

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Duluth Campus

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13 January 2019

Ancient Middle America Week 1



Getting Started

I'm looking forward to Thursday.

Ancient Middle America gets underway at 9:00 in Cina Hall 214.

If you haven't read my [Welcome Memo of 11 January 2019](#), please do that as it contains useful and important information about the course.

Every week—usually on Sunday—you will receive a memo like this which outlines what's happening for the week.

Each week you will get the memo in your UM e-mail account and it will be available in your  canvas folder in two other places . . .



The screenshot shows the Canvas LMS interface for the course ANTH 3888 (080) Anthropology of Food (Spring 2019). The left sidebar contains links for Account, Dashboard, Courses, Calendar, Inbox, and Help. The main content area shows 'Recent Announcements' with two entries: 'AF Spring 2019 Greetings' and 'Holidays Spring 2019'. Below this is the course summary: 'ANTH 3888 (080) Anthropology of Food (Spring 2019)'. To the right is a 'To Do' list with several items, some of which have been completed (indicated by a checkmark). A large yellow arrow points from the left side of the screen towards the announcements and calendar areas.

HINT: You can synchronize your  canvas calendar with your UMD Google calendar, if you want.

These weekly memos contain lots of valuable and timely information, so pay careful attention to them . . .

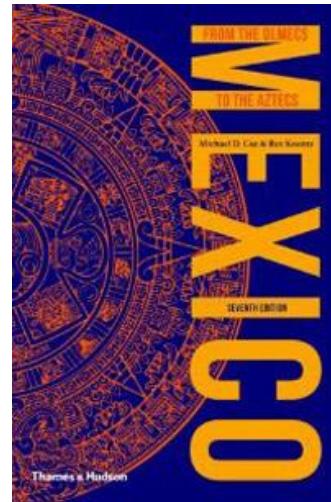
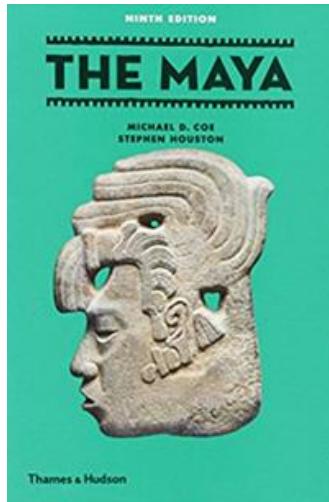
- The Weeks' Assignments and Activities Schedule

- **Due Dates** for the Week
- **Reminders** for the Week
- Suggestions and Hints for **Exams**
- **Interesting tidbits** of the week, including occasional **For-Fun Trivia . . .**
- **Optional links** that might be generally interesting and/or useful for **Extra Credit Papers**
- Information on **In-Class Films and Videos**
(of which there will be many, starting next week)
- **Breaking News Items**

Interest in ancient world cultures in general—and the ancient cultures of Middle America in particular—has never been higher. **One of the best sources for up-to-date news is BBC News.** I also like **The Telegraph** and, to balance things out, **The Guardian**, and **The New York Times**.

Right off the bat you might be interested in the textbooks for the course. One text is required, and as you should have your own copy of it as the **exams are open-book exams . . .**

As mentioned earlier **The Textbooks** for the course are . . .



The Maya (9th Ed.)

Michael D. Coe and Stephen D. Houston

(NY: Thames and Hudson, 2015)

ISBN-10: 0500291888

ISBN-13: 978-0500291887

T*The Maya 9th Ed.* is currently available online from about \$18.32 new, \$12.68 used, \$12.99 Kindle
(+ p/h, at amazon.com & eligible for FREE Super Saver Shipping on orders over \$25).
(28 December 2018)

Mexico (7th Ed.)

Michael D. Coe and Rex Koontz

(NY: Thames and Hudson 2013)

ISBN-10: 0500290768

ISBN-13: 9780500290767

M*exico (7th Ed.)* is currently available online from about \$20.22 new, \$12.40 used
(+ p/h, at amazon.com & eligible for FREE Super Saver Shipping on orders over \$25).
(27 November 2017)

Full information on the texts for Ancient Middle America can be found at

[<http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anth3618/matext.html#title>](http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anth3618/matext.html#title).

As mentioned earlier you will likely find the names of some of the places confusing at first—don't let that bother you. After about six weeks they will start sounding familiar to you. Many of the names are in Nahuatl (the language of the Aztecs) or in a Maya or other Mesoamerican languages and dialects so they will sound a bit exotic at first. You will not have to memorize the names, just be able to recognize the major locations and peoples.

As I mentioned in my earlier memo, **exams will be open-book essays constructed from a list of study questions that you help create**, so it would be a good idea for you to have your own copy of the text, and it is a good idea that you take your reading notes right in your copy of the text itself.

