



PHIL 3---: Mexoamerican Philosophy

Class Time: TBD

Class Location: TBD

Instructor: Chris Rahlwes

Email: TBD

How to reach me: *Please drop by my open office hours (TBD) or email me to make an appointment (either in-person or online). Always include PHIL 3--- in the subject of your email for a quicker response. I will respond within 48 hours Monday-Friday.*



Course Description:

In this course we look at pre-Colonial Mesoamerican philosophy with a particular focus and Maya and Nahua (Aztec) thought, but with some inclusion of Ñudzahui (Mixtec) and Zapotec thought as well. Our main topics will be personhood and identity, time, language, and knowledge. While much of the course will depend on secondary sources (e.g., McLeod and Maffie), we will engage with the K'iche' Maya *Popol Vuh* and the *Florentine Codex* as well as contemporary Maya accounts. We will also have a critical eye towards the Spanish accounts of the traditions in Mesoamerica.

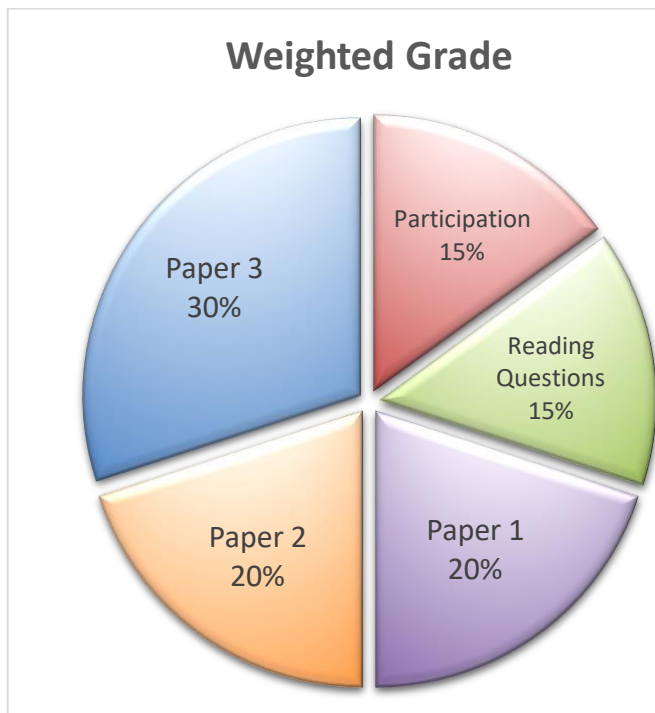
Course Goals:

By the successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify and summarize the Maya and Nahua philosophies and their distinctions.
 2. Engage in interpretive debates surrounding the primary texts and the Spanish accounts.
 3. Advance positions on Mesoamerican philosophy based on these texts and accounts using the tools of philosophical argument.
 4. Develop a research project focusing on Mesoamerican, in which you carefully and with great precision explain a key philosophical principle.
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Means of Evaluation

- **Participation (15%).** Participation will be measured through active class engagement as well as group questions and workshops.
- **Reading Questions (15%).** The Sunday before each class you are required to email two questions you have regarding the readings for the week (at least one question must be on the primary text). These will help guide the lecture throughout the week.
- **Paper 1 (20%) 4–6 Pages.** This paper focuses on your ability to explain a key Aztec or Maya philosophical principle or position clearly and precisely. Your grade is determined by your accuracy in demonstrating you understand the author’s position, the structure of your paper, and if your argument is compelling. You are allowed up to two revisions of this paper.
- **Paper 2 (20%) 4–6 Pages.** Same as Paper 1, but you must focus on a different philosophical principle or position.
- **Paper 3 (30%) 8–10 Pages.** This paper is a revision of Paper 1 or Paper 2, in which you further develop your explanation, ideas, and/or argument. This paper is the culmination of the course and shows your ability in designing a research project that is philosophically fruitful. You will be asked to submit a brief prospectus for this paper.



Letter Grade Cutoffs:

Grade	Percentage
A	93%
A-	90%
B+	87%
B	83%
B-	80%
C+	77%
C	73%
C-	70%
D+	67%
D	63%
D-	60%
F	Below 60%

Note: These are cut-off points: *decimals will not be rounded up.* Temporary grades: N (no basis for grade), I (incomplete grade), X (final assessment absence)

Required Materials:

- Alexis McLeod, *Introduction to Mesoamerican Philosophy*
- James Maffie, *Aztec Philosophy*
- Additional readings will be available online.
- You will need to bring material to write, take notes, and access the internet during class.
- You will need a word processor (such as [Google Docs](#) or [Microsoft Word](#)), a pdf reader (such as [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#)), and a web browser.

Tentative Schedule (Subject to Change)

	Date	Topic/Readings	Assignments
Module 1: General Account of Mesoamerican Philosophy			
Week 1		Introduction to the Course <u>Required Readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> McLeod, Introduction 	
Week 2		<u>Required Readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> McLeod, Chapter 1 Core and Stone, <i>Reading the Maya Glyphs</i>, selections 	Weekly Questions
Week 3		<u>Required Readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> McLeod, Chapter 2 Laack, <i>Aztec Religion and the Art of Writing</i>, selections 	Weekly Questions
Week 4		<u>Required Readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> McLeod, Chapter 3 Fitjar, <i>Balancing the World</i>, selections 	Weekly Questions
Week 5		<u>Required Readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> McLeod, Chapter 4 Houston and Stuart, <i>The Memory of Bones</i>, selections 	Weekly Questions
Week 6		<u>Required Readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> McLeod, Chapter 5 The <i>Popol Vuh</i> 	Weekly Questions
Week 7		<u>Required Readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> McLeod, Chapter 6 Finish the <i>Popol Vuh</i> 	Weekly Questions
Week 8		<u>Required Readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> McLeod, Chapter 7 and Conclusion The <i>Florentine Codex</i>, selections 	Paper 1 Due Weekly Questions
Module 2: Aztec (Nahua) Philosophy			

Week 9		<u>Required Readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maffie, Introduction • León-Portilla, <i>Aztec Thought and Culture</i>, "The Birth of Philosophy among the Nahuas" 	Weekly Questions
Week 10		<u>Required Readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maffie, Chapter 1 and 2 • León-Portilla, <i>Aztec Thought and Culture</i>, "The Pre-Columbian Concept of the Universe" 	Weekly Questions
Week 11		<u>Required Readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maffie, Chapter 3 	Weekly Questions
Week 12		<u>Required Readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maffie, Chapter 4, 5, and 6 	Paper 2 Due Weekly Questions
Week 13		<u>Required Readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maffie, Chapter 7 and 8 • León-Portilla, <i>Aztec Thought and Culture</i>, "Nahutal Man: Creator of a Way of Life" 	Weekly Questions
Finals Week			Paper 3 Due

Resources Available to All Students: **TBD**

College is a challenging time in your life.

Here is a list of resources that can help you navigate your experience as a student at TBD. It is important to remember that you are not alone, and these resources are there for you when you need help to achieve your academic goals.