

ART OF PRE-COLUMBIAN Mesoamerica
HONR300TS IW (W, H, IO5)
Wittenberg University
Fall 2022

Course Information

Course Identification HONR300TS IW

Number of Credits 4

Delivery Mode: Face to face, Kissell Auditorium, Koch Hall. If necessary, class will move to Moodle and Teams

Course Schedule: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:30-4:55pm

Faculty

Dr. Alejandra Gimenez Beger

Office Hours: by appointment

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Course Description

This course investigates the development of visual arts produced in Mesoamerica before the Spanish conquest of the Aztec Empire, and the richly varied effects in the visual arts resultant from the confrontation and amalgamation of the existing art forms with the European tradition.

The class surveys the Pre-Classic cultures of the ancient Valley of Mexico and the Olmec; art of the Classic period, including the Maya and Teotihuacan; the Early Post-Classic Toltec and Mixtec; and Late Post-Classic Aztec civilizations. After the mid-term, the class examines the encounter of the native civilizations with the European conquistadors, Japanese trade, and African influences. These encounters spur independent visual expressions in the formulation of personal and communal colonial identities.

Course Goals

Students will develop an understanding of Mesoamerican pre-Columbian art, its forms, functions, and original meanings for the cultures that produced it. Mesoamerican art represents one of the great aesthetic traditions of the world, yet the relative unfamiliarity of this tradition poses a challenge. Students will complete a series of critical reading, writing, and research projects to become familiar with the art, its forms, and its meanings.

If you are unable to attend class due to illness, or an emergency, or a university sponsored activity that overlaps with our class (like a field trip or an athletic event, etc) then please contact me. I may ask you for documentation or confirmation. These will be excused absences, and we will work out a way to make up the work based on the individual circumstance. All other absences are not excused. More than three unexcused absences will impact your grade. If you miss more than six class meetings, you may fail the course.

To earn full participation credit:

- a Show knowledge of the readings assigned. Prepare for class by doing the readings in advance. Be ready to identify the main ideas of the reading, the ways in which the author/s present the ideas, ways in which the thesis is supported, and the possible weaknesses or problems presented.**
- b Contribute to all class discussions in a respectful and thoughtful manner. Our discussions will often address the symbolic meanings of art. Evaluation of these values rarely leads to a single solution accepted by all. Listen carefully to other interpretations, and respond by providing supporting evidence, or better yet:**
- c Go beyond the basics.**

choose instead to have your emails forwarded to another service, it is your responsibility to figure out any problems in communication. I will not resend information due to problems that arise with those accounts. It is your responsibility to ensure that your Wittenberg login ID and password function properly in all campus computers.

Communications

If you have concerns or questions about the course, talk to me right away. Always consult your syllabus before sending a question via email. If doubts persist, feel free to send me an email at agimenezberg@wittenberg.edu. Please follow proper correspondence etiquette and allow 24 to 48 hours for a response.

I will use Moodle announcements and/or email to communicate with you.

Accessibility and ADA Accommodation

Wittenberg University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, learning, chronic health, physical, hearing, vision, and neurological, or temporary medical conditions, etc.), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, you must register with the Accessibility Services office by emailing accessibilityservices@nca-rbpn-rva-g-masonimai.

permission to use them from now on. Laptops and tablets should be used with discretion. In general, I will ask you to put your devices away. Bring a notebook and pen/pencil to take notes.

Arrive to class on time. Late arrivals are disruptive. Two late arrivals or early departures will be recorded as one full absence. If for any reason you must leave early, please inform me in advance.

Much of our class time will be spent looking at images. The lights will be turned down. This is not a license to be asleep or fidgeted with the material. Sleepers will be considered absent.

SCHEDULE OF WORK AND DATES (subject to revisions)

Complete readings and activities on your own time, as well as those which they are assigned.

Week 1

Introduction to the course

Why study Mesopotamian Art?

The Late E

WeekA ^

Week 11

Postclassic Mesoamerica, ctd

11/8 Selections from Miller:

11/10 Lindsay Jones, "Maya Mexican Polity and Chichén Itzá" *American Anthropologist* 99 no 2 (1997): 275-90

11/24 Thanksgiving

Seven Core Competencies of Oral Communication

The following criteria represent the major steps and skills required for effective oral communication of any kind and in any context. They are used to evaluate your oral communication assignments in this course according to the following scale:

5= excellent	Achieves or is close to perfection; could not be much better [A]
4= good	Above average; goes beyond minimum requirements of the criterion [B]
3= average	Adequate in meeting the minimum requirements of the criterion [C]
2= marginal	Needs improvement; only partially meets this criterion [D]
1= poor	Unacceptable; fails to address the criterion [F]

1 Consideration of Purpose

5 4 3 2 1

There is evidence that the speaker has taken into account and tailored the message to

Writing Skills Rubric

	Unacceptable 1	Beginning 2	Competent 3	Skilled 4	Exemplary 5
Main Idea/Thesis	Overall position is not evident. Topics expressed is superficial or undeveloped	Overall position is evident, but often too simplistic. Topic is also simplistic and one-dimensional	Overall position is clear with a sense of developed ideas. Topic is interesting and significant, but not deeply explored in needed areas	Overall position is clear and developed. Topic is interesting, significant, and is engaged from several angles	Overall position is well articulated and thoroughly developed. Topic is interesting, significant, and intellectually challenging with multiple facets addressed
Argument	No argumentative structure is evident. Ideas are unconnected	Argumentative structure is rudimentary. Claims are repeated rather than developed. Few objections are addressed and may be misrepresented	Argumentative structure is evident but sometimes simplistic. Objections are addressed but not fully	Argumentative structure is evident. Objections are taken and addressed fairly and mindfully.	Argumentative structure is clearly evident. Objections are taken seriously and addressed fairly and mindfully with great skill.

Readability	Awkward phrasing unskillful or inappropriate voice/tone, and unsophisticated and/or imprecise vocabulary hinder understanding	Awkward phrasing unskillful or inappropriate voice/tone, and unsophisticated and/or imprecise vocabulary distract from the paper's ideas	Phrasing is generally effective; voice/tone and vocabulary are generally suitable for the paper's ideas and only occasionally work against its ideas	Clear phrasing appropriate management of voice and tone, and vocabulary enhance the paper's ideas	Skillful phrasing adept management of voice and tone, and apt word choice create an inviting paper:
Conventions	Numerous errors in grammar; usage, spelling and punctuation seriously impede meaning. Necessary but documentation is missing	Several errors in grammar; usage, spelling and punctuation distract the reader and impede meaning. Problems with needed documentation exist	Errors in grammar usage, spelling and punctuation are noticeable, but do not seriously impede the reader. Documentation is usually correct.	There are occasional errors in grammar; usage, spelling and punctuation that do not impede the reader. Documentation of sources is correct.	There are very few or no mechanical errors in the paper. Documentation of sources is correct.
Overall Impression	The writer struggles in constructing and presenting a significant position. Paragraphing and overall organization hinder effectiveness. Ideas are asserted rather than developed or are largely underdeveloped. Language suffers from distracting errors at the sentence level. Falls short of college-level writing.	The writer occupies a significant position that falls shy of being persuasive. Overall organization is weak.	A solid piece of writing.	A well-written paper.	A fine piece of writing.