

ANTHROPOLOGY (ANT) 3162 (Section 9583)
AZTEC CIVILIZATION

COURSE INFORMATION:

Class Meets: Tues. Per. 4 (10:40-11:30) and Thurs. Per. 4-5 (10:40-12:35) TUR L005
Gen. Ed. Categories: **H & N**

Spring 2011

3 Credits

Not a Gordon Rule Course

PREREQUISITES: Prior course work in anthropology or history is highly recommended.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON E-LEARNING: <http://lss.at.ufl.edu> (Sakai)

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

Prof. **Susan D. Gillespie**

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Office Hours: Tu, Th 9-10 am, W 1-2 pm, and by appt

Teaching Assistant: TBA

TA Office Hours: TBA

TA Office and phone: TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course examines in detail the best known precolumbian civilization of Mesoamerica: the Aztecs. A major goal is to demystify the Aztecs—to look beyond the exaggerations and place their “exotic” customs and beliefs in their proper cultural and historical contexts. We want to appreciate their unique place in history while underscoring their essential humanity with relevant comparisons to our own and other societies.

The first two-thirds of the semester is an in-depth study of Aztec culture and society at about AD 1500. This intensive investigation requires you to learn Aztec words and concepts, because an important objective is to understand a non-Western culture from their point of view, not just ours! For information, we utilize ethnohistory, showing how scholars interpret information from 16th century documents written by both Aztecs and Spaniards, and also archaeology, explaining how scarce surviving material remains are interpreted. Aspects of Aztec culture are examined beginning with daily life and the life cycle, and then moving beyond the individual to the larger world: the household, neighborhood, capital city, and the Basin of Mexico. Social, political, and economic structures are investigated at all these levels, the largest being the conquest empire that covered much of central Mexico. Aesthetic, intellectual, and religious concerns receive extensive coverage. The last third of the course is devoted to the lesser-known neighboring groups with whom the Aztecs traded, allied, and warred, and the Spanish Conquest, treated from the viewpoints of Europeans and Aztecs. In the final lecture we look at the Aztec legacy.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND STUDENT GOALS: In-depth understanding of the Aztecs as a major world civilization through the representations they and their conquerors created; appreciation of the problems of studying a past civilization through scarce, fragmentary, and biased documentary and archaeological records; learning how to compare and contrast Western and non-Western cultures in a non-judgmental way; reflections and insights into one’s own way of life and world view through such a comparison. Current controversies are examined to engage students in the intellectual process. The development of cross-cultural comparative knowledge, evaluative and analytical capabilities in examining evidence for the holistic study of culture, communicative skills in writing papers, and self-reflections guided by group discussion are also important objectives of this course.

General Education Goals: To learn how to value and respect other ways of life, and in the process, have a more profound understanding of your own. Aztec representations of themselves— their histories, rituals, cosmologies, poetry, philosophy, artworks, architecture, city plans—are placed in context against 16th century Spanish and modern American representations of them. Students should begin to understand the critical roles played by creative expressions and the meaningfulness of the representations peoples like the Aztecs made of themselves, as well as the biased or unintentional misrepresentations that others make of them, influenced by their own point of view and sociohistorical contexts.

COURSE DESIGN: This elective course has been designed primarily for Anthropology majors and minors and secondarily for students in Latin American Studies, History, Classics, Art History, Religion, and Native American Studies. It has *not* been designed for students in other majors or those seeking *merely* to fulfill General Education requirements, although they are welcome. This upper-division course is *not* recommended for students seeking classes primarily to raise their GPA, or for true freshmen.

COURSE LEVEL: This is an upper-division undergraduate course. Success is based on **mastery** of the course information. Students should be experienced at listening to lectures and taking notes. They should know the difference between abstract or generalizing concepts and facts that illustrate those concepts. *Students are expected to review their notes each week.* There are *no* formal review sessions prior to exams, and exams are not reviewed in class afterwards. Success on exams requires critical thinking—the ability to evaluate, integrate, synthesize, and analyze diverse kinds of information—and not just to memorize static “facts.”

