerica’s Archaic Period. *Jour. Archaeological Research* 23:115-162. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10814-014-9080-x](http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10814-014-9080-x) [Best to read Introduction then go to the Conclusion and Discussion to get an idea of what we know about the Mesoamerican Archaic.]

**Theories on the origins of agriculture more generally**


**Domestication:**

- Katz, S.H., M.C. Hediger, and L.A. Valleroy, 1974. Traditional Maize Processing Techniques in the New World. *Science* 184:765-773. *Teaching Collection INST ARCH 2227*. [This is the definitive research that showed how advantageous dietarily it was to soak corn in lime, so take a look at the Concluding section.]

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**WEEK 4: 23 October**  
**Terminology, the Olmecs and the Middle Formative period**  
**Required:**

- ✖ Evans Chapter 5: 'The Olmecs: Early Formative (c. 1200-900/800 BC)'.
- ✖ Evans Chapter 6: 'The Olmecs: Middle Formative (c. 900 – 600 BBC)'.
- ✖ Study Sheet 3.

**Recommended book chapters for Olmec-related essays:**

- The Preface and Introduction (pp. 7-28) in *The Olmecs, America’s First Civilization* by Richard A. Diehl. *INST ARCH DFA 100 DIE*. [Very good overview by an Olmec scholar.]
- Olmec Beginnings, pp. 92-144 (Ch 4) in *Olmec Archaeology & Early Mesoamerica* by Christopher A. Pool. *INST ARCH DFA 100 POO* [Also a very good overview by an Olmec scholar.]
- The *Olmec World, Ritual & Rulership*, *INST ARCH DFA 300 Qto CLA*. [From an exhibition in Princeton, so good for illustrations]

**Journal articles on the Olmec:**


**Olmec Interaction in the Early Formative**


**Olmec stone carving & sculpture**


**WEEK 5: 30 October The Late & Terminal Formative periods**

**Required:**

- Evans Chapter 7: ‘Middle to Late Formative Cultures (c. 600/500 – 300 BC)’.  
- Evans Chapter 8: ‘The Emergence of States in the Late Formative (300 BC- AD 1)’.  
- Evans Chapter 9: ‘The Terminal Formative (AD 1-300)’. pp. 235-253. [or]
- Study Sheet 4.

**Olmecs, general**

- Coe, Michael D. and Richard Diehl, 1980. *In the Land of the Olmec*. INST ARCH DFA 10 Qto COE [Classic work on archaeology in the Olmec area. Very well written.]

**Olmecs and their neighbours:**

Oaxaca, Zapotecs


Zapotec and Mixtec writing or literary traditions


Elsewhere in Mesoamerica


WEEK 6: 4 to 8 November – R E A D I N G W E E K
WEEKS 7,8: 13, 20 November  THE GREAT CITY OF TEOTIHUACAN

Tentative plans are that in Week 7, I’ll summarise the character, politics, and organisation of the great city. In Week 8, Elizabeth Baquedano will lecture on Teotihuacan art, iconography, and symbolism. However, the topics may be reversed. It depends on my schedule as I am travelling to Krakow to the annual European Maya meetings on the 14th.

Either way, the two weeks will be devoted to Teotihuacan.

Required:

- Evans Chapter 10: 'Teotihuacan and Its International Influence (AD 250/300-600)'.

Other readings on Teotihuacan

- Cowgill, George L. 1997. State and Society at Teotihuacan, Mexico. Annual Review of Anthropology 26:129-61, Teaching Collection INST ARCH 2563. Also as a periodical INST ARCH Pers. [Cowgill is a very good writer; excellent review of the work carried out at Teo prior to the recent excavations by Saburo Sugiyama.]

Teaching Collection INST ARCH 2790.

- Blanton, Richard E., Stephen E Kowalewski, Gary M Feinman, and Laura Finsten 1993 Ancient Mesoamerica. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. INST ARCH DF100 BLA; ISSUE DESK IOA BLA 3 and 4. Chapter 4 on the Valley of Mexico. [Figures 4.1-4.6, 4.8, 4.10, 4.12, 4.14 are a series of settlement maps that show the locations of the various sites in the Basin (or Valley) of Mexico, and you can get an idea of how settlement has changed through time.]

The Teotihuacan mapping project

- Cowgill, George L. 2015. The Teotihuacan mapping project: Experiences with data files, big questions, and some research priorities for Teotihuacan.

