



McMaster University
ANTHRO 1B03 – Winter 2008
INTRODUCTION TO WORLD PREHISTORY



Instructor: Kostalena Michelaki
Chester New Hall, # 509 - **Tel:** (905)-525-9140 ext. 23913
E-mail: michela@mcmaster.ca

Office Hours: Thursdays 5-6 pm

Lecture Times and Location: Thursdays 7-10 pm, DSB/AB102

Required Text: People of the Earth: An Introduction to World Prehistory, by Brian M. Fagan, 2006, 12th edition, Pearson Prentice Hall. ISBN: 978-0132274081

COURSE CONTENT

- * Who were our first ancestors?
- * When did we acquire language?
- * Why did we create art and why did it take us so long to do so?
- * Why did we domesticate animals and plants after thousands of years of hunting and collecting them in the wild?
- * Why did we settle in villages? How did we build cities and states, and why did some of us become kings and others commoners?

In this course our journey will begin about 4,000,000 years ago when we could not yet be called humans. Our goal will be to follow our cultural development on a very broad scale throughout most of the world and look for answers to big questions of the human experience, such as the ones above. In the process we will also examine some of the scientific methods and the theories currently implemented by archaeologists in their search for answers. At the end of this course you should have developed: 1) an understanding of the big trends that shaped the human past, 2) a sense of the past as the dynamic lives of people, rather than a static catalogue of their material remains, and 3) an appreciation of archaeology as a discipline relevant to the present as much as to the past.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- **MID-TERM EXAM: In class, Thursday February 14th.**

Material will cover up to (and include) the *lecture of February 7th*. The form may include a variety of styles: multiple choice, short answers and essays.

- **FINAL EXAM: In class, Thursday April 3rd.**

Material will cover the whole course, with emphasis on the issues covered after the mid-term. The form will be similar to that of the mid-term.

- **Assignment #1:** *A Day in the Life of the Iceman.*

This assignment will be divided in two parts. In part A you will conduct library research to collect information from peer-reviewed journals and books about various aspects of the life of Ötzi, the Iceman. In part B you will put the facts together to create a story describing a day in the life of the Iceman. Your story will be fictional, but based only on actual archaeological facts. See details in document “Assignment 1” on the web.

- **Assignment #2:** *What does your room say about you?*

In this assignment you will observe a room in the house where you live, or your dorm room and record all the artefacts, ecofacts and features that you see in it. You will then consider the kinds of activities you perform in your room and check whether they are all reflected in the material culture of your room. You will also take a broader look at your room and reflect on what it says about you (can someone who visits your room tell your age, gender, profession, hobbies, values etc?). See details in document “Assignment 2” on the web.

- **Assignment #3:** *Five signs that tell you Canada is a State level society.*

In this assignment you will consider the characteristics that all state level societies share, as covered in your textbook and lectures, and then provide five examples that would show to an archaeologist of the future that Canada was a state level society. See details in document “Assignment 3” on the web.

GRADING

Mid-term Exam:	25%
Assignment #1a:	15%
Assignment #1b	5%
Assignment #2:	20%
Assignment #3:	5%
Final Exam:	30%

- Being late with your assignments will result in the reduction of 3% of your final course grade per day, including weekends. For example, if you are one day late with an assignment that is normally worth 15%, it will end up being worth 12% of your grade. Be two days late and your essay will be worth 9% of your final grade.

Assignments must be handed in to me at the end of each lecture. If you are late with an assignment you must drop it in the drop-box outside room 524, immediately opposite the elevators on the 5th floor of Chester New Hall. Make sure that both the Course name and number AND your own name and student number are clearly marked on the front page of your assignments!

You cannot email/fax your assignment, or slide it under any office door. The drop box is checked daily, Monday to Friday, at 4 pm. Assignments received after 4 pm are dated with the following day’s date.

- Academic Dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at: http://www.mcmaster.ca/senate/academic/ac_integrity.htm

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

- **Academic Skills Counselling and Services for Students with Disabilities** are available through the Centre for Student Development: tel: 905-525-9140 x24711, e-mail: csd@mcmaster.ca, website: <http://csd.mcmaster.ca>

Guides to effective writing are also available at the university bookstore.

Assignment	Due Date	Percentage
Assignment #1a	January 31 st	15%
Assignment #1b	March 20 th	5%
MID-TERM	February 14 th	25%
Assignment #2	February 28 th	20%
Assignment #3	March 13 th	5%
FINAL	April 3 rd	30%

LECTURE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS*

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
Jan. 10	Introduction to archaeology	1
Jan. 17	Human Origins: Lower Palaeolithic	2-3
Jan. 24	Neanderthals & Modern Humans: Middle and Upper Palaeolithic	3-4
Jan. 31	Peopling of the New World	5-6 Assign. #1a Due
Feb. 7	Hunter-Gatherers: Mesolithic and the Origins of Agriculture	7-8
Feb. 14	MID-TERM TEST	
Feb. 21	BREAK	
Feb. 28	Neolithic I: SW Asia & Europe	9-10 Assign. #2 Due
Mar. 6	Neolithic II: Africa, Asia, Mesoamerica	11-12-13
Mar. 13	The Development of States	14 Assign. #3 Due
Mar. 20	Africa & Asia	15-16 Assign. #1b Due
Mar. 27	Europe, Greece, Mediterranean	19-20
Apr. 3	FINAL EXAM	

* The course outline above is a guideline. Some topics may take more or less time than anticipated. Any changes to this outline will be announced in class. If you are not there it is your responsibility to contact me for any changes to the syllabus.