For the exams you should normally just need to read the book *carefully* and be able to discuss its articles *intelligently*. That is, you should read these as if you had picked the book up at an airport or neighborhood bookshop because you were interested in the subject and wanted to know more about it, like literally millions of people are doing in everyday life.

PLEASE NOTE WHAT I MENTIONED EARLIER: *Some students are used to principally memorizing facts in classes. This class is not one where that is the focus.* It is about investigating new topics, reading, listening, synthesizing ideas, thinking, exploring, and becoming familiar enough with the various subjects, peoples and places to carry on an intelligent conversation in modern-day society.. In short, this class aims to give you practice in critical thinking, and even creativity.

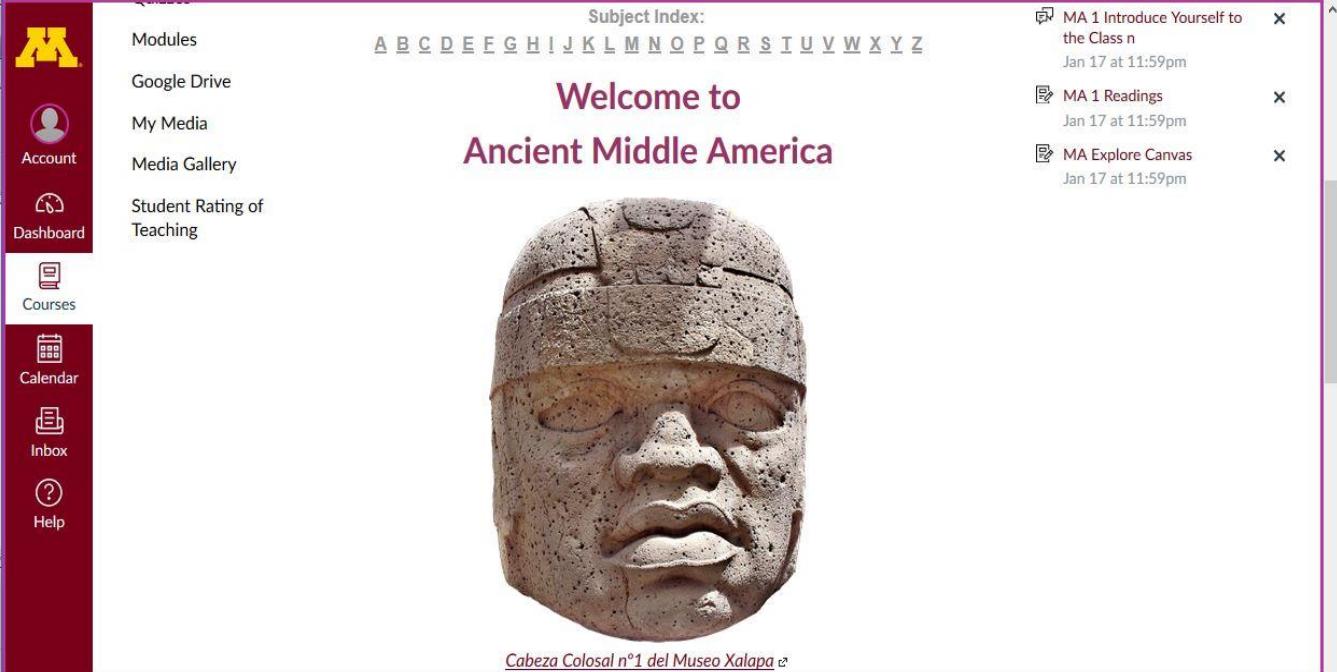
Critical thinking, involving **evaluation** and **synthesis**, has long been regarded as essential for success in the modern-day world. In recent years, actually for two decades, **creativity** has also become central to success, and "process skills" vital to creativity. Process skills involve "strategies to reframe challenges and extrapolate and transform information, and to accept and deal with ambiguity" (Pappano, "[Learning to Think Outside the Box](#)," [The New York Times EducationLife](#), 9 February 2014, 8). Laura Pappano, writer in residence at Wellesley Center for Women at Wellesley College, points out that "In 2010 'creativity' was the factor most crucial for success found in an I.B.M. survey of 1,500 chief executives in 33 industries. These days 'creative' is the most used buzzword in LinkedIn profiles two years running" (2014, 8).

With all of the class materials **you will be expected to share your ideas and comments with others** in the Class *Discussions* and wikis.

**You will find that there are "an awful lot"
of materials on-line
—maybe even too many!**

Where to start?

Have a look at the course **“Home”** page of your Ancient Cultures of Middle America  **canvas** folder <<http://canvas.umn.edu/>>. It will look something like this . . .



