2014 Archaeological Field School in Belize
University of New Hampshire
Standard Field School Session: June 1 to June 29, 2014
Extended Session: June 1 to July 6, 2014

Preliminary Information
(Updated December 2, 2013)

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For The Most Recent Information Visit:
www.unh.edu/anthropology/belize

Application Deadline: March 7, 2014

For an application, go to:
http://cola.unh.edu/study-abroad/program/belize-field-school/apply
Background on the Program
The UNH-managed Archaeological Field School in Belize (ANTH 675) is an 8 credit
intensive course on Maya archaeology in Belize, Central America. On the field school,
Students will be active participants in the Belize River East Archaeology (BREA) project,
directed by Dr. Eleanor Harrison-Buck. The archaeology field school is a four-week
long program that will run from June 1 to June 29, 2014. Those students who wish to
stay longer can opt for the extended session from June 1-July 6, 2014. Students will gain
hands-on experience in survey, mapping, and excavation of archaeological sites, as well
as laboratory processing and analyses of recovered artifacts. 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, anthropology, geography, history, art
history, architecture and urban planning, among other fields.

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. The Archaeological
Field School in Belize is part of Dr.
Harrison-Buck’s ongoing BREA research
project. The Field School 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. The
field school is limited to no more than 12
students. In addition to the Director, the BREA project includes two teaching assistants
and multiple other research staff with PhDs, trained in Maya archaeology. 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. Permission to survey and excavate sites in the BREA study area has been granted to the PI by the Belize Institute of Archaeology.

Field school activities will range from archaeological excavation to survey and mapping of Maya archaeological sites in and around the area. Project vehicles will transport students to and from the archaeological sites and occasionally sites will be accessed via canoe. Students will have the opportunity to learn how to excavate, how to draw profiles and plan maps of their excavations, how to record archaeological data, how to process and analyze artifacts in the lab, and how to survey and map previously unrecorded archaeological sites. Students will receive training in not only fieldwork but also lab methods (artifact cleaning and analysis). Course work will include hands-on field and lab work, a field journal, a written exam based on reading and evening lectures, and a final written report based on original field and lab research. The program also includes several site tours of nearby Maya ruins, including the large sites of Xunantunich and Cahal Pech, as well as optional trips during free weekends.

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.
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.

Measuring roughly 6000 km$^2$, 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, not more than 30-40 minutes drive from our base camp at Banana Bank Lodge. One is a hilltop site known as Kaax Tsaabil that 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 in previous field seasons. We will continue to investigate one of the main plazas where we conducted an excavation last season on the top of one of the elite monumental structures and found a burial of possibly a sacrificial victim! In addition, we will conduct systematic testing of other parts of this site to gain a better understanding of its long history, which may extend from Preclassic to Postclassic times (950 BC-AD 1250).

Several of our surveyors also will 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 (http://cola.unh.edu/study-abroad/program/belize-field-school/apply). 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 March 7, 2014. 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 March 31, 2014. All approved applicants are required to pay a deposit of $500 that will be applied to their program fee and must be received by March 31, 2014. 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 29-Day Session:
(8 Hours Credit)
Study Abroad Program Fee estimated $2,530
Plus 8 credit hours of tuition*, estimated $3320-$3656
Airfare, estimated $750
The Study Abroad program cost includes the following:
• All student transportation in Belize once the project begins until it ends
• Overnight excursion 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)

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 675, Archaeological Field School in Belize, for the summer session from June 1-29, 2014. Students at other universities can easily be admitted to the UNH program for the summer session 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 675)
This is an intensive, 8-credit-hour course 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 field excavations, survey and mapping of archaeological sites, and laboratory processing and analyses of recovered artifacts. The course consists of lectures 2-3 nights/week on a variety of topics related to ancient Maya civilization, as well as lecture and class discussion on a range of topics concerning archaeological field and laboratory techniques. Evening labs will also include hands-on artifact analyses with one-on-one training from program staff, all of who are trained professional archaeologists. The goals of the Archaeological Field School are to: a) provide students with an overview of ancient Maya history, from Pre-Hispanic to Colonial times (ca. 900 BC – AD 1900), and b) offer students a thorough understanding and hands-on working knowledge of how archaeological research is conducted in both the field and the lab.

Course Requirements & Grading
Students will be graded on their participation, their submission of a field notebook, an exam based on readings and nightly lectures, and a final written report based on original field research, assisted by Project Staff. 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 and lab techniques. Grades will be based on student participation and their performance in daily field activities (Monday-Friday) and nightly labs (Monday-
Thursday) with their weekends free. As part of the course curriculum, students will have one exam based on evening lectures and reading assignments and will also keep a field notebook that they must submit at the end of the course as part of their final grade. Assisted by program staff, each student will choose a different topic of original field research (e.g., analyses of a particular artifact class) to focus on and will be responsible for writing up an analytical report as part of their final grade in the field course.

The student’s participation grade in this course will be determined by each student’s demonstrated ability to perform basic and more advanced procedures in four facets of archeological fieldwork, including mapping/profiling, excavation, survey, and laboratory processing. A portion of the grade will be based on the quality of field notes the students maintain in their daily journal, as well as their participation and overall conduct in both field and lab activities.

Grading breakdown for ANTH 675 is as follows:
Field & Lab Participation: 20%
Field Notebook: 15%
Exam: 25%
Lab Report: 40%

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.

**Typical Field Day (Tentative Schedule)**
5:15-5:30am Coffee & Breakfast served
5:55am Load up the vehicles
6:00am Depart for the field
11:30am-12pm Break for lunch
2:30pm Leave the field
3:4pm Artifact washing (2-3 afternoons/week)
4:5-5:45pm Free time
5:45-6:30pm Dinner
6:45-8:00pm Lab
Tentative Program Schedule

Friday, April 18 12:40 p.m. Mandatory Pre-departure Orientation Meeting for University of New Hampshire Students, Huddleston Hall, Archaeology Lab (Rm. G16)

**June 1** You are responsible for your own travel to and from Belize. You must be at the airport in Belize City on June 1. 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).

**June 2** Orientation day with tour of BREA study area.

**June 3-6** Regular field and lab schedule (see Typical Field Day schedule above).

**June 7-8** Weekend Free

**June 9-12** Regular field and lab schedule.

**June 13-15** Long Weekend Free (Friday off – Note extra lab on Sun. June 15 after dinner)

**June 16-20** Regular field and lab schedule.

**June 21-22** Program-sponsored field trip to Cahal Pech and Xunantunich.

**June 23-27** Regular field and lab schedule.

**June 28** Last day in camp (wrap up lab project, pack, etc); Evening Farewell Party.

**June 29** Transportation provided to the Belize International Airport for departure to US.

*June 30-July 6 Optional extended week-long session.*

*July 6* For those students who opt to stay on for the extra week, transportation to the Belize International Airport for departure to the US will be provided on July 6.