

## World Prehistory Fall 2017 Syllabus

**Code:** 070:112

**Credits:** 3

**Lectures**—Mondays and Thursdays, 10:55 am to 12:15 pm Biological Sciences Building, room 205

### **Instructor**

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**Room 203A**

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### **Pre or Co-requisites**

none

### **Catalog description**

An overview of world Prehistory from the first human made tools to the development of farming and herding.

### **Detailed description**

Prehistory is the longest and most unknown period in Human History. Since the first hominin produced a stone tool until the first writing stamped in clay almost three million years of our history has been recorded only in the archaeological record. This course will focus on the early stages of World Prehistory, from the Lower Paleolithic to the Neolithic. In this class, we will explore the evolution of the first cultures in Africa and how the first hominin pioneers migrated Out of Africa. We will see what sort adaptative strategies they developed in Asia and Europe. We will discuss how other hominins evolved outside Africa and developed a distinctive culture, and how these groups were replaced and intermixed once more with African populations: the modern humans. We will survey the conquest of new continents by the humans in Australia and America, and we will study the how humans have adapted to drastic climatic changes using culture. Finally, we will close the course by analyzing the factors that lead to one of the most fascinating transformations in human history: the Neolithic revolution.

### Course-Specific Student Learning Outcome Goals

- To acquire basic knowledge on chronology, geographical location, and meaning of the processes that shaped World Prehistory [EA1 and EA3 see <http://anthro.rutgers.edu/undergrad-program/department-learning-goals>].
- To be familiar with the current debates in World Prehistory.
- To understand the influence of the Prehistoric Archaeology on the fields of Human Evolution and Archaeology.
- To show written and oral proficiency in discussing the major issues regarding world prehistory. [EA4 and EA5 see <http://anthro.rutgers.edu/undergradprogram/department-learning-goals>]
- To effectively locate and evaluate scientific sources and effectively use them when constructing arguments

### Core Curriculum Goals

- i. Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, method, evidence, arguments, and theory in social and historical analysis.
- k. Explain the development of some aspect of a society or culture over time, including the history of ideas or history of science.

### Suggested Texts

1. Scarre, C. (2005). *The human past: World prehistory & the development of human societies*. New York, N.Y.: Thames & Hudson.

The first part of this book is focused in the early stages of prehistory, whereas the second part deals with recent prehistory. In this course, we will use the first part of the book as a complementary source to classes. Please check the topic list below for further details.

2. *The Oxford handbook of the archaeology and anthropology of hunter-gatherers* (First edition.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This is an extensive handbook from which only some chapters are selected\*. The average length of each chapter is around 14 pages plus references. Please check the topic list below for further details.

### Grading Structure

Grading will be based on three exams (15% each, 45% in total), one paper (30%), and coursework (25%). The exams can cover any material presented in the lectures and readings. The exams are non-cumulative, although the students should be familiar with the materials discussed in previous parts of the course.

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\* At this point we are working to grant online access to this handbook from Rutgers libraries

Optional extra credit (5%) can be obtained by submitting a short essay.

### **Detailed grading structure**

#### Exams

Three exams (15% of the final grade each)

Non-cumulative

10 short questions to be answered on up to 1-page (letter size). The answers should be between 150 and 250 words long and must be written in complete sentences. The answers should be precise and complete. The student must demonstrate understanding of the essential concepts explained in class, and in each question and should be able to “Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, method, evidence, arguments, and theory in social and historical analysis”.

Example:

Q. What are the main hypotheses explaining the Neanderthal demise?

*A. Historically the main hypothesis describing the Neanderthal extinction can be divided into three groups: A) Hypotheses supporting a multiregional origin for AMH, and therefore they do not actually support Neanderthal extinction, B) hypotheses supporting a complete replacement, also known as Out of Africa 2 hypothesis, and C) hypotheses that support a mixed model of replacement and genetic flow. Currently, the group of hypothesis A) and B) have been somehow abandoned since the last DNA data show that current Eurasian populations share at least a percentage of their DNA with Neanderthals, meaning that at some point in Human Evolution, Neanderthal and Modern Human admixture was happening. Therefore, the most supported hypotheses nowadays are within the third group. The hypotheses in the third group can be divided accordingly to the evidence produced. Some hypotheses are based on inexistent archaeological evidence, such as a disease hypothesis, which considers the existence of a disease carried by Modern humans as the main responsible for the Neanderthal extinction. Other hypotheses are based on actual archaeological evidence and they consider technological differences, climatic changes, behavior and social organization to explain the extinction of Neanderthals. Among this group, the most extended is the hypothesis of the competitive exclusion. Modern humans and Neanderthals were competing for the same resources, but modern humans would have had a more efficient technology, social organization, and symbolic system that had allowed them to outcompete Neanderthals in an extremely unstable environment.*

