

Introduction to Archaeology
Ant 304/ Ary 301
Spring 2012

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This course provides an overview of world prehistory beginning with hominid evolution and continues through the rise of complex societies in North and Mesoamerica. It begins with a brief introduction to archaeological methods and techniques. Grades will be based on one mid-term exam (30%), a final exam (30%), a written 3-4 page film review on an archaeological film of your choice from the collections at the Fine Arts Library (Doty Fine Arts Building 3.200), those shown in class, [or one of your choice after consultation with Prof. Denbow or your TA] (15%), answers to your lab exercises (15%), and attendance in class and labs (10%). Exams will be multiple choice and cover materials from your readings, class lectures, labs, and films. Dates for the exams will be announced in class one week in advance. **The double-spaced typed film reviews are due on Wednesday, April 11th.**

Classes will meet on M and W in Belmont Hall (BEL 328), which is somewhere in the west side of the football stadium. Lab sections will meet in our new classroom in the Student Activity Center (SAC 4.174). At that time, your TAs will be able to answer questions you might have, discuss lectures, go over lab materials and exams, and view films. My office is also on that floor.

Textbook:

Chris Scarre (2009 version) *The Human Past: World Prehistory & the Development of Human Societies*. London: Thames & Hudson.

You can order your book online, or it will be available in a couple of weeks from the Coop. It will not be necessary for the first 3 weeks or so.

Your textbook has a web site with study guides and sample questions at:

<http://www.thamesandhudsonusa.com/web/humanpast/index.html>. Here you will find chapter reviews, quizzes, and other information helpful while studying. A few questions on each exam will be drawn from these online quizzes, so it would pay to have a look at them

Lab exercises:

Virtual lab exercises related your class topics can be found at:

<http://www.utexas.edu/courses/denbow/index.htm>. I have included references to these in the syllabus. They should be read in advance before lab sections so that you will be able to ask questions. I have also put some supplemental materials for some of these labs in the Course Documents folder for the class in Blackboard. Answers to lab exercises on the web will be due the Friday after they are discussed in the quiz section. Some shorter films to supplement class lectures and labs will be shown in lab. Some of these films can be accessed at:

<http://www.archaeologychannel.org/> Be sure to click on the “more videos” button at the bottom of the short list to find all the films we will use. You can use either a Mac or PC to access these streaming videos, but you will need to have Windows Media Player or RealPlayer installed; they do not have any QuickTime versions. The site has a link for a free download of these programs if you do not already have one of them.

Other Information:

Class attendance is important as I will often show films, discuss examples and topics, or use materials not directly covered in the readings. I encourage you to ask questions during the lecture by raising your hand and I will try to answer them as they arise. If your questions require longer answers, I will ask you to come and see me during office hours, or ask you to defer your question for your TA during your lab section. I have not put fixed dates to the schedule below because I prefer to work at a class speed on subjects to be covered. The date for the mid-term exam, however, will be announced in class at least a week before it is given. This is generally either just before or just after spring break. The date for the final exam during finals week is set by the registrar and will be available later in the semester.

In the Course Documents section of Blackboard for your class you will also find copies of several recent papers of mine. If you look these over you will get an idea of the types of archaeological work I am involved in – principally in Africa – and the variety of work that most archaeologists engage in. These articles are written from a variety of perspectives and touch on issues of heritage management and preservation, ethno-archaeology, analysis of environment and subsistence, and detailed analyses of metals and ceramics and some of the ways that social and cultural information can be gleaned from artifacts. I don't expect you remember details of these, but simply to look them over as examples of how practicing archaeologists work and write. Examples of some of this will be included in lectures.

Course Schedule

Topic 1 Principles of Archaeology

Readings: Scarre: Preface and Chapter 1

Week 1: *film: Pompeii: Buried alive*

Week 2: **Lab 2: (survey methods)**

Film clips: radar imaging; electrical resistivity; proton magnetometer

How do you know where to dig? What did they eat?

Class lectures

Week 3: Lab 4: (Sampling strategies)

Week 4: Lab 3 (Excavation Analysis)

Film clips: fine excavation-beads; fine excavation-plaster wall; coarse excavation-shovel scraping; soil deposition & stratigraphy

How old is it?

Class lectures

Week 5: Lab 1 (Seriation, stratigraphy, absolute dating)

Film: Ethno-archaeology and pot making

What did they eat? How was their health?

Class lectures

Week 6: Lab 7 (Palynology)

Week 7: Lab 8 (Caddoan archeology and dental anthropology)

Film: Inagina: last house of Iron

Topic 2

The Evolution of Humanity

Early hominids

African Origins

Chapter 2: African Origins. (Nick Toth & Kathy Schick)

Week 8: *Ardi*

Week 9: Labs 5 and 6: Human origins & lithic technology (just read over Lab 5).

Mid-Term Exam

Pre-modern humans

Chapter 3: Hominin Dispersals in the Old World. (Richard Klein)

Modern Humans

Chapter 4: The Rise of Modern Humans (Paul Pettitt)

Week 10: *film: Journey of Man, 1st section*

Symbolism and Rock Art

Class lectures

Film: /Num Tchai

Week 11: *Film: Seminole Canyon*

The Origins of Food Production

Chapter 5: The World Transformed: From Foragers and Farmers to States and Empires (Chris Scarre)

Week 12: Lab 9: Ancient Egypt: sex, gender and demography

Topic 3

North America and Mesoamerica

Chapter 9: Origins of Food Producing Economies in the Americas (David Bowman, Gayle Fritz, Patty Jo Watson)

Week 13: film: Peopling of the Americas

Chapter 18: Complex Societies of North America; 5,000 BC- 1550 AD (George Milner and W.H. Wills)

Week 14: Film: Cahokia: America's lost city

Chapter 16: Mesoamerican civilization; 5,000 BC- 1550 AD (David Webster and Susan Evans)

Week 15: Films: The fall of the Maya & City of the gods

Final Exams will be set according to the registrar's schedule for exams announced toward the end of the semester.