Moon Pyramid


**The Sun Pyramid**

• Sload, Rebecca. 2015. When was the Sun Pyramid Built? Maintaining the status quo at Teotihuacan, Mexico. *Latin American Antiquity* 26(2): 221-241.


**The Feathered Serpent Pyramid**


**Irrigation at Teotihuacan**


**Teotihuacan interaction**


• Clayton, Sarah C. Interregional relationships in Mesoamerica: Interpreting Maya ceramics at Teotihuacan. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 16(4): 427-448. [Regional interaction]

• Price, T. Douglas, James H. Burton, Paul D. Fullagar, Lori E. Wright, Jane E. Buikstra, Vera Tiesler. 2008. Strontium isotopes and the study of human mobility in ancient Mesoamerica. [Several case studies, one of which is the Oaxaca Barrio at Teotihuacan; useful if you do an essay on what isotope analysis has contributed to our understanding of Teotihuacan and its people.]

**Teotihuacan art, iconography, religion, worldview**


Teotihuacan writing and language

Cultural heritage

WEEK 9: 27 November The Classic Maya

Required:
- ✶ Evans Chapter 11: 'The Maya in the Early Classic (AD 250-600)'.
- ✶ Evans Chapter 12: 'The Lowland Maya: Apogee and Collapse'.
- ✶ Study Sheet 6.

Other readings on Classic rulership

WEEK 10: 4 December

The Fall of Teotihuacan, Chichen Itza and the Terminal Classic; The Rise of Tula and the Postclassic

Required:
- ✶ Evans Chapter 13: 'The Late Classic and Epiclassic in the West (AD 600-1000/1100)'.
- ✶ Evans Chapter 14: 'The Maya in the Terminal Classic and Early Postclassic . . .'
- ✶ Evans Chapter 15: 'The Rise of Tula and Other Epiclassic Transformations. . . .'
- ✶ Study Sheet 7.

Mesoamerica after the Classic . . .
Papers from my work (and my students & colleagues) on the collapse


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WEEK 11: 11 December The Aztecs and the Conquest of Mexico

**Required:**
- Evans Chapter 16: 'The Middle Postclassic (1200s-1430)', pp. 425-429; 437-446.
- Evans Chapter 20: 'The Conquest of Mexico and Its Aftermath'.
- Study Sheet 8.

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'Crocodile' effigy from a cache in a large platform, Lamanai. Terminal Postclassic or Early Historic (Late 15th to 16th century).

*Drawing by Louise Belanger.*

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**4 Online Resources**

The handbook and module information will be uploaded onto Moodle. The text is not available digitally as far as I know. The journal articles can be accessed on-line through the UCL library services. Whatever I have copyright permission for, I will upload, but most edited books are not available online. See the Overview for other online sources of articles and papers.

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**5 Additional Information**

*Communication between student and course co-ordinator:*

The main channels of communication are the Moodle site, where I post in the News Forum, and my own e-mail address e.graham@ucl.ac.uk. During the first lectures I will pass around a sheet on which you should provide the e-mail address where you can be contacted. When you e-mail me, PUT THE COURSE NUMBER OR NAME IN THE SUBJECT LINE and I will know to give it priority. If you have a non-UCL address, it would be best for you to arrange for e-mail to be forwarded from your UCL address, because staff and students will expect to be able to reach you through your UCL e-mail, available on the UCL website. Please also make sure that Judy has an up-to-date telephone number for you in case you need to be contacted.

*The Course Moodle website*

I will post lectures, the Course Handbook, and course handouts on Moodle. If you would like to consult or print the handbook, review lectures (after they have been delivered in class), or get a handout you don’t have, please go to Moodle. If I am slow to add material feel free to remind me by e-mail. Please ensure you are signed up to the module on Moodle. For help with Moodle, please contact Charlotte Frearson (c.frearson@ucl.ac.uk)
Libraries and other resources:
The libraries with resources most used in this course are the Institute of Archaeology library, the DM Watson Science library and Anthropology Library (UCL) and the Anthropology library at the Centre for Anthropology (British Museum). During the research for your essays you may have to consult the Main library, but in most cases all the resources are found in the three libraries mentioned. The British Library is nearby and is also an excellent resource. Other than library resources, artifacts relevant to Mesoamerican civilizations can be found on display in the British Museum in the Mexican Gallery.

Criteria for assessment:
The criteria for assessment used in this course are those agreed by the Board of Examiners in Archaeology, and are included in the Undergraduate Handbook ( available on the Institute web-site). In brief, the grades used are A, B, C, D, E and F, with finer distinctions indicated by a plus (+) or a minus (-). All coursework is marked by two internal examiners, and can be re-assessed by the Visiting Examiner. Therefore, the mark given by the initial examiner (prior to return) is a provisional assessment for guidance only, and may be modified after consultation with the second internal examiner, or by the Visiting Examiner.