Exams dates: TBD

#### Paper

Subject: The Paleodiet

How to: Each year many books, blogs entries, papers, or news articles are published about the so-called “Paleodiet”. The Paleodiet is a fashionable diet for losing weight and improving your fitness that is quite popular nowadays. The aim of your paper is to discuss how “Paleo” is this contemporary diet really. You

can use the concepts and sources discussed in class but you will have to supplement them with scientific publications of actual prehistoric remains.

Length: Maximum 3,000 words. Minimum 1,000 words. Use word count tools to calculate the length. The maximum and minimum limits are not negotiable and failing to adjust to these limits will affect negatively your grading.

Paper structure: The following paper structure is highly recommended, although it is not mandatory:

1. Introduction
2. Materials and Methods
3. Results
4. Discussion
5. Conclusions
6. References

Figures and tables: Figures and/or tables are expected to support the information provided in your paper. Figure and table captions will not be considered for the count word but you should keep them as short as reasonably possible.

References: You must support your paper with scientific references (Books, book chapters, journal papers, etc). You must provide a minimum of 4 publications related to Prehistory or Archaeology. Scientific papers dealing with the current Paleodiet will not be considered for the minimum of archaeological references required, however, you can feel free to use them in your paper. Wikipedia, personal blogs, or other unreviewed sources will not be accepted as valid references. Every single reference cited in the text must appear in the final list of references, and conversely, all the references in the final list must be cited in the main text or figure captions.

During the first class of the course a complete explanation how to find and cite reference will be given. Moreover, you can use the physical or online resources of the Rutgers library. Useful guidance on how to find materials can be found at the Rutgers Libraries "How Do I?" page:

[https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/how\\_do\\_i](https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/how_do_i)

Other specialized webs like Web of Science

([https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/indexes/web\\_of\\_science](https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/indexes/web_of_science)), Scopus ([www.scopus.com](http://www.scopus.com)) or Sciencedirect ([www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)) can be used to access journal papers online.

Additional outside resources to understand a scientific paper can be found here: <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2016/05/09/how-to-read-and-understand-a-scientific-paper-a-guide-for-non-scientists/>

and here:

<https://www.sciencenewsforstudents.org/blog/eureka-lab/understand-scientific-paper-delve-its-parts>

### Coursework

Along the course, a series of 5 papers will be uploaded to Sakai. You will have to review the papers and write a 500-word essay about the significance of the discovery for World Prehistory. This essay must include a short description of the paper contents (no more than 100 words), a short review of how this paper may change (or not) what we knew about Prehistory, and a critic evaluation about the importance (or not) of the paper.

List of paper examples<sup>†</sup>:

Ambrose, S.H., 2001. Paleolithic Technology and Human Evolution, *Science* 291, 1748-1753.

Carbonell, E., Mosquera, M., Rodríguez, X.P., Sala, R., van der Made, J., 1999. Out of Africa: The Dispersal of the Earliest Technical Systems Reconsidered, *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 18, 119-136.

Weiner, S., Xu, Q., Goldberg, P., Liu, J., Bar-Yosef, O., 1998. Evidence for the Use of Fire at Zhoukoudian, China, *Science* 281, 251-253.

McBrearty, S., Brooks, A.S., 2000. The revolution that wasn't: A new interpretation of the origin of modern human behavior, *Journal of Human Evolution* 39, 453-563.

Groman-Yaroslavski, I., Weiss, E., Nadel, D., 2016. Composite sickles and cereal harvesting methods at 23,000-years-old Ohalo II, Israel, *PLoS ONE* 11.

### Short essay (voluntary extra credit)

Subject: New challenges in World Prehistory

How to: Using the knowledge acquired during the course describe what are the new challenges that will affect World Prehistory in the near future.

Length: Maximum 1500 words

References: at least three references required

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<sup>†</sup> The paper list might change according to the latest scientific developments. Prehistoric archaeology is a highly active field where new scientific discoveries are published on a daily basis. This course is designed to provide the students with the most updated information, and to do so the paper list provides an opportunity to adapt the course to the most recent discoveries, but also to reinforce the concepts explained in class using classic publications.

