2014 Archaeological Survey & Mapping in Belize
University of New Hampshire
Field School Session: January 2-19, 2014

Preliminary Information
(Updated September 20, 2013)

Field School Summer 2012

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For The Most Recent Information Visit:
https://cola.unh.edu/study-abroad/program/belize-mapping/about

Application Deadline: October 15, 2013

For an application, go to:
http://cola.unh.edu/study-abroad/program/belize-mapping/apply
Background on the Program
The UNH-managed Archaeological Survey & Mapping in Belize (ANTH 674) course is a 4-credit intensive course that involves hands-on training in field reconnaissance, survey and mapping of archaeological sites, and the use of ArcGIS software in the production of site maps. The field course is aimed at exposing students to all aspects of field survey and mapping and focuses on the recording of ancient Maya archaeological sites in the eastern Belize River valley. This program in Belize is offered through the University of New Hampshire (UNH) and managed by the COLA Center for Study Abroad and supported by the Anthropology Department and the Center for International Education at UNH. It will be of interest to a wide range of students, including those studying archaeology, geography, forestry and environmental studies, architecture and urban planning, and geology, among other fields. The 2014 Jan Term course will run from January 2 to 19 and will entail survey and mapping of archaeological sites, and laboratory processing and analyses of recovered artifacts.

The field school will be based out of Banana Bank Lodge (shown below), located near the capital city of Belmopan, Belize. The lodge is situated in a beautiful spot along the Belize River. The area is rural, consisting of dirt roads and fields and surrounded by jungle, but is within a 15 minute drive of the capital. Students will stay in cabanas (3-4 students will share a cabana). Banana Bank will provide three meals a day to all field school students and staff, including a daily breakfast, a packed lunch for field excursions, and a sit-down dinner in their large, thatch palapa dining room (the food is fantastic!).

Dr. Eleanor Harrison-Buck has been doing archaeology in Belize for over 20 years and initiated the Belize River East Archaeology (BREA) project in 2011. She will be responsible for all aspects of the field course, including lectures, in-field instruction and supervision, and direction of all field and laboratory work. Two experienced post graduate-level Teaching Assistants will help to train students in survey and mapping of archaeological sites in the BREA study area. Permission to survey and excavate sites in the BREA study area has been granted to the PI by the
Belize Institute of Archaeology.

The Archaeological Survey & Mapping in Belize course is not a typical study abroad—the program offers college students a rare opportunity to be active participants in the archaeological investigations of ancient Maya sites in the BREA study area. The results of the fieldwork contribute directly to Dr. Harrison-Buck’s ongoing BREA research project. The course is limited to no more than 12 students. In addition to the Director, the BREA project includes five staff members, including a professional surveyor and four PhDs trained in Maya archaeology, survey, mapping, and ArcGIS software. Because we keep the field school small, the program offers an incredible staff-to-student ratio, with intensive, one-on-one instruction in archaeological field and laboratory methods from staff who all have years of field experience and can share their various areas of expertise in Maya archaeology.

The course consists of nightly lectures on a variety of topics related to survey and mapping and ancient Maya settlement archaeology. Evening labs will include hands-on practicums, such as artifact analyses with one-on-one training from program staff. During evening labs, students also will receive training in post-processing data and creating maps in ArcGIS. The goals of the course are to:

a) provide students with an overview of ancient Maya settlement archaeology and
b) offer students a thorough understanding and hands-on working knowledge of how archaeological sites are recorded through various survey and mapping techniques, as well as the final map production using ArcGIS software.

The program also includes an excursion to the town of San Ignacio and several site tours of nearby Maya ruins, including the large sites of Xunantunich and Cahal Pech. There is a free long weekend where optional trips can be arranged, allowing students to explore other parts of the country, such as the cayes.
About BREA

The Belize River East Archaeology (BREA) project represents the first comprehensive archaeological survey and excavation to be carried out in the eastern half of the Belize River watershed (see Map). The Belize River is a large and navigable waterway with its headwaters in Belize and Guatemala. The river flows 180 miles (290 km) across central Belize to where it drains into the Caribbean Sea and the entire watershed is around 11,000 km². The mid-to-lower reaches of the Belize Watershed east of Roaring Creek comprise the BREA study area.