Plagiarism policy
Work submitted
All work submitted as part of the requirements for any examination at UCL, which includes all assessed work such as essays, must be expressed in the student’s own words and incorporate the student’s own ideas and judgements. All students have received a copy of the College’s rules on plagiarism; the Institute’s guidelines are included in the Undergraduate Handbook. Examiners for this course will scrutinise all work for evidence of plagiarism or collusion between students. To avoid charges of collusion, students should always ensure that their work is their own, and not lend their essays or essay drafts to other students because they are likely to be penalised if the second student copies the work and submits it as their own.

What is plagiarism?
Plagiarism is defined as the presentation of another person’s thoughts or words as though they are one’s own—that is, without citing where you got the information. Cite where the information came from, no problem. Plagiarism constitutes an examination offence under the University Regulations and students found to have committed plagiarism may be excluded from all further examinations of the University and/or College. Plagiarism can take more than one form:

1) If information is copied verbatim from the published or unpublished works of other persons, it must be identified as such by placing the copied information in inverted commas/quotation marks and the source of the information must be referenced appropriately and accurately. Where copied information is neither quoted nor referenced, the information is considered to have been plagiarised.

2) If information is paraphrased by the student from the published or unpublished works of other persons, the source of the information must be provided. That is, the information source must be referenced appropriately and accurately. Where paraphrased information is not referenced, the information is considered to have been plagiarised.

In archaeological writing—as opposed, say, to creative writing in English—we do a great deal of borrowing and paraphrasing of ideas and information from scholarly sources. Therefore it is especially critical for us to recognize our sources by accurate and full referencing.

3) ‘Self-plagiarism’ is a term sometimes used to apply to the extensive use of the same sources and materials in more than one piece of assessed coursework, submitted for the same or for other courses taken as part of the degree. It is not illegal (whereas plagiarism technically is illegal) but it is considered bad practice, and unacceptable at university.

4) Plagiarism is also committed when a student copies the work of another student and submits it as his/her own.
This appendix provides a short précis of policies and procedures relating to modules. It is not a substitute for the full documentation, with which all students should become familiar. For full information on Institute policies and procedures, see the IoA Student Administration section of Moodle: https://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/module/view
For UCL policies and procedures, see the Academic Regulations and the UCL Academic Manual: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/srs/academic-regulations ; http://www.ucl.ac.uk/academic-manual/

GENERAL MATTERS

ATTENDANCE: A register will be taken at each class. If you are unable to attend a class, please notify the lecturer by email. Students are normally required to attend at least 70% of classes.

DYSEXIA: If you have dyslexia or any other disability, please discuss with your lecturers whether there is any way in which they can help you. Students with dyslexia should indicate it on each coursework cover sheet.

COURSEWORK

General policies and procedures concerning modules and coursework, including submission procedures, assessment criteria, and general resources, are available on the IoA Student Administration section of Moodle: https://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/

It is essential that you read and comply with these. Note that some of the policies and procedures will be different depending on your status (e.g. undergraduate, postgraduate taught, affiliate, graduate diploma, intercollegiate, interdepartmental). If in doubt, please consult your module co-ordinator.

GRANTING OF EXTENSIONS: Note that there are strict UCL-wide regulations with regard to the granting of extensions for coursework. Note that Module Coordinators are not permitted to grant extensions. All requests for extensions must be submitted on a the appropriate UCL form, together with supporting documentation, via Judy Medrington’s office and will then be referred on for consideration. Please be aware that the grounds that are acceptable are limited. Those with long-term difficulties should contact UCL Student Support and Wellbeing to make special arrangements. Please see the IoA Student Administration section of Moodle https://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/ for further information. Additional information is given here http://www.ucl.ac.uk/srs/academic-manual/c4/extenuating-circumstances/

