

ANTH 4825E - Archaeology of Americas Topics: International Study Belize

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 01, CRN 43843,

Credit hours: 3

Instructor

Matt O'Mansky

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Public Instructor Information

Instructor Title: Dr. Matt O'Mansky

Instructor Professional Qualifications: Ph.D., Anthropology, Vanderbilt University, 2007

Bachelor's, Anthropology, Indiana University, 1991

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Course Description

4825E. Archaeology of Americas Topics: International Study Belize. Examination of the archaeological evidence of the development of New World cultures. Topics vary by semester and may include historical archaeology, North American prehistory, Ohio prehistory, Maya, Aztec and Inca, South American prehistory, and others. Prereq.: ANTH 1500: Introduction to Anthropology. 3 s.h.

Course Readings

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	The Maya, 10th edition	Coe, Michael D. and Stephen Houston	9780500295144
Optional	The Ancient Maya, 6th edition	Sharer, Robert J. and Loa P. Traxler	9780804748179

The course readings are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, research developments, current events, and/or to ensure better learning.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Reading(s)	Proposed Topic	Due/To Prepare for Class
8/24	Coe and Houston, ch. 1 "Introduction"	Introduction to the course – and the trip	None
8/31	O'Mansky, Matt (2017) "The Mesoamerican Ballgame: Sport and Violence in the Beginning"	Introduction to the Ancient Maya: Geography, Chronology, and the Concept of Mesoamerica	None
9/7	None	The Popol Vuh: An Introduction to the Religion of the Ancient Maya	None
9/14	Coe and Houston, ch. 6 "Maya Thought and Culture"	A Closer Look at Ancient Maya Religion	None
9/21	Coe and Houston, chs. 2 "The Earliest Maya" and 3 "The Rise of Maya Society"	The Preclassic period in the Lowlands: Early Village Life...and Giant Cities?	None
9/28	Coe and Houston, ch. 4 "Classic Splendor: The Early Period" Stuart, David (2000) "The Arrival of Strangers"	The Early Classic Transition: Teotihuacan and the Arrival of Strangers	None
10/5	Martin, Simon and Nikolai Grube (1995) "Maya Superstates"	The Early-Middle Classic Dynasties and the "Great War"	None



10/12	"Settlement and Subsistence: The Rain Forest Adaptation" from Demarest, Arthur (2004) Ancient Maya.	Ecology and Civilization: The Secret of Maya Rainforest Adaptations	None
10/19	"The Ancient Maya Economy" from Sharer, Robert J. and Loa P. Traxler (2004) The Ancient Maya, 6th ed.	Classic Maya Settlement and Economics	None
10/26	Coe and Houston, ch. 6, pp. 198-200 and 203-212 (Review)	Maya Hieroglyphics, Epigraphy, and Calendrics	None
11/2	Coe and Houston, ch. 5 "Classic Splendor: The Late Period"	Late Classic Period Maya Civilization	None
11/9	Coe and Houston, ch. 7 "The Terminal Classic" O'Mansky, Matt and Arthur A. Demarest (2007) "Status Rivalry and Warfare in the Development and Collapse of Classic Maya Civilization"	The Collapse of Classic Maya Civilization	None
11/16	Coe and Houston, chs. 8 "The Postclassic", 9 "Maya Life on the Eve of the Conquest, and 10 "The Enduring Maya"	A very brief look at the Postclassic, Conquest, and Modern Maya	None
11/23	None	Pre-departure orientation (mandatory)	None
11/30	None	A review of sites we'll visit: Lamanai, Caracol, Xunantunich, Yaxha, Aguateca, and Tikal	None
12/7		TRIP! Depart Thurs., 12/10; Return Sun., 12/20 (details on Blackboard)	Journal due on Blackboard Wed., 12/23 (typed)

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