Measuring roughly 6000 km², the BREA study area includes the main trunk of the Belize River and several of its major tributaries, including Saturday Creek, Beaver Dam Creek, Labouring Creek, Spanish Creek, and Black Creek. Our overall goal is to develop a more comprehensive settlement history for the eastern half of the Belize Watershed and gain a better sense of the settlement density along the main trunk of the Belize River and its tributaries (see Map figure for extent of BREA study area).

For the latest information on the BREA project and to learn more about the sites we have investigated previously, please visit: http://www.breaproject.org
2014 Field Research Plans

Preliminary plans for the 2014 field season will involve work at several different locations in the BREA study area, all within 30-40 minutes drive from our base camp at Banana Bank Lodge. One site where we will focus our efforts in mapping is the Maya site referred to as Saturday Creek, a large center on the banks of the Belize River. Another site that we plan to further map and investigate in 2014 is More Tomorrow, where we have identified in previous survey expeditions several re-positioned monuments, possibly dating to the Postclassic period. A third site we plan to further investigate is known as Kaax Tsaabil. This hilltop site is one of the largest ancient Maya centers we have recorded in the middle reaches of the Belize River. We mapped and excavated this site during the 2012 field season. We will continue to investigate one of the main plazas here, where we previously conducted an excavation on the top of one of the elite monumental structures and found a burial of possibly a sacrificial victim!

Several of our surveyors will also continue to conduct reconnaissance along the main trunk of the Belize River, where we have found that ancient Maya sites are virtually continuous. This is a chance to discover previously unrecorded ruins hidden in the forest!

To Apply

Whether you are a UNH student or affiliated with another university, you can participate in the 2014 Archaeological Survey & Mapping in Belize course, but you must first complete the application form (https://cola.unh.edu/study-abroad/applying). There are no pre-requisites or additional requirements to join the program aside from the standard UNH eligibility requirements. However, it is important for all prospective participants to be fully aware of the conditions of the field school and expectations of the participants. The project requires all participants to live and cooperate in close quarters with others and involves hard physical labor in a hot, tropical environment, often hiking into remote parts of the jungle. Roads are not always going to be paved and in good condition and some riverside sites are only accessible via canoe. Excavating entails lifting up to 25 pounds, swinging a pick, and using a shovel, in addition to more detailed work using a trowel, dental pick, and paint brush. Survey entails hiking through the jungle while wearing snake guards and a backpack (carrying up to a gallon of water).
The closing date for applications is October 15, 2013. All applications for the program go through a review process. Acceptance to a study abroad program is based on this review, fulfillment of GPA and academic requirements, and approval by the COLA Center for Study Abroad. You will be notified if you have been accepted to the program no later than November 15, 2013. All approved applicants are required to pay a non-refundable deposit of $500 that must be received by November 15, 2013. Checks should be made out to: University of New Hampshire and mailed to the College of Liberal Arts Center for Study Abroad Office, 116 Murkland Hall, 15 Library Way, Durham, NH 03824.

Estimated Cost
The cost of the program is estimated as follows:
Fee 18-Day Session:
(4 Hours Credit)
Study Abroad Program Fee $1980
Plus 4 credit hours of tuition*, estimated $1660-$1828
Airfare, estimated $750
The Study Abroad program cost includes the following:
• All student transportation in Belize once the project begins until it ends
• Overnight trip to visit several restored archaeological sites (all meals and hotel included)
• Lodging at Banana Bank Lodge (students will share a cabana with other students)
• Three meals/day (7 days/week while at the lodge)

*Tuition rates for the Jan Term session is $415 per credit, NH residents, $457 per credit, nonresidents.