**Course policies**

Academic Integrity: Cheating lowers the value of a Rutgers degree and the learning experience for all students. No form of cheating, including plagiarism, will be tolerated. One commits plagiarism when one represents the text or ideas of others as one's own creation. Please visit the website of the Rutgers Office of Academic Integrity (<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>) for a fuller explanation of plagiarism and of the penalties for it. Convicted plagiarists may receive a disciplinary F in the course and possibly face expulsion from the University.

Student Absences: **Students are expected to attend all classes;** if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. For absence periods longer than one week you will be directed to see a Dean of Students for assistance to help verify these circumstances. For any other circumstances please contact me.

**Topic list***Week 1**Introduction to the course and the history of Prehistory research*

Readings: Chapter 1 in Scarre, Christopher. *The Human Past: World Prehistory & the Development of Human Societies*. New York, N.Y.: Thames & Hudson, 2005.

Reading workload: 20 pages

*Week 2 and 3**Human origins and the First tool makers*

Chapter 2 in Scarre, C. (2005). *The human past: World prehistory & the development of human societies*. New York, N.Y.: Thames & Hudson.

Stone Tool Technology Steven L. Kuhn and Amy E. Clark in Cummings, V. (2014). *The Oxford handbook of the archaeology and anthropology of hunter-gatherers* (First edition.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Reading workload: 54 pages

*Week 4**Out of Africa 1.0*

Chapter 3 in Scarre, C. (2005). *The human past: World prehistory & the development of human societies*. New York, N.Y.: Thames & Hudson.

Reading workload: 20 pages (40 pages between week 4 and weeks 5 and 6)

*Week 5 and 6*

*The Early Stone Age in Africa, and the Lower Paleolithic in Europe and Asia*

Chapter 3 in Scarre, C. (2005). The human past: World prehistory & the development of human societies. New York, N.Y.: Thames & Hudson.

Reading workload: 20 pages (40 pages between week 4 and weeks 5 and 6)

*Week 7 and 8*

*The Middle Paleolithic and Middle Stone Age*

Chapter 4 in Scarre, C. (2005). The human past: World prehistory & the development of human societies. New York, N.Y.: Thames & Hudson.

The Neanderthals: Evolution, Palaeoecology, and Extinction João Zilhão in Cummings, V. (2014). The Oxford handbook of the archaeology and anthropology of hunter-gatherers (First edition.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Reading workload: 60 pages

*Week 9 and 10*

*The emergence of Modern Humans and their expansion*

Chapter 4 in Scarre, C. (2005). The human past: World prehistory & the development of human societies. New York, N.Y.: Thames & Hudson.

From The Oxford handbook of the archaeology and anthropology of hunter-gatherers (First edition.). Oxford: Oxford University Press:

- Modern Human Origins in Africa: A Review of the Fossil, Archaeological, and Genetic Perspectives on Early Homo sapiens Kevin L. Kuykendall and Isabelle S. Heyerdahl-King
- Upper Palaeolithic Hunter-Gatherers in Western Asia Ofer Bar-Yosef
- The European Upper Palaeolithic Paul Pettitt

Reading workload: 42 pages

*Week 11 and 12*

*The Holocene, climatic changes and cultural adaptations*

From Scarre, C. (2005). The human past: World prehistory & the development of human societies. New York, N.Y.: Thames & Hudson.

Chapter 5 from page 176 to 183  
Chapter 6 from page 201 to 212  
Chapter 8 from page 265 to 273  
Chapter 9 from page 306 to 313  
Chapter 10 from page 350 to 361

Chapter 12 from page 392 to 398

Hunter-Gatherers in the Post-Glacial World Vicki Cummings in The Oxford handbook of the archaeology and anthropology of hunter-gatherers (First edition.). Oxford: Oxford University Press:

Reading workload: 51 pages

*Week 13 and 14*

*A new solution: The Neolithic*

From Scarre, C. (2005). The human past: World prehistory & the development of human societies. New York, N.Y.: Thames & Hudson.

Chapter 6 from page 214 to 233

Chapter 7 from page 235 to 244

Chapter 9 from page 319 to 342

Chapter 10 from page 361 to 365

From The Oxford handbook of the archaeology and anthropology of hunter-gatherers (First edition.). Oxford: Oxford University Press

- Plant Domestications David R. Harris
- Animal Domestications Alan K. Outram

Reading workload: 55 pages

### **Reading workload distribution**

The readings described above are designed to support and complement the materials covered in class. These texts have been selected to give you a deeper background and reinforce the discussion in class. The readings suggested are designed to give you a minimum workload during the semester, this is an average of 3 pages of reading a day, with peaks of four pages in some weeks.

