

ANTHROPOLOGY 1030 (Gen. Ed. Breadth SS)
WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY
Fall Semester 2016

3 credits

Professor Steven Simms

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Class: Tuesday and Thursday 9:00 – 10:15 am Widtsoe 007

Student Drop-In Visitation Hours: T, Th 8:00 – 8:30 am, 10:30 – 11:00 am.
Many other times to meet can be arranged by appointment. Just email me.

Teaching Assistant: Amanda Cook amandacook@aggiemail.usu.edu

OUR COURSE

The course is web-assisted, but it is very much a “live” course. The CANVAS home page is used for several things including:

- Course Content. Some of the overheads used in class, as well as note-taking aids are posted here. Additional short readings are also posted.
- Announcements. I will occasionally send announcements to the class as reminders, or alerts.
- Assignments. Assignments are shown on your syllabus, but are also shown on CANVAS.
- Discussion. This link provides a way for you to ask questions online and propose discussion among each other.
- Mail. You may contact me or the T.A. via email or via Canvas mail. I see my direct email more frequently than the Canvas mail.
- Grade Book. This enables you to track your progress through the semester.

TEXT (required)

Fagan, Brian

2012 *Ancient Lives: An Introduction to Archaeology and Prehistory*. 5th Edition. We will not be using the MySearchLab companion to this text.

Other Readings (required)

Shown on this syllabus under the section Course Schedule and Reading Assignments. Links to PDF of the readings are on Canvas.

INTRODUCTION TO COURSE SUBSTANCE

We will investigate two broad subjects in this course: *archaeology* and *the human past*. What are these and what are the differences between them?

Archaeology is a sub-field of anthropology (the other subfields are cultural anthropology, biological anthropology, and anthropological linguistics). Archaeology learns about humans from the remains we create and leave behind: buildings, artifacts, skeletons, landscape modification, and discard (to name just a few). These remains do not have to be old - they can be yesterday's garbage. This aspect of the course focuses on the *means* by which archaeologists "decode" the material record

of past human behavior. In other words, emphasis will be placed on *how* we can know about the past. The scientific and problem-solving characteristics of archaeology are important. A central goal is to provide you with the intellectual tools *to evaluate data* about the past. By learning how archaeology works, you gain much more than a list of "facts." You will gain problem-solving skills that you can build upon after you leave.

The human past refers to the *interpretations* of archaeology and *explanations* of the human past at an anthropological scale. This means that we seek more than a description of the past. We also seek explanation of culture process – the *causes* driving *why* things happened the way they did, and *why* cultures take the forms that they do. We will find there is a great deal of patterning across cultures, and that the diversity and even the strangeness of the past that often attracts us are actually unified by similarity of process. We will find that cultural differences and similarities are *dependent on the circumstances* under which cultures evolved and exist. A combination of specific cases and learning about general processes will help us see a past arising out of the circumstances in which human behavior developed, rather than innate or arbitrary (biological, sociological, or psychological) differences among “kinds” of people. Finally, by seeking explanation, we see that humans are part of the natural world - not apart from it.

Archaeology and the American Culture Wars

Archaeology bridges the sciences and humanities, and students often find some of the material to be strangely unfamiliar and even disconcerting. You may be surprised at how far-ranging the study of the past can be. The past is used by all cultures *to shore up existing values*. Sometimes it might seem that our investigation of the past challenges some of our received wisdoms. That is the nature of education, but it is especially characteristic of anthropology. This is because anthropology purposefully steps outside of our own culture to consider the problem of the *Other*. We all have our beliefs, but for our purposes here consider the idea that regardless of what any of us believe happened in the past, something did happen and it may be very different from what we believed happened or what we might prefer. One of our primary quests this semester is to learn to evaluate *how we know*; which stories about the past are more likely to be true and which are less likely to be true. We employ a scientific perspective, which means that we don't so much traffic in truth, but in degrees of probability. In science the questions often teach us more than the answers. In archaeology, it is not what you find, but what you find out.

LEARNING GOALS AND ASSESSMENT

Note: Class readings, lecture, questions, and discussion, as well as the quizzes, the final exam, and assignments are all designed to assess the following learning goals.

1. Understand some basics about the science of archaeology: goals, ethics, concepts, terminology, and some applications.
Assessment: Know history of archaeology, archaeology as a natural science, archaeology as a subfield of anthropology, and archaeology in cultural context. Appreciate that the past is a non-renewable resource that is being destroyed. Appreciate that the study of the past is a tool to promote understanding of and tolerance for cultural diversity in the present and future.
2. Use the knowledge in #1 to *evaluate information* that comes from archaeology in order to know about the human past.
Assessment: Know kinds of archaeology, the nature of the archaeological record, and some questions archaeology asks. Show familiarity with some of the methods, and how archaeological evidence is used in some specific cases.
3. Learn the outlines of the human past from the time of the first humans to the present.
Assessment: Know the major periods, cultures, and trends. Be able to refer to examples and connect these examples to the larger questions that archaeology is interested in.
4. Understand the processes that explain human differences and similarities - the reasons that history followed different courses across space and through time.
Assessment: Ability to connect your knowledge of archaeology with the processes that caused the human past to take the forms it did. Examples might include: the sexual division of labor, agriculture, civilization, inequality, cooperation, and conflict. You should be able to synthesize your knowledge of the human past and some of the explanations for that past to a person who is *as familiar* with archaeology as you.

EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

Simms Basic Rules

You are *responsible* for what goes on in class *whether you are present or not*. It is not appropriate to ask the professor “what did I miss, or to expect recapitulation of the course for your personal convenience.

You are *responsible* for all course assignments (e.g., reading, writing, in-class discussions, hand-outs, videos) whether you do them adequately or not.

Attending the university is optional. As such, I assume you are registered for this course *only* because you are interested in the subject matter, not because you “need credits”. I treat attendance and performance at a research university on a par with holding down professional-level, salaried employment.

Please be punctual. I get to know chronic late-arrivers and you do not want me to know you that way. If there is a good logistical reason for repeatedly arriving late, please communicate with me so I will understand your situation.

Please turn off cell phones when in class.

If you want to chat with friends, or use your laptop to surf the web, or use your email, please leave. If you are found to be doing these things, it will weigh against you on “Intangibles” (see section below Points and Grading).

My Promise to You

I will return your investment in meeting the standards of a university education and your effort toward intellectual growth with a genuine interest in you. I will be available to you, return your emails, and discuss anthropology with you. My evaluation of your work in the course is unrelated to my value for you as a person.

The Teaching Assistant

We are fortunate to have Amanda Cook as our teaching assistant (TA). She is an experienced anthropology student who can help you learn. Contact her via email or CANVAS mail. Please be aware that for questions about grades, absences, special arrangements, make-up exams, etc., you must contact Professor Simms, not Ms. Cook.

Some Unsolicited Advice

This course is introductory, but not elementary. Introductory courses can be among the most difficult because the material is typically unfamiliar. This course assumes broad cultural literacy including intellectual traditions of the Western (Occidental) World, including literature, history, philosophy; university level vocabulary, reading speed, and comprehension skills; familiarity with the processes of the natural sciences; university level note-taking and study habits. I will, however, work with you if you are willing to put in the effort. If you need help, see me *sooner rather than later*.

Other Policies

Cheating

USU policies regarding honesty, including cheating on exams and assignments and plagiarism, will be adhered to. See the Student Code for policy details. <http://www.usu.edu/copyrightatusu/students/usu-student-code.cfm>

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and need reasonable accommodation to participate in this course, please visit with me *immediately*, or notify the Disability Resource Center to contact me so we can work with you.

FERPA

In compliance with the Family Education Right to Privacy Act (FERPA), we maintain the confidentiality of students’ records. In some instances, we may place assignments for pick-up during class where they might be visible to others. The waiver we sign in class is optional, and if you choose not to sign it, please let the Teaching Assistant know so we can hand your assignments to you personally.

ASSIGNMENTS, QUIZZES AND FINAL EXAM

In-Class Learning Assignments (60 points)

Six brief writing assignments will assist your learning of key concepts and critical thinking that are introduced in class prior to the assignment. Each assignment will be presented as an archaeological problem, a question about concepts, or a case study in the human past. Your success with this assignment is significantly dependent on class attendance and attention.

1. The writing assignments are scattered throughout the semester, and scheduled as we go.
2. Each assignment will be announced in class, and only then will it be announced on Canvas. Due dates will also be announced, and will be due just a few days out from the date of the assignment. Thus, if you miss a class, check Canvas to see if an assignment was made.
3. Assignments will require written essays, reports, or responses that are 400 – 500 words in length.
4. Assignments will be submitted via the Canvas page for each of the six assignments. Important: Submit assignments in the text box by pasting from your word processing program.
5. The assignments are worth 10 points each. Two points off for each day late.

Critical Thinking Assignment (75 points)

This assignment enables you to experience the process of formulating questions in a scientific manner. As you will learn in class, science has less to do with providing answers than it does with shaping questions in a manner making them approachable with evidence. Thus, science is not about belief, but about the new knowledge we gain from asking questions, and an evaluation of what we know at any particular time in the questioning process. The thrust of this assignment is the formulation of research questions, often called research problems, or research design.

The vehicle for this exercise in critical thinking will be a case in the human past introduced in class, or in class readings. Thus, your topics are not free-form. Indeed, finding the right subject matter will be the foundation for success. Topics may be problem-oriented, such as a debate about some aspect of early hominin evolution, the colonization of the Americas, the spread of farming across Europe, the peopling of Australia, or changes in climate and ecosystems. Or, problems and research design may be drawn from specific cultures and periods such as the Maya, the European Megalithic, or Ancestral Puebloans. Once you find a problem pertaining in some way to class material, you may do research to deepen your knowledge.

