ANTHROPOLOGY 111

THE STUDY OF ARCHAEOLOGY

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A139 Fowler
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This course is an advanced consideration of theory in anthropological archaeology. It is designed for students who have had at least one introductory class in archaeology (Anthropology 8 or its equivalent). Lectures will assume that students already have a general understanding of what it is that archaeologists do as well as knowledge of the broad outlines of world prehistory. Readings, lectures, and exams are designed to lead students from that point to a more sophisticated understanding of archaeology as an intellectual discipline. That is achieved through a review of the history of anthropological archaeology, a consideration of the forms of reasoning that allow archaeologists to make claims concerning ancient societies based on material remains, and a brief survey of two areas of substantive inquiry in contemporary archaeology (the development of agriculture and the study of ancient states and civilizations).

Specific Goals

The specific goals of the class are to encourage students to (1) consider the current state of archaeology in the context of the history of the discipline, (2) think critically about how archaeologists use the evidence provided by material remains to draw conclusions about social life in the past, (3) think about contemporary archaeology at a more sophisticated level than is possible in an introductory class, (4) master this material by articulating it orally in class discussions, and (5) write clear, well-reasoned essays on theoretical topics.

Course Requirements:

Evaluation focuses on student writing in Mid-term I (25% of final grade), Mid-term II (30% of final grade), and the Take-Home Final Exam (35% of final grade). Participation, including attendance at lectures and discussions as well as participation in class discussion, will also be considered (10% of final grade). The instructor may occasionally take roll at lectures and/or discussions.

Readings. Two textbooks as well as a reader including research articles by archaeologists are all required.

Discussions. Seven classes are devoted to student discussion of assigned readings. Students will find these particularly important as preparation for the exams.
Lectures. Lectures are required and students should attend all of them.

Exams. Exams are in essay format and require students to display a sophisticated understanding of materials covered in lectures, readings, and discussions. The two mid-terms are during regularly scheduled classes (students should bring bluebooks). The final exam is in take-home format. Responses for the final exams should be no more than 10 pages, typed and double-spaced.

Required Texts:


In addition, a reader is for sale at Course Reader Materials in Westwood Village (1141 Westwood Blvd, under the Pizza Hut, next to Thrifty). Their phone is (310) 443-3303.

PART I: THE HISTORY OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

1/6  Lecture: Introduction to Anthropological Archaeology
1/8  Lecture: The Early History of Archaeology
1/10 Lecture: Cultural Anthropology in Historical Perspective
1/13 Lecture: Culture-Historical Archaeology
1/15 Lecture: The New Archaeology
1/17 Discussion: The Intellectual History of Archaeology.
1/20 Martin Luther King Day Holiday
1/22 Lecture: From "New Archaeology" to Processual Archaeology
1/24 Lecture: Postprocessual Archaeology
1/27 Lecture: Science in Archaeology
1/29 Discussion: A Crisis of Legitimacy in American Archaeology: Relations between Archaeologists and Native Americans.
1/31 Mid-term Exam I

PART II: HOW ARCHAEOLOGISTS REASON

2/3  Lecture: The Shape of Archaeological Theory
2/5  Lecture: Middle-Range Theory
2/7  Lecture/Discussion: The Hunting/Scavenging Debate.
2/10 Lecture: The Hunting/Scavenging Debate -- Conclusions
2/12 Discussion: Ethnographic Analogy.
2/14 Lecture: Archaeological Reasoning
2/17 Holiday
2/19 Mid-term Exam II
PART III: SUBSTANTIVE INQUIRY IN ARCHAEOLOGY:
AGRICULTURAL ORIGINS

2/21 Lecture: Thinking about Hunter Gatherers
2/24 Lecture: Introduction to Agricultural Origins
2/26 Discussion: Comparing Diverse Attempts to Explain the Transition to Agriculture.
2/28 Lecture: Agriculture – Conclusions

PART IV: SUBSTANTIVE INQUIRY IN ARCHAEOLOGY:
COMPLEX SOCIETIES

3/3 Lecture: Introduction to the Study of Sociopolitical Complexity
3/5 Lecture: Agency As a Reaction to Processual Archaeology
3/7 Discussion: Debating Agency in Archaeology.
3/10 Lecture: Introduction to Gender and Politics in Ancient States.
3/14 Lecture: Further Considerations of Gender and Politics; Brief Retrospective