

University of Florida

SYLLABUS

ANT 3141: DEVELOPMENT OF WORLD CIVILIZATIONS

Prof. Peter Schmidt
Office Hours: Thurs, 12-1:30 pm; and by apt.
Grinter 441
Tues. Period 7; Thurs. Periods 7-8

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I. Content and Teaching Approach:

This course focuses on the development and growth of complex cultures. It takes up the human story when more elaborate technologies were taking hold approximately 40,000 years ago. In that sense, it is a course on modern humans, rather than the evolution of modern humans from hominid and primate origins. We will quickly examine the major cultural developments from early hominids to the Upper Paleolithic, but this will be done through a summary reading assignment. For more detail on processes of human evolution, we suggest Introduction to Archaeology (ANT 3930) in which human evolution is taken up or Biological Anthropology and Human Evolution (ANT 3514).

In this course we will examine the growth of local government, the development of powerful priestly cults, and the growth of chieftainship and kingship based on control of economic production with its accompanying exploitation of under classes. We will take up the human story when populations began to establish settlements and when population densities began to require more organized hunting, gathering, food production, waste disposal, and social structure.

Our task is to examine some of the major world civilizations that have prospered before the modern era. We first look at the concept of civilization, especially its Euro-centric foundation and its many shortcomings as a concept. We will also see how its meaning has come to change under conditions of colonialism as well as our growing knowledge of prehistoric complexity—way beyond the definitions that emerged from 19th and early 20th century scholars.

As a class we will develop our own working definition—negotiated amongst class members and the instructor. These criteria will then be applied during our study of such cultures as diverse as ancient Egypt, Mycenae, Sumer, Aksum, Zimbabwe, Saba, etc. Some of you may not recognize the names of important societies that have remained hidden from view because they either lack monumental architecture or they arose in parts of the world outside the interest of scholars and a public captivated by monumental remains. Ancient Greece and Egypt tend to dominate our thinking, along with Mesopotamia, about what constitutes ancient civilization. This course will explore some of the better-known cases as comparative background for our study of little known and forgotten civilizations that get only abbreviated mention in textbooks and remain mostly unknown outside mainstream knowledge.

Current groundbreaking research on major civilizations in various parts of the world will be examined. A number of case studies from the instructor's research in Africa and Asia are

considered for two reasons: 1) The African and Asian examples provide excellent comparative evidence for the study of “civilizations,” and extraordinary African technological innovations have remained hidden from the world until the last two decades; 2) With his personal engagement in several long term African inquiries into the growth of the state, the instructor will draw from his long-term field engagement in the subject matter.

Archaeology is an exciting way to explain how and why some ancient cultures grew to complexity, developed extensive trade networks, fabricated elaborate and powerful religious leadership, and harnessed the creativity and labor of the common folk. Archaeology must work with many other disciplines to sort out the mysteries of the past, seeking to understand why, for example, urbanism was a primary component of complex society while it is sometimes completely absent from the lives of other ancients identified with complex cultures.

One of the most critical issues facing the study of ancient civilizations today is the destruction of archaeological sites by development, by overuse in tourism, by systematic looting and theft of antiquities, and by public apathy about the loss of the past. The past cannot be studied without a clear awareness of how the expansion of Western Europe and the greed of contemporary collectors have led to the widespread destruction of other cultures, both living and archaeological. We will constantly refer to the conditions that prevail around the preservation and stewardship of the ancient monuments and sites that we study, working from the proposition that if there is no archaeology left to study, then there will be no pasts to write about and study in the future.

Films: Films are a *very important* part of the course content. You will be expected to take close notes and have excellent understanding of the films shown during the course. Consider film viewing **as important as the readings and lectures**. Study guides will be provided for films in advance of their showing, either by posting on e-Learning or by email list-serve. If you conscientiously answer questions posed in the study guides, then you will be prepared to deal with pertinent film questions that appear on the mid-terms and final exams. Those who prepare answers on the film guides inevitably do better on exams.

Guest Lecturers: Attendance at guest lecturers is just as important as regular lecturers. Attendance sign-ins will occur. All materials presented are part of the syllabus and will be drawn upon for the examinations.

Scheduling: The syllabus schedule is subject to revisions and amendments as needs arise, with possible extensions or shortening of topics on a week-to-week basis. Any significant changes will be discussed in advance.

II. Participation

This course is interactive. Students are encouraged to be active participants in discussions. The quality and regularity of participation plays a key role in the course. You will be asked to take an active role in the analysis of why and how complex cultures grow. The instructor will provide a basic outline for the primary points of interest and analysis as well as the key issues in the assigned readings. Facilitation of Learning: One of the best ways to seek clarifications or amplifications on the meaning of course materials is to visit the instructor during office hours.

- **Attendance and Attendance Policy:** Class attendance is an integral part of the participation component of the final grade. Everyone starts with a full credit of 10% of the total grade at the beginning of the course. Attendance will be recorded starting **Thursday, September 1**. Please note that Thursday classes will count as *two absences*. Five unexcused absences will be waived during the semester. Additional absences will be deducted from the final grade at the rate of 2% per absence.

Attendance will be taken by signing in upon arrival. The honor code comes into play when signing the attendance form. An excused absence must be verified by a medical excuse, written proof for official university business, or other written evidence affirming a compelling family obligation (funeral, wedding, etc.). You must notify the instructor ***in advance, via email or in class***, if you must be absent for a religious holiday. If a student has other unavoidable reasons for missing a class (e.g., job interview), then he/she must discuss the planned absence with the instructor ***prior*** to the event to obtain approval; this may be done through a personal discussion or by sending an email request to the instructor. *Requests for an excused absence after missing a class will not be granted.*

Autobiographies: Each student will submit a short, 200-400 word autobiography to the instructor no later than Thursday, **September 1**. These will be submitted as *hard copy* in class. This document will be used by the instructor as background for meetings with students.