Passport Information: If you don’t already have one, you should apply for a passport immediately. THERE ARE CURRENTLY SIGNIFICANT DELAYS IN PROCESSING PASSPORT APPLICATIONS, SO PLEASE APPLY FOR ONE NOW JUST IN CASE YOU DECIDE TO GO ON THE TRIP. The process is not difficult. Visit the US Department of State website for more information. You will need two passport photos of yourself, and you can get those taken at the Durham Post Office where you can also apply for your passport.

Insurance Information: More information about insurance is available from the Center for International Education at the University of New Hampshire (http://www.unh.edu/cie/international-travel-assistance-insurance-program).
Receiving Credit for the Program
Students attending the University of New Hampshire are required to enroll in ANTH 674, Archaeological Survey and Mapping in Belize, for the Jan Term session from Jan. 2-19, 2014. Students at other universities can easily be admitted to the UNH program for the January Term and enroll in the course, but must fill out an application. Please contact the UNH Study Abroad coordinator, Lisa Mulvey (lisa.mulvey@unh.edu) with any questions.

Description of Course Objectives (ANTH 674)
This is an intensive, 4-credit-hour course offered during the Jan Term, designed to introduce students to the methods used to collect and analyze archaeological data in a hands-on field setting. Students will receive instruction in survey, mapping, and field excavations of archaeological sites. Our anticipated student to staff ratio on this course is roughly 3:1, ensuring that students will receive a great deal of individual attention and training in archaeological field techniques.

Course Requirements & Grading
Grades will be based on student participation and their performance in daily field activities and nightly labs with scheduled days off for travel or relaxation at the Banana Bank Lodge (for daily schedule see below). Assisted by program staff, each student will be graded on their participation in the survey and mapping of archaeological sites in the study area and will learn how to produce a site map in ArcGIS. At the end of the course, students will be graded on a final field practicum. This mapping exercise will involve surveying a site, mapping it with a Total Station, and producing a digital map in ArcGIS. Throughout the course, students will keep a survey notebook that they also must submit at the end of the course as part of their final grade.

Grading breakdown for ANTH 674 is as follows:

Field & Lab Participation: 25%
Survey Notebook: 25%
Final Mapping Exercise: 50%
Description of the Lodge and Schedule
Students will be housed in the cabanas at Banana Bank Lodge, a jungle resort on the Belize River. More information about the lodge is available on their web site (http://www.bananabank.com/). The lodge has a restaurant, bar, swimming pool, wireless internet, 24-hour electricity, and cell phone coverage. There is no TV at the lodge. The program includes three meals per day while at the lodge, and there is a full-service bar. Students will be able to use the swimming pool and walking trails. Other activities, including horseback riding, guided tours, tubing, canoeing, etc. can be arranged through the lodge, but are not included in the cost of the program.

Pool at Banana Bank Lodge

Tentative Program Schedule
Monday, December 9 at 12:40 p.m. Pre-departure Orientation for Student Participants, Huddleston Hall, Archaeology Lab (Rm. G16)

**Jan 2** You are responsible for your own travel to and from Belize. You must be at the airport in Belize City on Jan 2 (try to arrive by 2pm or earlier). Group assembles at Goldson International Airport (Belize City). Once everyone has arrived, we will travel by van to Banana Bank Lodge (1.5 hour ride). 6pm Dinner and introductions.

**Jan 3** Orientation day with tour of BREA study area, afternoon lecture.

**Jan 4** Fieldwork half day, afternoon lecture, then depart for excursion to San Ignacio.

**Jan 5** Guided tours of two large Maya sites, which have been developed for tourism.

**Jan 6-10** Daily fieldwork involving rotating teams on survey and mapping of sites and excavation. Evening lectures and Lab Practicum (Mon.-Thurs).

**Jan 11-13** Long Weekend Free to travel or relax at Banana Bank.

**Jan 14-17** Daily fieldwork involving rotating teams on survey and mapping of sites and excavation. Evening lectures and Lab Practicum (Tues.-Fri.).

**Jan 18** Final Mapping Exercise; Evening Farewell Party.

**Jan 19** Transportation to Belize Intl. Airport for departure to US.