Suggested Essay Questions

First Essay, Formative Mesoamerica, 2,500 words
Choose one question, or suggest one but confirm it with me
• What new evidence do we have from Mesoamerica on the peopling of the New World? How has the evidence contributed to our knowledge of Palaeoindian movement and settlement.
• How does the landscape of domestication in Mesoamerica compare to domestication in the Old World? What are the similarities and differences?
• How do figurines produced in Formative Mesoamerica compare/contrast with figurines manufactured by people in another civilisation you are studying?
• What is so ‘formative’ about the Formative Period in Mesoamerica?
• What are the various ideas about the ways in which the Olmecs interacted with other parts of Mesoamerica in the Formative.
• Who are/were the Zapotecs? What evidence do we have for the development of Zapotec centres, and writing?
• What do Olmec sculptural traditions (stone monuments and sculptures) have to tell us about Olmec society and culture?
• What was the role of trade and exchange in the formation of early Mesoamerica?
• Why are the Olmecs important in Mesoamerican history? Is there such a thing as ‘Olmec’ anyway?
• What farming systems existed in Formative-period Mesoamerica?
• Pinpointing the domestication of maize has been a long saga. Trace what has been said about the domestication of maize in Mesoamerica from Macneish’s work in the Tehuacan Valley to present discoveries about its origin and early domestication. What did Macneish get wrong? What do the new data on maize have to say?
• What role did the emergence of an elite stratum play in the development of Formative-period urbanism?
• What evidence do we have for the emergence and development of writing in Mesoamerica? (Up to the end of the Formative/Preclassic period)

**Second Essay, 2,500 words, Choice No. 1:**
Select an artefact (or artefacts) from the British Museum Mexico exhibit (e.g., turquoise mosaics, Yaxchilan lintels). Make sure to reproduce the artefact clearly in your essay—either carefully download the photos from the British Museum web site, or try to find the artefact in the literature, or photograph it or draw it yourself. I will expect a strong visual component. Use the artefact as the basis for exploring the people and culture which produced it. First describe the artefact and why you chose it. Then explore its material, form, function, and symbolism. Is it art? Is the role of the ‘artist’ important in producing the artefact? To what extent does the artefact reflect the cultural values of the respective civilization or society which it represents? Does it reflect cultural or social or individual identity in any way? Please check with me to rough out an outline for the essay. The important concept here is that of ‘art’ and what the term means. If you are in an art or art history department, this is a good way to bring in art theory. Most all of the BM artefacts were not legally excavated, so there is also the fact that we don’t know their original context—how does this affect what we can say?

**Second Essay, 2,500 words or as above, suggest a topic but check with me:**
• Describe and discuss Teotihuacan urns (censers) and their uses (function, iconography, symbolism).
• Was Teotihuacan the head of an empire?
• What archaeological evidence is indicative of urbanism at Teotihuacan?
• Critically discuss Jared Diamond’s views on collapse with respect to whether they explain (or not) the end of the Classic period in Mesoamerica.
• Critically discuss *Apocalypto!* What about this film is supposed to reflect Maya culture? Is Gibson exceptional in his treatment of the past, or does his treatment reveal something about how societies in general like to view the past, or ‘the other’?
• Discuss the role of elite women in Classic-period Mesoamerica as seen through archaeology, iconography, and epigraphy (where possible). You can discuss this issue cross-culturally, or select a particular culture or cultures.
• Compare the art style of a civilisation in Mesoamerica (e.g., Teotihuacan, Maya) to the art style characteristic of an Old World civilisation or culture with which you are familiar (Greco-Roman, Shang, Mohenjo-Daro, etc.). What does the ‘art’ tell us about the respective cultures in terms of their values?
• What do we know from colonial documents about how Tenochtitlan functioned?
• Compare Classic Maya cities with the urban centre of Teotihuacan in terms of layout and architecture. What are the similarities and differences? What do you think the similarities and differences reflect in terms of the respective societies’ priorities and values?
• Discuss the concept of ‘political landscape’ with respect to the ancient Maya. For this you need to use The Political Landscape by Adam T. Smith plus Martin and Grube’s Chronicle of the Maya Kings and Queens.
• Compare the court as depicted on Classic Maya vases to courts of another culture or civilisation (Medieval Europe, Japan, South Asia, China?)
• What evidence is there for contact and relationships between Teotihuacan and the Maya in the Early Classic period? Have views about their relationships changes through time?
• The collapse of Classic-period Mesoamerican societies occurred any time from the 7th to early 9th centuries. What collapsed, and why?
• Discuss the content and structure of the Mixtec codices. Do they deal with history?
• Essays that focus on specific aspects of the symbolism or iconography of Teotihuacan, or any other civilisation that we covered, are also possible.
Details:

- For domestication: (See also class recommended readings, WEEK 3, Fuller, Zeder and also Bruce Smith.)
  - **Ingold, Tim.** 1996. Growing Plants and Raising Animals. In *The Origins and Spread of Agriculture and Pastoralism in Eurasia*, ed. by David Harris, pp. 13-24. INST ARCH HA HAR (ISSUE DESK: 1 copy 3 hr.; 9 copies 1 week). Teaching Collection INST ARCH 1727 (3 copies). This looks at agriculture from the point of view of relationships among people, plants, and animals.
  - **Morse, Stephen S.** 1990. Stirring Up Trouble: Environmental Disruption Can Divert Animal Viruses into People. *The Sciences*, Sept/Oct, Vol. 5, pp. 16-21. Teaching Collection INST ARCH 2269. Morse is a virologist; in this fascinating article he discusses how environmental disruption can divert animal viruses into people. This is something to think about in comparing, for example, Europeans' close relationship with cattle and sheep, which ultimately if unintentionally produced human forms of BSE, and the greater emphasis in Mesoamerica on plant sources.

- For the Olmecs and the 'Olmec' style:

- For the Zapotecs and Mixtecs of the Valley of Oaxaca: (See also 'Cultural evolution and state formation', below.)
  - Marcus, Joyce. 1980. Zapotec Writing. *Scientific American* 242:50-64. (See class readings.)
  - Sellen, Adam T. 2011. Sowing the blood with the maize: Zapotec effigy vessels and agricultural ritual. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 22: 71-89. (References for this paper have lots more.)

- Mixtec codices

- Writing:

- Archaeological theory - Overviews
- **Archaeological theory, examples:**
  - Shennan, S. 2002. Chapter 3: Culture as an evolutionary system. In Shennan, S. *Genes, Memes, and Human History*, pp. 35-65. ISSUE DESK IOA SHE 10; INST ARCH BB 1 SHE.

- **Cultural evolution, state formation, urbanism:**
  - Feinman, Gary M. & Joyce Marcus, editors. 1998. *Archaic States*. School of American Research Press, Santa Fe, New Mexico. INST ARCH BD FEI. [One or more chapters here might be helpful; it has worldwide coverage.]
  - Flannery, Kent V. 1972. The cultural evolution of civilizations. *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics* 3:399-426. [This is the ultimate ecosystems approach. Although Flannery uses the term ‘cultural evolution’, this work seems to me to explain change of almost any kind in social systems. See what you think.] INST ARCH Teaching Collection 1045, 4 copies. Also INST ARCH BD FLA.
  - Marcus, Joyce & Kent V. Flannery. 1996. *Zapotec Civilization: How urban society evolved in Mexico’s Oaxaca Valley*. Thames & Hudson, London. ISSUE DESK IOA MAR 1 and INST ARCH DFA 100 MAR.
  - Sanders, William T. and David L. Webster. 1988. The Mesoamerican urban tradition. *American Anthropologist* 90:521-46. [This concentrates on cities, but is a classic cultural evolutionary approach.]


Early Mesoamerica:
- Flannery, Kent V., ed. 2009. The Early Mesoamerican Village. Academic Press, New York. INST ARCH DF 100 FLA, 8 copies on 1 week loan, 3 copies on 3 hour loan. [Selected chapters and comments help to illuminate approaches to cultural evolution.]

Essay Structure

Format:
Essays must be word-processed and should be printed (double-spaced). I prefer one-side but it will be cheaper for you to print two-sided. DO NOT SINGLE-SPACE. Adequate margins should be left for written comments by the examiner. Students are encouraged to use diagrams and/or tables where appropriate. These should be clearly referred to at the appropriate point in the text, and if derived from another source, this must be clearly acknowledged. Each essay is 2,500 words. Students should adhere to word limits on essays; such limits are intended to help ensure equality of workloads between courses as well as to encourage the useful transferable skills of clearly structured argumentation and succinct writing.

- Use double-line spacing, or at least 1 1/2. DO NOT SINGLE-SPACE.
- Number all pages except for the title page. NUMBER ALL PAGES. Number all pages. Number all pages.
- I prefer 12-point font but 11 is okay.
- DO NOT JUSTIFY THE RIGHT MARGIN.
- Your adherence to the above is part of my assessment of your overall organization.

Hand in your essay with the IoA cover sheet, and your candidate number, but nothing else. No plastic sheets or other covers. Just use a staple or paper clip in the upper left corner, or fold it and I’ll add the staple.