E-LEARNING COMPONENT: Go to <http://lss.at.ufl.edu>. Log in (on Sakai) with your Gator-link ID. If you haven't used E-Learning before, run the tutorials. All **lecture outlines** are posted as Word documents here. *Every* student is expected to have the lecture outline for every class. You can print it with additional spacing if you wish for note-taking. The outlines do not provide the entire lecture, but they show the organization of major and subsidiary points and have all the important Aztec words. The website also has all handouts, exam rules, practice quizzes, project requirements, and assigned readings beyond the textbook. Check it regularly for announcements. Exam and project scores are also posted.

FORMAT: The course format is lecture, illustrated with slides. **Every student is expected to bring the lecture outline and any handouts to each class.** Nothing is written on the board. Talking amongst yourselves is disruptive. Students who show no respect for classmates trying to listen to the lecture will be asked to leave. On Thursday the professor will call for a 10-minute break between the two lectures.

PERSONAL DEVICES: *Turn off cell phones.* All cell phones, PDAs, iPods, iPads, and similar portable devices must be stowed away. Notebook computers are allowed *only* for taking notes; any other use is strictly prohibited. Don't even try it, since the TA and neighbors can see your screen. Newspapers and other reading materials not relevant to the class should be put away out of sight when class begins.

ASSIGNED SEATING: At the third class meeting a seating chart will be distributed. On that day you may choose where to sit (within limits), and this will become your assigned seat—you should always sit there. *Students will be seated in groups* for discussion purposes. Put your seat number on all assignments to facilitate returning them to you. If you don't sit in your assigned seat, you may be marked as absent.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: All students are expected to be in their seats and ready to listen at **10:40**. Discussion assignments are given and projects are collected in the first 5 minutes of class. Students who are tardy and miss the assignment must notify the TA so that they won't be marked as absent (but will be marked as tardy.) Much of the course material is presented only in the lectures. Class meetings provide the only opportunity to “download” the lecture; thus, attendance is not optional and is regularly checked. *If you don't come to class regularly, you will fail this course.* If you miss any class, it is your responsibility to obtain the notes from a classmate. Attendance records begin with the first day of class.

CLASS PARTICIPATION: Some class periods have short written assignments to be completed in small group discussion. These are graded for effort and comprise 5% of the final grade (15 points out of 300 possible). Any student with an excused absence for a class day that has a written assignment is responsible for those lost points and should make them up in other ways. One way is by submitting *thoughtful* written questions (by email) for **Extra Credit**. This option is available to every student. A maximum of 1 point per week may be earned this way, with a cap of 10 points for the entire semester.

REQUIRED READINGS: There is ONE required textbooks available for purchase:

Smith, Michael E. *The Aztecs* 2003 (revised) edition only **ON RESERVE**

All **other assigned readings** are available as pdf files on the e-learning website. Assigned readings should be done each week. It is useful to bring handouts (e.g., maps) and project assignments to class. Smith (2003) is the best available textbook, but his order of presentation does not match the lectures, so carefully watch the assigned page numbers. The professor does not use the textbook as the source for her lectures; the textbook provides supplementary information beyond the lecture topics. The lectures provide a great deal of information not found in the textbook and may disagree with the textbook.

EXAMS: Your grade in this class is based primarily on your **mastery** of the course material as demonstrated on the exams, which cover lectures, readings, and visual information from slides and maps. *There are 4 exams given during the semester.* Each one is 60 points, each worth 20% of your final grade (total 80%). Exams are machine-scored and are not returned; a key is posted. All students seeking to improve their subsequent exam score should meet with the TA or Professor to go over the exam taken; if you don't, the instructor assumes you are satisfied with a poor grade. Missed exams may be made up only if you have a valid excuse for an *involuntary* absence during the scheduled exam period AND if you (or someone on your behalf) inform the Professor or the TA *before* the exam begins that you have a valid excuse. Missed exams should be made up within one week of the original exam period at the instructor's convenience. See **exam rules** on the E-Learning site for hints about studying and taking the exams.

