



The UNM/Uxbenká Archaeological Project Field School in Belize 2008

Since 2004 the Uxbenká Archaeological Project has been studying the rise and fall of an important Maya city, Uxbenká, located in the remote rainforest of southern Belize. In summer 2008 a limited number of students will have the opportunity to gain valuable field experience learning from an international and multidisciplinary team of scientists while participating in ongoing archaeological research.

This five week summer course focuses on the archaeology of the ancient Maya and will provide students with hands-on training in basic archaeological field and lab methods. Instruction will include training in excavation and survey using state of the art technology, lectures during field trips to nearby Maya ruins, and additional instruction in the form of lectures by visiting scholars and specialists.

Uxbenká is the oldest Maya ruin in southern Belize. Since 2004 the UAP has been mapping the ancient city and excavating in the main ceremonial core and in commoner household groups. Other UAP projects include

mapping and excavation in nearby cave sites used by the ancient Maya and geoarchaeological studies that are helping us to reconstruct the pre-Columbian climate and local environment of Uxbenká. The field site is located in and around the modern Mopan May village of Santa Cruz, and participants will have the opportunity to work alongside our Maya speaking partners in the field and to participate in traditional village life.

Eligibility: The program limited to 10 students and is open to anthropology majors and non-majors with specific interest in Maya archaeology and the consent of the director. Students may obtain up to 6 credits of Anthropology from UNM and out of state students will qualify for in-state tuition.

Prerequisites: Students must be in good physical health for an extended stay in the tropics. A medical release and travel insurance are required. Prior experience in camping and hiking is highly recommended.

Requirements: All students are required to participate in all project activities and to keep an active and daily fieldwork journal. Students enrolled for credit will be required to write a research paper detailing their anthropological research experience and results. Specific readings will be assigned in late spring.

Schedule: (Preliminary) The Field School will run for five weeks in June and July, 2008. Mid-session there will be an optional and affordable extended weekend break to the white sand beaches of Placencia for snorkeling, diving, or relaxing. Fieldwork is conducted 5 days a week and Saturdays are generally reserved for lab studies. Every Sunday the project takes day-trips to nearby archaeological ruins, waterfalls, swimming holes, caves, or other sites of interest.

Accommodations: Students will stay at the UAP field house in a dormitory style building. The project's house is rustic and remote but has electricity and is furnished with kitchen, dining area, laboratory, outhouses and showers. It is located in a small village near Uxbenká and we have regular access to phone and internet.

Fees: The program fee will be approximately \$1750, which includes all lodging and meals, local transportation and field trips, and laundry. Most meals are prepared by our expert cook. Fees do not include airfare and transfer to Punta Gorda, Belize, overnight excursions to the beach, or soft drinks or other extras. Airfare to Belize is generally between \$500-\$700 and group rates can be arranged.

For more information or to be put on the mailing list contact Dr. Keith Prufer at kmp@unm.edu or 505-277-1608. An informational meeting will be scheduled for mid November and the deadline for applications will be February, 2008.