In-text citations:
Scholarly publications in archaeology generally use in-text citations and not footnotes. This means that any information taken from books or sources other than your own research must be followed by the reference in parentheses. The in-text referencing normally includes the author’s name, the year of publication, and the pages from which the information is derived. For guidelines, check the Institute’s ’New Rules for Referencing’, available in the Institute Intranet and on the Moodle site for the class). However I will accept any form as long as you are consistent. The in-text (or Harvard) citations do not count in the word count.

Footnotes:
Footnotes can be used for information that you feel is important but does not integrate well with the text, but in general, try to incorporate the information into the text and avoid footnotes. The idea is that if it is not important enough for the main body of the text, it is not important enough for a footnote. However, the historians among you will be used to using footnotes for information; if you feel they are necessary, use them, but only for information, not for citations, please.
**References cited:**
In addition to providing source references in the text in those places in which you either use quotations, or paraphrase information from other sources, you are required in archaeological research and writing to list all the sources you have used for information at the end of your essay. **This is not, contrary to popular belief,** a Bibliography. It is normally entitled: **References Cited** or merely **References** or sometimes **Works Cited.** (Bibliographies, strictly speaking, can include works you have read but from which you have not drawn specific information for your essay.) In the case of the essays you will submit, **no citation should appear in the text that is not also listed in the References Cited section,** and **no work should appear in the References Cited section that is not also referred to in the text.** There are no exceptions to this rule either in this course, or in archaeological publication.

**Web sources:** (see p. 3 above for some recommended web sites—also Moodle)
Web sources can and should be used, but they should either be peer-reviewed sites, or originate from a university or research organization (e.g., the FAMSI reports on the field research they sponsor in Mesoamerica). The web sites of individuals are suspect and normally should not be used (e.g., Shaman Fred’s New Age Maya Remedies for the Next Millennium). Where web sites are used, don’t put the url in the text. If there is an author, use his/her name, or maybe pick a name to identify the site and then put the details of the url in the References Cited. For example, if the information is from the National Geographic web site, you might put ‘National Geographic’ in your text, and in the References Cited section provide the web address and any relevant details, including the date you accessed the site. However there may be more information on web citation in the ‘New Rules for Referencing’ on the Institute’s Intranet.

### Essay Assessment for ARCL0031

#### Why this handout?
The Institute’s criteria for the assessment of undergraduate work are in the Undergraduate Handbook. It is up to me, however, to judge the ways in which these criteria are met. It is not a straightforward process because the system requires me both to judge and to teach. Since we all learn a great deal by making mistakes, the system has inherent contradictions: How do I judge, for example, whether you have demonstrated ‘outstanding critical ability’ when it is my job to teach you the critical process? How do I judge ‘exceptional clarity’ when I hope to teach you how you can maximize clarity in your writing?

On the other hand, you come to university with a range of skills and knowledge, and you are here to use them as the basis for more complex learning. I can teach you, but you must be prepared to be taught. By this I mean that I expect you to show enterprise in reading and research; I expect you to show an interest in learning; and I expect you to want to respond to my recommendations concerning how you can maximize your course performance. What I cannot do is teach enterprise, interest, or responsiveness, but I can reward enterprise, interest, and responsiveness by making my expectations as clear as possible, and by providing as much feedback as possible so that you can improve your performance.

The fundamental criterion for essays is whether or not the question that has been set has been answered and how well it has been answered. You may think you have answered the question very well. I may think you have answered the question poorly. What you think is ‘VERY GOOD’ I may judge to be ‘SATISFACTORY.’ My job is not just to apply the criteria, then; my job is to tell you why and how I reached the assessment. Therefore in addition to the Criteria for Assessment, I **provide a set of criteria I use as guides when I read your essays.**

You will see in the list of my essay comments below that I look for a range of things. Good proofreading and clear composition and style are important to the reader (me) in understanding what the writer (you) is trying to say. Therefore proofreading, grammar, composition, and spelling are among my criteria, although they carry very little weight. I use them largely to remind me to point out in your text where you can improve in these areas. Good organization is essential to thoroughness and clarity of presentation, and I have three presentation criteria I follow (organization overall, organizational details, and nature of presentation). Enterprise in reading is more difficult to assess globally because to some extent this depends on the question; but I do look at the range and types of sources you have used, and I pay great attention to referencing — a lot of attention to referencing — because this tells me what you consider to be relevant evidence, and also tells me how you have used the sources you have chosen to construct an argument or to support your discussion in answering the question. Critical ability and perception will always have some subjectivity involved in their assessment. Therefore I have criteria I use that help me to judge critical ability.
Cover sheets for essays
When I return your essays to you, I will do so accompanied by an official Institute cover sheet with comments on separate sheets. These constitute my assessment of your grade. I keep records on my computer so I can also e-mail the comments to you.

