

**PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY**  
Montclair State University  
ANTH103-01  
Spring 2009

**Instructor:** Dr. Peter E. Siegel  
**Classroom:** University Hall 3004  
**Lecture hours:** Tuesday and Thursday, 8:30 – 9:45AM  
**Office:** Dickson Hall 143  
**Office hours:** Tuesday, 2 – 3:30PM, Thursday, 11:30AM – 1PM, or by appointment

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

Objectives of the course are to expose students to: (1) scholarly perspectives in understanding ancient cultures, (2) the intellectual rigor required in archaeology to build plausible reconstructions of the past, and (3) the ethical issues surrounding professional excavations of archaeological sites and the collecting of prehistoric antiquities. Students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the concepts, methods, and theory of prehistoric archaeology, emphasizing the importance of cross-cultural comparisons and identifying diversity in the ancient past. The class is structured around three major themes: (1) history of archaeology and how it developed as a scientific discipline, (2) methods used by archaeologists to reconstruct and interpret past lifeways and belief systems, and (3) the connections between archaeological research and issues of broad societal importance. In presenting the material I will draw on a variety of examples, some from the textbook and others from additional sources.

**SCOPE OF COURSE:**

Prehistoric Archaeology addresses the methods and philosophy archaeologists use to investigate ancient cultures. Particular attention is paid to inferential reasoning in archaeology; distinguishing plausible narratives vs. specious reconstructions of what happened in the past; and an appreciation for diversity, gender relations, power and social inequality, and non-Western lifeways and belief systems in past cultures.

**TEXTBOOK:**

Price, T. Douglas  
*2007 Principles of Archaeology*. McGraw Hill, Boston.

Additional Reading (on reserve at the Sprague Library):  
Willey, Gordon R., and Jeremy A. Sabloff  
*A History of American Archaeology*. W.H. Freeman, San Francisco.

**GRADES WILL BE BASED ON:**

2 quizzes	20% (lowest of the two quiz scores will be dropped)
Midterm exam	30%
Cumulative final exam	50%

Grades will be assigned according to the following method: The highest score attained by an individual on all of the **quizzes and exams combined** will be treated as the upper limit of an “A” grade. **Whole letter grades** will be calculated as 10 percentage points from that highest score. For **example**, if the quizzes and exams combined equal 1,000 points and the highest achiever in the class scored 850 points then to get an “A” in the class you would need a score of 795 or more total points. In this **example**, an “A-” encompasses the point distribution of 765-794, and so on. Once the benchmark has been established by the highest overall achiever in the class (i.e., the person who scores the most points on all quizzes and exams combined) then the following percentage distributions will be used to assign letter grades: A = 94-100, A- = 90-93, B+ = 87-89, B = 84-86, B- = 80-83, C+ = 77-79, C = 74-76, C- = 70-73, D+ = 67-69, D = 64-66, D- = 60-63, F = <60.

Quizzes and exams will draw on information presented in the textbook, lectures, and films/videos. I recommend that you use the PowerPoints that will be posted on Blackboard as study guides. For the quizzes and exams you may bring to class **ONE 5-inch by 8-inch-sized index card** with notes that you

may refer to during the quiz or exam. **If you bring a card larger than this size you may not use it during the quiz or exam.** Notes may be written on both sides of the cards. BRING A PENCIL AND ERASER TO QUIZZES AND EXAMS.

**OPTIONAL EXTRA-CREDIT PROJECT:**

Extra credit, up to five percentage points, may be earned by writing two book reviews or a research paper. Extra-credit projects must be arranged with me in advance. **March 26 is the deadline to sign up for an extra-credit project. The project will be due no later than the final exam.**

**Research paper guidelines:**

- 10 pages typed and double-spaced on a topic appropriate for this class and approved by me in advance.
- Included in the 10 pages there should be a References Cited section.
- You should cite 8-10 relevant sources.
- Internet websites are NOT to be referenced for the paper.
- Valid references include books and journal articles. If you are unsure of what a valid reference is, talk to me.
- Downloading of text from the Internet or copying text from books/journals without attribution is plagiarism and will result in no extra credit.

**Book review guidelines:**

- Books selected to review should be appropriate for this class and approved by me in advance.
- Each book review should be 2-3 pages in length.
- The reviews should include the full bibliographic citations of the books you are reviewing.
- Reviews should state clearly what the book is about, a summary of the information presented, conclusions presented by the author(s), and your assessment of the book.

**CLASS POLICIES:**

*Attendance.* **ATTENDANCE TO CLASS IS CRUCIAL TO YOUR SUCCESS. LATENESS TO CLASS IS STRONGLY DISCOURAGED.** Lectures will include information that is **not** contained within the textbook and readings.

*Cell phones.* Cell phones must be turned off or placed on vibrate.

*Academic dishonesty.* Academic dishonesty is defined as “intentionally or knowingly giving or receiving aid on any test, exam, or academic exercise ... collusion or purchase [of] term papers, and plagiarism” (*MSU University Regulations and Disciplinary Procedures* of the Undergraduate and Graduate Student handbook). A student found culpable for academic dishonesty will be subject to penalties.

**SCHEDULE OF TOPICS**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading Assignment</b>
Jan 20	Introduction	
Jan 22, 27	Scientific method and archaeology, Archaeology and anthropology	Price, pp. 3-45
Jan 29	History of archaeology	Price, pp. 47-65 Willey and Sabloff
Feb 3, 5	What makes something archaeological?	Price, pp. 67-99
Feb 10	Quiz (covers material from Jan 20 – Feb 5)	
Feb 12, 17, 19	Sampling and prospecting or how do archaeologists find and dig sites?	Price, pp. 101-175
Feb 24, 26	Dating methods in archaeology	Price, pp. 215-243
Mar 3, 5, 10	Settlement patterns	Price, pp. 245-269
Mar 12	Mid-term exam (covers material from January 20 – March 10)	
Mar 16 – 22	SPRING RECESS!	
Mar 24, 26	March 26: deadline to sign up for optional extra-credit project Technology	Price, pp. 177-213, 271-321
Mar 31, Apr 2	Subsistence	Price, pp. 323-375
Apr 7, 9, 14	Social systems, cosmology, and ideology	Price, pp. 377-413, 445-475
Apr 16	Quiz (covers material from March 26 – April 16)	
Apr 21, 23, 28, 30	Law, ethics, and bones of contention in archaeology	Price, pp. 477-501
May 5	Review and overview	
May 12	Final exam (covers material from January 20 – April 30) University Hall 3004, 8 – 10AM	