



## Student Maya Research Opportunity in the Mirador Basin, Guatemala, 2025

### Idaho State University / **FARES Foundation**

The Idaho State University/ Guatemala Archaeological and Ecological Research Program is located in the remote Mirador Basin in the northern department of Peten. The research encompasses one of the most exciting research projects on the ancient Maya, and is focusing on the origins, cultural dynamics, and collapse of Preclassic Maya civilization. Under the direction of Dr. Richard Hansen you will have the opportunity for original research and exploration in the largest and earliest ancient Maya cities with teams of scholars from a variety of disciplines.



Former Idaho State University student Craig Argyle and Dr. Richard Hansen examining the Preclassic Maya stucco frieze at El Mirador that he excavated.

The ISU research opportunity offers students the chance to be on the cutting edge in the application of sophisticated technology, excavation and research strategies and methodologies, innovative conservation measures, and theoretical considerations relative to the origins and demise of complex societies. Experts and scholars from more than 46 universities and research institutions will provide the intellectual backdrop. In addition, epigraphic experts will assist in teaching the Introductory Maya Hieroglyphic Writing course as well as a more advanced course for students who are beyond the introductory level. This will allow students to know and understand the fundamentals of Maya writing and calendar systems.



Idaho State University  
field research students and staff at El Mirador.

### Field Work Description

The Mirador Basin Project offers the student unique field experience in Lowland Maya archaeology. Students will hike into the Basin from a small village, providing observations of the variations of tropical flora, fauna, and archaeological sites. The primary base will be the site of El Mirador, where students will be assigned to specific excavation, conservation, and investigation projected depending on skills and interests. Students will work closely with technicians and experienced scientific personnel. Students will gain an understanding of excavation and research strategies, Maya ceramics, lithics, bone and shell collection, architectural consolidation and conservation, and chronometric methods. Students will gain an understanding of Maya art and architecture, archaeology and tropical forest ecology. A basic understanding of mapping using sophisticated technology in tropical forests, radar instrumentation, and remote

sensing will be available. Additional knowledge of stabilization, consolidation, and architectural conservation measures will be obtained from experts working on site.

Students will have the opportunity to tour museums in Guatemala as well as Tikal National Park.

**Duration and Travel: July 6-August 8, 2025. Students may stay later with the project at no additional cost.**

**\*Note: The starting date may vary a few days one way or the other depending on weather factors and government obligations.**

-Roundtrip Airfare: Student obligation from residence to Flores/Santa Elena, Peten, Guatemala. Bus tickets can be obtained in Guatemala City to Flores, if traveling independently, but the project does rent a bus for the transport of staff and personnel and students would have the opportunity to use this service.

#### **ACCOMODATIONS**

Students will be housed in personal tents at the field camp locations. A list of mandatory equipment and personal belongings will be supplied approved applicants. Meals and laundry services will be provided by the project.

**TUITION AND FEES:** Academic Courses 6 and 3 credit hours

University admission fee: \$50.00 admission fee. All students must apply to Idaho State University, Dept of Anthropology

#### **I. Guatemala Field Research**

**ANTH 4499\_01 Undergrad:** 6 credit hrs, Undergraduate fees: \$2412 + \$1450 activity fee = \$3862

**ANTH 5599\_01 Graduate:** 6 credit hrs, \$3150, Graduate fees: \$+ \$1450 activity fee = \$4600

Activity fees (af): \$1450 plus airfare to and from Guatemala City and/or Flores (only once per field season)

#### **II. Intro Maya Hieroglyphic Writing, Level 1, Level 2**

**ANTH 4484\_01 Undergrad:** 3 credits \$1206/3 credit hours or \$402 per credit

**ANTH 5599\_02 Graduate:** 3 credits, \$1575/3 credit hours or \$525 per credit

#### **ADDITIONAL FEES**

-\$1450 Field School Fee (all students). One time fee/ season, regardless of credit hours

-Roundtrip airfare to Guatemala City and/or Flores

-Medical Evacuation Insurance, personal medical Insurance

#### **INQUIRIES**

ISU Anthropology Department

Email: [Rachael Johnston, Administrative Assistant 1](#) | Department of Anthropology/Global Studies and Languages

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**Application and fees deadline: May 15, 2025**



**Workmen and staff at El Mirador**



**ISU Staff and personnel at El Mirador**