The screenshot shows the Canvas course homepage for "Ancient Middle America". The left sidebar has a dark red background with white icons and text:

- M** Modules
- Google Drive
- My Media
- Media Gallery
- Student Rating of Teaching
- C** Dashboard
- Courses**
- Calendar**
- Inbox
- Help

The main content area has a white background. At the top center is a "Subject Index:" with letters A through Z. Below it is the course title "Welcome to Ancient Middle America" in a large, bold, maroon font. Underneath the title is a large, detailed stone head sculpture. At the bottom of the image, the caption "Cabeza Colosal nº1 del Museo Xalapa" is visible. To the right of the title, there is a list of three assignments with due dates:

Assignment	Due Date	Action
MA 1 Introduce Yourself to the Class n	Jan 17 at 11:59pm	X
MA 1 Readings	Jan 17 at 11:59pm	X
MA Explore Canvas	Jan 17 at 11:59pm	X

As I mentioned in the Welcome Memo, probably the best place is by having a quick look at the

"First Day Handout"

on-line at <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anth3635/cehandout_first-day.html#title>.

Then have a look at . . .

Assignments and Events

. . . this week are listed on your "Calendar".

They are also listed on the "Syllabus" section of your  canvas folder, if you prefer to have them in another form (see below).



The screenshot shows the Canvas course homepage for 'Ancient Middle America (S...)'. On the left, there's a sidebar with links like Home, Announcements, Syllabus, Assignments, Grades, Discussions, People, Chat, Quizzes, Modules, Google Drive, My Media, and Media Gallery. The 'Calendar' link is highlighted with a yellow arrow pointing to it. The main content area has a 'Recent Announcements' section with two items: 'MA Spring 2019 Greetings' and 'Holidays Spring 2019'. To the right is a 'To Do' list with several tasks, each with a due date and time. Below these sections is a 'Welcome to Ancient Middle America' message.

This Week's "Calendar"

13	14  MA 1 Readings  MA List of Readings for the Entire Semester	15	16  Canvas Guide: User Settings and Profile Picture	17  9a MA 1 First Day Handout  9:01a MA 1 Agenda: Welcome / Getting Started / Orientation	18  9a MA 1 Introduce Yourself to the Class	19  MA 1 Complete or Update Your Canvas Notification Preferences  MA 1 Complete or Update Your Canvas Profile
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In the “Syllabus” version the assignments look like this:

Mon Jan 14, 2019	MA 1 Readings	due by 11:59pm
	MA List of Readings for the Entire Semester	due by 11:59pm
Wed Jan 16, 2019	Canvas Guide: User Settings and Profile Picture	due by 11:59pm
	Canvas Student Guide	due by 11:59pm
	MA Explore Canvas	due by 11:59pm
Thu Jan 17, 2019	MA 1 First Day Handout	due by 9am
	MA 1 Agenda: Welcome / Getting Started / Orientation	due by 9:01am
Fri Jan 18, 2019	MA 1 Introduce Yourself to the Class	to do: 9am
Sat Jan 19, 2019	MA 1 Complete or Update Your Canvas Notification Preferences	due by 11:59pm
	MA 1 Complete or Update Your Canvas Profile	due by 11:59pm

And the “Syllabus” version is found here:



The screenshot shows a Canvas course interface for ANTH 3618 (001) Ancient Middle America. On the left, a sidebar menu lists various course sections: Home, Announcements, Syllabus (which is highlighted with a yellow box and a large red arrow pointing to it), Assignments, Grades, Discussions, People, Collaborations, Chat, Quizzes, Modules, Google Drive, My Media, Media Gallery, and Student Rating of. The main content area displays "Recent Announcements" with two entries: "MA Spring 2019 Greetings" and "Holidays Spring 2019". Below the announcements, the course title "ANTH 3618 (001) Ancient Middle America (S...)" is visible. At the bottom, there is a "Subject Index" with letters A through Z and a "Welcome to Ancient Middle America" message.

**So once again, welcome to Anth 3618
Ancient Cultures of Middle America.
This *will be* a great course, and a great
experience.**

You will see. . . .

If you have any **questions** right now, please do not hesitate to post them on the  **canvas** “Discussions”, or e-mail troufs@d.umn.edu, or stop in before or after class across the hall in Cina 215 [\[map\]](#).

See you Thursday at 9:00 in Cina 214! I’m looking forward to the class.

Best Wishes,

Tim Roufs
<http://www.d.umn.edu/~troufs/>

P.S. If you are new to the world of "technology" don't worry too much about that. Things may not "work" for you at first, but hang in there and we'll help you along. If you have not used  **canvas** course management system before, you might find it helpful to view the **Canvas Student Guide**.