You can begin thinking about the possibilities for this assignment based on material early in the course. Or, you can jump ahead in the Course Outline and the readings, consult with me or Amanda, and get started. The assignment is due late in the semester, but don't wait too long to begin. This assignment intentionally places the choice and hence the responsibility on you. The process of developing the question is the assignment. It is meant to be a process, not an event. You will benefit from drafting up a paragraph or two, or some ideas, and consulting with me or Amanda soon. Again, think of the assignment as a process, not as stimulus-response exercise. Ask questions, but please avoid the irresponsible tactic of saying, "I don't know what you want". You are not my trained dog performing tricks. What I want is for you to think and discover the process of critical thinking in the context of the subject matter presented in this course.

Specifics:

- Formal essay form. Essays must have a purpose, a thesis; not just a topic.
- Length: 1000 – 2000 words. Longer is only good when the thesis is fully developed, but with no extraneous material. Short is only acceptable if the problem and essay are so beautifully crafted that it enraptures the reader.
- Two submissions are required. See the assignment on Canvas for submission details:
 1. Essay title (titles are important) and a 250 word abstract of your research problem due Friday, November 18 before 5:00 pm. This will be part of your assignment grade. Late abstracts lose points.
 2. Final Essay due Friday, December 2 by 5:00pm. Five points off for each day late beginning immediately.

Help. I will suggest topics as we go through the semester, beginning in the first week or two. You will find that my lecturing style often frames topics as research questions/problems. Keep an ear out for this. Remember, science is about questions more than answers, and about probability more than about truth.

Finally, seek help. Please contact us only after having made an investment, and preferably with something written. Please try to avoid the immature lament, "I don't know what to do". Start with the course material! Start with the next class meeting.

Quizzes and Final Exam (30, 30, 75 points)

There are two quizzes and a final exam. They are objective in style (multiple choice etc.), and we will use a blue scantron (the large ones). Dates are shown on the Course Schedule. *Students provide full page blue scantron forms for the quizzes and final. Purchase them at the bookstore ASAP.*

Important! The final exam is cumulative, and will include verbatim repeats of some questions asked on the previous quizzes. For this reason, SAVE your quizzes because they will help you on the final.

Make-up Policy for Quizzes and Exams

Quizzes *may* be approved for make up, and the Final may be approved to take early under *exceptional* circumstances and by *prior arrangement*. No make-ups will be given more than one week after the quiz was administered in class. Plans for an early Final must be made by Week 14 of the semester. Communicate with me. I will listen to reason, but will expect you to be prepared, professional, and mature in your expectations of yourself and of me.

POINTS AND GRADING

Learning Assignments (6 @ 10 pts each)	= 60
Critical Thinking Assignment	= 75
Quizzes (2@ 30 pts each)	= 60
Final exam	= 75
Course Total	<hr style="width: 10%; margin-left: auto; margin-right: 0;"/> = 270

Intangibles may take any grade higher or lower. Consider the possibilities. Go beyond the minimum and the “gud-nuff” attitude. Communicate. Make sure I know your name (this may take time and I may have to ask you more than once). Have good attendance and punctuality. Show alertness, good work habits, and a positive attitude. Don’t whine.

Students can track their grades in CANVAS under the Grade link. I am available to discuss your grade standing and the means to improve.

Given the diversity of assignments already required, there will be *no extra credit assignments*.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS
(topics organized in order of our Tuesday/Thursday schedule)

Week	Topics	Reading (from Fagan text unless otherwise noted)
1 8/30	Encountering the past Introduction to the course, what you can gain from the study of archaeology. The anthropological perspective. History of archaeology.	Chapter 1
2 9/6	Probing the past Basic terminology. Kinds of archaeology and kinds of sites. Goals of archaeology. Culture and evolution.	Chapter 2
3 9/13	The Archaeological Record The concept of the archaeological record and site formation processes. Fantastic archaeology vs. archaeological inference. Ethics.	Canvas: Binford
4 9/20	Acquiring the past Finding sites and going on a dig. Chronology building techniques.	Chapter 3
5 9/27	How did people live Kinds of information and analyses. Being a hunter-gatherer. Individuals and Interactions	Chapter 4 & Canvas: Simms Chapter 5
6 10/4	Studying the intangible Ethnoarchaeology, rock art. Mind, religion, and culture. Contemporary archaeology: Some examples	Chapter 6 Chapter 7
7 10/11	Quiz 1. Bring blue scantron. Human Origins: Time and environments. The nature of evolution and adaptation: why we did not descend from apes and monkeys.	Chapter 8
8 10/18 .	Hominin Evolution A forest of hominins, and a plethora of fossils Thursday 10/20 attend Friday classes.	Chapter 8
9 10/25	African Exodus <i>Homo erectus</i> , fire, culture, and evolutionary dead-ends. “Eve,” continuity, discontinuity, and the debate over the beginnings of “race.” Neanderthals, “modern” humans, and cultural takeoff. Breaking the cave man image.	Chapter 9
10 11/1	The Great Diaspora Our foraging legacy Colonizing Sunda and Sahul. Origins of Polynesians. Colonization of the Americas: when and how?	Chapter 10
11 11/8	The Earliest Farmers The Mesolithic in Southwest Asia and Europe. Farming: when, where, and why? Farming and language. The Neolithic “revolution”: the greatest irony?	Chapter 11 Canvas: Diamond & Bellwood

