MAYA CIVILIZATIONS (ANT. 4328)

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COURSE GOALS: This course is designed to give students an overview of the Maya civilizations of Mexico and Central America from the ancient past to the contemporary diaspora, incorporating a Maya perspective on Maya history and culture. The course is structured to provide students with a basic knowledge of the Maya through lectures, films, readings, written assignments, field trips and class presentations by students.

GRADING POLICY: Students will earn grades according to the following formula:
book review 1 = 20%
book review 2 = 20%
class participation (includes attendance and discussion) = 20%
final examination = 20%
working group presentation = 20%

Please note that grades are not negotiable. I will be glad, however, to review any graded work to analyze how a student’s performance could be improved.

BOOK REVIEWS: Students will write book reviews of (1) Sullivan’s Xuxub must die: the lost histories of a murder on the Yucatan and (2) Fischer and Benson’s Broccoli and Desire: Global Connections and Maya Struggles in Postwar Guatemala. Each review is to be at least 3 pages of text typed, double spaced with the pages stapled together. Reviews should include a separate title sheet with the student’s name and student ID number. Publications such as the Sunday book review section of the New York Times or the New York Review of Books are examples (usually) of well-written book reviews. Most professional journals in the humanities and the social sciences also contain such reviews. The reviews are to be written to analyze the book not merely summarize it. Students are encouraged to give their own opinions and bolster them with well-founded arguments. No reviews are accepted by e-mail.

FINAL EXAMINATION: Final examinations will be essay. The final will cover all material from the entire course. In the exam, students will choose two questions to answer from a menu of questions.

WORKING GROUP PRESENTATION: At the end of the semester, students as part of working groups are to give a 30 minute class presentation on a selected topic concerning the Maya. A bibliography and signature sheet are due the day of the presentation. Working Group Guidelines are available at www.fiu.edu/~socant.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS: Class participation implies on time class attendance at all classes. Absence from class, late arrival to class and talking during class other than related to class discussion are unprofessional. All students are encouraged to participate in class discussions by asking questions and offering comments on course material. Students are also asked to watch for media reports that may appear or museum exhibits, artistic performances, lectures, films, etc. that pertain to the Maya taking place in South Florida this spring.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS or FAILURE to COMPLETE ASSIGNMENTS: Late assignments will lose one letter grade for each class period the assignments are late. Absence from working group presentation will earn a 0 and be averaged into the calculations for the final grade. In the case of emergencies students are expected to contact me regarding their assignments.
REQUIRED BOOKS: The following four books constitute the required reading for this course. All books are available from the FIU Bookstore.

(1) Coe, Michael  

(2) Fischer, Edward F. and Peter Benson  

(3) Schele, Linda and David Freidel  

(4) Sullivan, Paul  

INSTITUTE OF MAYA STUDIES: Students may be interested in joining the Institute for Maya Studies, a local, non-profit interest group interested in the ancient Maya. The IMS publishes a newsletter, has monthly lectures and holds other events related to the ancient Maya. Membership is $30. per year. Addresses: Institute of Maya Studies, Inc., Miami Museum of Science, 3280 South Miami Ave., Miami, FL. 33129. The IMS also has a web site.

CLASS AGENDA and DUE DATES:
Jan. 8: Introduction, syllabus, student introductions & selection of working groups.  
Jan. 10: Overview of the Maya: Coe, Chapter 1; S&F, Prologue, Foreword and Chapter 1.  
Jan. 15: No class  
Jan. 17: Maya Spiritual and Intellectual Life: Coe, Chapter 9 and S&F, Chapter 2  
Jan. 24: Rise of Maya Civilization: Coe, Chapter 3 and S&F, Chapter 3  
Jan. 29: Classic Period and War: Coe, Chapter 4 and S&F, Chapter 4 and pages 198-203.  
Feb. 5: Terminal Classic: Coe, Chapter 6 and S&F, Chapter 8  
Feb. 7: Post-Classic: Coe, Chapter 7 and S&F, Chapter 9  
Feb. 12: Research Day  
Feb. 14: Conquest: Coe, Chapter 8 and Chapter 10 (pp. 242-250) and S&F, Chapter 10  
Feb. 19: The Colonial Experience: Two Masters and Many Maya  
Feb. 21: Sullivan’s Xuxub must Die due.  
Feb. 25: A reformulating Maya identity  
Feb. 28: Contemporary Maya: Mexico  
Mar. 5: Contemporary Maya: Guatemala  
Mar. 7: Contemporary Maya: The Borderlands  
Mar. 12: Gender and Maya Women  
Mar. 14: Rigoberta Menchu as a Maya Symbol  
Mar. 19: No class, Spring Break  
Mar. 21: No class, Spring Break  
Mar. 26: Development in Mayaland: Tourism  
Mar. 28: Film, TBA (Dusan Urgina)  
April 2: Film TBA (Dusan Urgrina)  
April 4: Fischer and Benson’s Broccoli and Desire due.  
April 9: The Maya Diaspora  
April 11: The Maya Future  
April 16: Working Groups  
April 18: Working Groups  
April 23: FINAL EXAMINATION; 12:30PM
GUIDELINES for WORKING GROUPS for CLASS PRESENTATIONS

GOAL: To produce a class presentation of 30 minutes on a pre-selected topic with all working group members contributing. Each member of the working group earns the same grade.

CONTENT of PRESENTATION: (a.) Explain what your topic is and why it is important. (b.) Analyze the topic critically including any debate concerning it. (c.) Summarize and conclude. Please note that a hard copy bibliography of sources employed in the presentation and a list of the participating students with their signatures are required the day of the presentation.

ADVICE for WORKING GROUPS: Respect for all working group members and their opinions should be the basis of the conduct of the group.

A consensus model of decision-making is likely to be the most successful. Learn to listen, encourage quieter group members to participate and don’t allow one or two people to dominate.

Try to delegate tasks based on group members’ interests, abilities and expertise.

Remember to cooperate and solve your own group issues within the group should any arise. If a problem within the group proves irresolvable, I will make an intervention.

MOTIVATION: Remember the working group presentation represents 20% of your final grade and that all working group members will earn the same grade. Also remember that each class member selected her or his own working group.

Please remember in use relevant sources for information, including non-web based sources, i.e. professional journals and books.

Please remember that requests for special equipment (portable computer, projectors, etc.) need to be made through me. I would need the name and panther number of the student who will be obtaining the equipment from the Media Equipment Office in the Greene Library. I will then forward students’ requests to the ME Office. Please make these requests one week in advance of the date for which the equipment is needed.