PROJECTS: Three short writing projects (15 points each) make up 15% of the final grade (5% each). The assignments and most supplementary materials are on E-learning. This is an unusual opportunity to examine 16th century documentary sources. The projects constitute a "research-based" form of learning whereby you discover information yourself instead of copying someone else's work. In each case, you will take on an elite occupational role in Aztec society (a fortune-teller, a teacher, a tax-collector), requiring you to interpret documents and communicate aspects of the indigenous culture. See the E-learning website for a list of the **requirements** and expectations for each project. Late projects quickly lose points. Certain additional extra credit opportunities may be available at the end of the semester that are open only to students who complete all three projects in a timely manner.

GRADES: All grades in this course are *earned* throughout the semester, not negotiated individually at the end of the semester. Do *not* request a grade adjustment based on work other than what is described in this syllabus. Grading is based on **mastery** of the course material as determined from the performance on the exams (80%), participation in in-class assignments (5%), and the research projects (15%). Letter grades are assigned at the end of the semester, based on a total of 300 points, according to the grading scale below. See University policy: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html>

Important: If a minimum grade of **C** is required to fulfill certain graduation requirements, C- does **not** fulfill those requirements. Note GPA points for each letter grade in the bottom line of the chart below.

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
270-300	264-269	255-263	240-254	234-239	225-233	210-224	204-209	195-203	180-194	174-179	173 or lower
4.00	3.67	3.33	3.00	2.67	2.33	2.00	1.67	1.33	1.00	0.67	0.00

The gradebook is "closed" on the date of the university-scheduled final exam for the class (April 26 at 10:00 am). Any overdue assignments must be received by that date and time.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS: EVERY STUDENT IS EXPECTED TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

Learn the Aztec (Nahuatl) words. Practice pronouncing them. Students who become familiar with the words enough to say them out loud tend to comprehend and remember the material better than those who do not. If you are doing poorly on the exams, this is one easy way to help you do better.

Bring the lecture outline to every class—otherwise, be prepared to fail the course. Use the outline to differentiate major points of each lecture and to see how subsidiary information (1a, 1b, etc.) supports the major points (A, B, etc.). Make sure you can explain the 3-4 major ideas with supporting information for any single lecture as you study for the exams.

Attend every class, on time, to keep up with the visual material presented in slides.

Study the maps. Knowing where places are located in space helps you to understand the course material. Map questions appear on the exams.

Make time to do the reading assignments and *review your notes every week*. Cramming right before the exam or pulling an all-nighter are well-known strategies for failure.

Practice with the “do it yourself” weekly and pre-exam quizzes posted on E-learning.

Ask for help if you need assistance in taking notes, comprehending the readings, or studying for the exams. If you cannot come during office hours, make an appointment for a more convenient time. If you don’t ask for help after a poor exam performance, we assume you don’t want to improve your grade.

ACCEPTANCE OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS: By remaining registered in this class, you agree to accept the course requirements and expectations as stated in this syllabus. These are in addition to other general University requirements and codes of conduct as stated in official documents.

COPYRIGHT INFORMATION: Lectures may not be tape-recorded without the prior express written permission of Dr. Susan D. Gillespie. The contents of the syllabus, lectures, lecture outlines, and handouts for this course are copyrighted, intended for the private use of students registered in ANT 3162. This means these materials *cannot legally be reproduced*, in part or in whole, by any commercial enterprise (like a note-taking service) or for any profit-making business. Doing so is a punishable breach of copyright protections, and students who do so will be subject to sanctions (see the UF code of ethics).

UNIVERSITY POLICY: The following information is included in conformance with University Policy: 1) Students seeking modification of due dates for assignments and exams for religious reasons (e.g., holiday observance) should contact the Professor and request this modification. 2) Students seeking any classroom accommodation to facilitate their education **must** first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Professor when requesting accommodation. 3) The University reminds every student of the implied pledge of Academic Honesty: on any work submitted for credit the student has neither received nor given unauthorized aid. This refers to cheating and plagiarism. It includes conducting unauthorized research on the internet and failing to cite sources of information. Don’t do it! University policy will be enforced in any instance where cheating or plagiarism is suspected. Consult the Student Guide at www.dso.ufl.edu/stg/ for more information.

ANT 3162 WEEKLY READING ASSIGNMENTS - SPRING 2010

Pay attention to the Thursday double lectures. They are listed separately, with separate assignments, even though both lectures are on the same date.