Essay Comments
The format laid out in the following two pages is my own frame of reference that helps me to assess your work according to the official marking criteria. It is meant to provide the maximum amount of feedback to facilitate improvement and maximum results on your part.

These criteria appear on the Essay Comments Sheet on the reverse of the Cover Sheet, and below:

➤ DOES THE ESSAY ANSWER THE QUESTION?

Depth of approach
This category and the next reflect creativity and initiative. Here I account for the range and depth of thinking involved in answering the question, and in the intellectual breadth of information applied to answering the question. Often this is a relative issue – that is, I am guided in part by how students in the class perform generally, and do not always evaluate this category with preconceived notions about necessary depth or breadth. On the other hand, I will let you know if I feel that you have not given sufficient attention to particular points or issues.

Clarity of approach
I expect you to explain your approach to addressing the essay question in your introduction. I then look at how well you have followed through on the approach; how effective your approach is in answering the essay question; and in some circumstances your rationale for using the approach.

➤ STRUCTURE OF THE ARGUMENT (structure rather than content)

Organization overall
Is your essay structured to comprise an introduction, a body of text, and a conclusion or wrap-up? I look for these essential elements before I proceed to the organizational details. The essay must have an introduction outlining the theme or purpose of the essay, and the conclusion should reiterate the most important points or provide closure in some way.

Organization: details
One long narrative is not acceptable. Use headings and perhaps sub-headings to improve organization of your ideas. Headings and sub-headings help to facilitate getting your points across to the reader. Decide how your paragraphs illustrate various points and make sure that the sub-headings reflect this. Do your points have a logical order and lead to the conclusion? Do you impart information in a sequence that facilitates (or hinders) understanding and comprehension?

➤ SOURCES

Sources: Range
I will acknowledge the number of sources you have used related to your topic and I will make a judgement about the effort you have made in seeking a range relevant to your topic.

Sources: Types
I will also look at the kinds of sources you have used: books on a topic; edited books; general texts; monographs. I will look especially to see if you have consulted journals so that you have the most up-to-date information. I do not judge all the literature by date because some of the best information is from early sources, particularly with regard to site reports. But the use of journal articles is usually a plus. Remember that there are not many journals that focus on the New World, so I feel this is a fair criterion and does not require an inordinate amount of searching. I also expect you to use scholarly sources and not popular sources (unless of course your essay is on the topic of popularisation).

In-text citations
Is there appropriate in-text citation? That is, do you cite the source of your information where you have used or presented the information? Are page numbers given? PAGE NUMBERS MUST BE PROVIDED UNLESS YOU ARE INDEED REFERRING TO THE ENTIRE BOOK OR ARTICLE. Is every source cited in the text listed in the References Cited section at the end? No sources should appear in the in-text citations that do not also appear in the References Cited. Provide source citations for ALL information that is not something you have discovered through your own independent work. Since few or none of you have yet done primary research of your own and discovered new data, almost all of your information should have a source citation. Consult the section in the Course Handbook on plagiarism for other information relevant to this criterion.
References cited
Is your References Cited section clearly presented? Is the publication information correct? Have you provided the publisher’s name and place of publication? I prefer the publisher first, followed by the place because place is not as important as it once was, when publishers used to be associated with specific cities. Have you made sure when you use a paper in an edited volume that you have cited the paper, its author, and its page numbers in the volume? Is every reference cited at the end also in the text? DO NOT USE THE TERM ‘BIBLIOGRAPHY’ to refer to your list of references. What you will provide is not a bibliography in any case. See above.

 ➤ USE OF EVIDENCE
Selection & nature of evidence
This covers what information you have chosen from the literature (or other sources) to address the essay question. Have you shown good judgment in selecting the evidence and can it be used to sustain the argument? Does the evidence bear on the question?

Presentation (judgment, assessment)
This refers to how you present the information for discussion of the various points in order to make your case. I think of it a bit differently from Organisation (above) because for Organisation I am looking at structure not substance—almost the framework that you set up physically. Here I will assess substance—your ability to use the structure effectively to develop your argument, discuss the data cogently, and/or make a strong case.

Integration
This is part of the presentation, but I look here specifically at how effectively you have integrated the data and information from your sources to make your case. (Information should not just be dropped down in no particular order.) I consider your understanding of the information you have used, as well as your critical abilities in balancing, through your hierarchy of presentation, the variety of information on which you draw. I may also consider the range and types of sources here, not in terms of sheer numbers, but in terms of how the information is integrated.