Anything marked “**handout**” in the Sakai (e-learning) materials should be brought to class that day.

	Date	Topic	Smith Book	Sakai materials
1	1/6	Why Study the Aztecs?	p 1-7	Paszatory reading
2	1/6	Anthropology, Culture, Civilization		

3	1/11	You Speak Nahuatl!		Pronunciation handout
4	1/13	Epistemology and Sources of Information	p 12-27	Anonymous Conqueror reading
5	1/13	Geography of Mesoamerica	p 7-11	geography map handouts
6	1/18	Culture History of Mesoamerica [<i>seats are assigned today</i>]	p 27-34, 37-42	
7	1/20	The Individual in the Cosmos: Souls and the Afterlife	p 206-211	López Austin reading (Animistic Centers)
8	1/20	Destiny: Tonalpohualli and Tonalamatl <i>PROJECT 1 ASSIGNED</i>	p 246-256	tonalpohualli handouts Project 1 handout Durán reading
9	1/25	EXAM I		
10	1/27	Life Cycle	p 125-131	Mendoza reading
11	1/27	House and Big House: Calli and Calpulli		
12	2/1	Social Estates: Pilli and Macehualli	p 131-146	
13	2/3	Huey Altepēt̄l Tenochtitlan Project 1 Due at beginning of class (10:40)	Chap 8	Basin of Mexico map handout
14	2/3	Templo Mayor	p 220-229	Matos Moctezuma reading
15	2/8	Maize Agriculture: “Our Sustenance”	Chap. 3	
16	2/10	Crafts & Market: Toltecatl, Tlanquitzli	Chap. 4	
17	2/10	Philosophy, Poetry, Games	p 262-267	poetry handout
18	2/15	Writing: Tlilli, Tlapalli <i>PROJECT 2 ASSIGNED</i>	p 238-246	writing handouts Project 2 handout Dibble reading excerpt for Project 2
	2/17	“The Aztec Empire” (video)		
19	2/22	EXAM II		
20	2/24	Cosmology: Cemanauatl	p 192-196	
21	2/24	Cosmogony: World Creation (the Five Suns)		Sun Stone handout Sahagún reading
22	3/1	Sacred History of the Mexica	p 34-37, 42-3	Gillespie Tenochtitlan dynasty reading ethnic groups map handout

23	3/3	Religion: Teotl and Teopixqui	p 196-206, 212-215	deity pictures
24	3/3	Ceremonies of the Xihuitl	p 229-237	ceremonies map and list handouts
		3/7-3/11 SPRING BREAK		
25	3/15	New Fire and Xiuhmolpilli		
26	3/17	Divine Kings: Huey Tlatoani Project 2 Due	p 43-55	kings' names handout Gillespie kings reading
27	3/16	Warfare (Yaoyotl) and Sacrifice	p 216-220	
28	3/22	EXAM III		
29	3/24	Warfare for Conquest		Gillespie Triple Alliance reading
30	3/24	Pochteca: Traders and Travelers	p 106-124	map with place names
31	3/29	Empire and Tribute <i>PROJECT 3 ASSIGNED</i>	Chap 7	Aztec "provinces" map handout Project 3 handout
32	3/31	Neighbors: Tarascans to the west		Mesoamerica map 2 Tarascan maps R. de M. pictures Pollard reading
33	3/31	Neighbors: Totonacs, Huastecs, Tlaxcaltecs, and Cholultecs to the east		Totonac map handout Tlaxcala maps handouts
34	4/5	Spanish Views of the Conquest, part 1	p 268-279	conquest map handout Lienzo de Tlaxcala
35	4/7	Spanish Conquest, part 2		León-Portilla reading
36	4/7	Aztecs Views of the Conquest: Omens?		Gillespie - Blaming Moteuczoma reading
37	4/12	The Aztec Conquest as a Matter of Time PROJECT 3 DUE		Gillespie- Time reading
38	4/14	Colonialism and Legacy of the Aztecs	p 279-293	
39	4/14	The Aztecs in Popular Imagery		
40	4/19	EXAM IV in class		