Use of tables, charts, illustrations
In archaeology, illustrations are almost always useful and I will expect you to use illustrations to clarify or supplement your text. Make sure they are clear. Scanning is okay if it’s clear, but don’t be afraid to trace maps. Sometimes this makes the information clearer. The term to use then in your in-text citation is: ‘. . . adapted from xxxxx’

 ➤ WRITING QUALITY
Proofreading
Have you proofread the text well, or is it filled with errors, run-on sentences, erratic margins, faint printing, or blurry illustrations? Is the print overly small? Does the essay lack page numbers? ALL ESSAYS MUST BE PAGINATED.

Grammar, composition, spelling, style
Try not to use spell-check blindly without making sure of the correct context of individual words. Be wary of the thesaurus; always look up the suggested synonym (e.g., ‘plethora’, ‘parameters,’ and ‘ecology’ are invariably used incorrectly). The web is now great for this as major dictionaries have free on-line resources (e.g. Oxford or Merriam-Webster). Don’t assume you know the meaning; check on the meaning. Make every effort to use words correctly and succinctly; it will simplify understanding. Keep in mind that I do not grade on grammar per se, but on how clarity and understanding are affected by writing skills.

 ➤ ORIGINALITY AND INDEPENDENT THINKING
Originality
Here I judge the way you have strung the various ideas together from your sources to make points. This is related to ‘integration’, above, except that above I look more at how effectively or smoothly you have integrated the data whereas here I consider the extent to which your essay reflects original thinking—your product—and not simply a string of quotations.

Critical thinking
Have you thought critically about the sources of your data, the logic behind the assumptions your authors make, and whether the conclusions are valid?

 ➤ INTEGRATION OF THEORY, METHODS AND DATA
The Institute’s cover sheet states:
‘Ability to relate argument to core concepts in general archaeological method and theory; reasoning from problem to methods to data to build a sustained argument’.
Given that the question does not always lend itself to archaeological method and theory, and also that there are people taking the course who are not in archaeology, I focus more here on whether theoretical reasoning has contributed to your answer. I consider this category more heavily in the second essay and less so in the first, and I will try to comment in the first essay to show you how you might contextualise your answer within a broad theoretical framework. ‘Theory’ may not always be relevant, but I do encourage you to think about your specific essay issue within a broad context. For example, if you write on women and gender, you might think at some point whether gender is only a Mesoamerican issue or a broader societal issue. Or, if you discuss table-top altars, how does this reflect hierarchy in societies? If you are from History of Art or Classics or History, draw on theory in your discipline if you can.
MARKER’S COMMENTS

**DOES THE ESSAY ANSWER THE QUESTION?** – Demonstrate understanding of the issues; build to a relevant conclusion

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- Depth of approach
- Clarity of approach

**STRUCTURE OF THE ARGUMENT**
Relevance, analysis, logic and coherence.

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- Organization overall
- Organizational details

**SOURCES?**
Use of appropriate types and range of sources; discrimination of relative value of sources; clear in-text citation and reference practices.

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- Range
- Types
- In-text citations
- References cited

**USE OF EVIDENCE**
Selection of evidence bearing on the question; judgment in assessing lines of evidence; appropriate examples, methods; reasoning in building a sustained argument

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- Selection & nature of evidence
- Presentation (judgment, assessment)
- Integration
- Use of tables, charts, illustrations

**WRITING QUALITY (Communication and reader comprehension)**
Spelling, grammar, punctuation, paragraphing and general fluency; use of appropriate vocabulary

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- Proof reading
- Grammar, punctuation, style

**USE OF TABLES, CHARTS, ILLUSTRATIONS** (See USE OF EVIDENCE, above)
<table>
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<th>ORIGINALITY AND INDEPENDENT THINKING</th>
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<td>Critical reflection; ability to criticise assumptions of other writers; independent thinking in the evaluation of evidence; insight in the application of knowledge.</td>
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<th>INTEGRATION OF THEORY, METHODS AND DATA</th>
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<td>Ability to relate argument to core concepts in general archaeological method and theory, or to core concepts and broad ideas in other disciplines (anthropology, biology, history); justification of the approach;</td>
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The best features:

Suggestions for improvement:

First examiner’s signature: Elizabeth Graham

First examiner’s mark based on content:  

Provisional Overall Mark:  

Penalty (if any, & reason):  

Second Examiner’s Mark:  

Agreed Internal Mark:  

Final Mark:  