- **Question Submissions:** At the beginning of each Thursday lecture, the instructor will announce the names of students who will submit questions on the readings, lectures, or films for the following week. The questions must be submitted by 12 noon the following Monday to the instructor's email address. **This is a firm deadline.**

Questions will be graded on their thoughtfulness, pertinence to the subject matter, and success in teasing out key issues. Two to three questions will be selected for discussion at the beginning of class the following Thursday. Questions will be graded on a five point scale: 0 to 5 percentage points (of the total grade). Each person will submit questions twice during the semester. This part of the course counts as 10% of the final grade.

Summary for Grading Participation:

1. Attendance: 10%
2. Question Submissions: 10%
3. Total for Participation: 20%

III. Examinations:

There will be one map quiz, one mid-term, one film quiz, and a quiz on identification of sites and artifacts.

- A map quiz will be administered on September 21 and will focus on major geographical placement of various civilizations discussed through September 20; drawing maps and

identifying key geographical features will be included. The quiz will count 10% of the final grade.

- The mid-term exam on October 5 will include question on readings, lectures, and class discussions through October 3. The format will be discussed before the exam and will likely include a short essay, some multiple choice, true-false, and short identifications. The mid-term will count for 20% of the final grade.
- The second quiz on November 16 will focus on film content up to this point in the semester and will count 10% of the final grade.
- A quiz will focus on identifications of illustrations of sites and artifacts. It will count for 20% of the final grade and will be administered on December 5.
- Failure to present a valid excuse for missing an exam or in-class exercise will result in a “0” for the exam. There will be makeup exams only when a letter from a health professional or university official is presented.

Grading Summary for Exams:

Map Quiz:	10%	Dates:	Sept. 21
Mid-term:	20%		Oct. 5
Film Quiz:	10%		Nov. 16
ID Quiz :	20%		Dec. 5

IV. Special Project

During the semester, each class member will conduct a short project—a survey of families members, friends, and neighbors about attitudes toward the destruction and preservation of antiquities in North America and other regions of the world. This hands-on project will entail consistent, detailed conversations with no less than 10 people to discern contemporary ideas about the importance of antiquities to our lives today and in the future. You will use your results to write a short report of 4-6 pages (double-spaced typed) to summarize the high points of your findings and to comment on their significance. This exercise will count for 20% of the final grade. Rubrics will be available September 13, **and the report will be submitted on Thursday, November 9.**

V. SUMMARY OF ALL GRADES

- **Participation:** 20%
- **Exams:** 60%
- **Special Project:** 20%

Grading Policy: Grading policies for assigning grade points may be accessed by using the following webpage: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html>.

VI. Extra Credit

The best way to receive extra credit is to schedule a meeting with the instructor to discuss the special project or any other academic matter. **Those doing so will receive 2% extra credit on a one-time basis, before Nov. 8.** Opportunities to earn extra credit may arise during the semester,

e.g., attendance at an important lecture on campus, such as the Archaeological Institute of American lectures. As well, there **may be** extra credit questions on exams.

VII. Department

- Cell phones must be turned off in class. If a cell phone rings during class, a skyhook will descend and whisk away the offender, invariably an embarrassing event. Mobile phones and other electronic devices of all varieties will be stored in back packs, purses, briefcases, and pockets during class. Texting or using a smart phone during class is disrespectful will result in a meeting with the instructor.
- Laptops and iPads (and related devices) also fall under the “no use” rule, as they create “cones of distraction” that work against the interests of students seriously trying to engage the course material because displays on screen are distracting or offensive to neighbors. There is an additional negative—laptop use encourages a disengaged, stenographic approach to note-taking rather than one that uses reflection and summaries. Laptops and iPads will only be used during class meetings if a student suffers from a disability that requires laptop use; in such a case, the student should consult with the instructor during the first week of class for permission or bring a certification of use from the Dean of Students Office.
- Emails to the instructor should follow conventional letter salutations (e.g., Dear Professor, Hello, Hi, etc.) and endings (e.g., Thanks, Sincerely, etc.) with your name written. **You are NOT sending a text message** when you communicate with an instructor.

VIII. For students with disabilities: Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

IX. Key Dates Reprised

Sept. 1:	Attendance Roll Starts
Sept. 1:	Short Autobiography Due as hard copy to instructor in class.
Sept. 28:	Map Quiz
Oct. 5:	Mid-term
Nov. 9:	Submission of Special Project Reports
Nov. 16:	Film Quiz
Dec. 5:	Quiz: Identifications of Sites and Artifacts

X. Required Texts:

- 1) Brian Fagan, 2011. *World Prehistory: A Brief Introduction*. New York, Prentice Hall. Paperback.
- 2) Reader for ANT 3141, available at BookIt, in the NW corner of Holiday Inn, 13th St. and Univ. Ave

X. SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS

(Readings should be completed *before* the date listed).

Aug. 22: **Introduction:** Syllabus, Course Format, Course Expectations.
Readings: Fagan, Chapters 2-3.

Aug. 24: **Stereotypes dominating Archaeology**
Film; Discussion; and in-class Exercise

Aug. 29: **Archaeological Goals Today: What is Civilization?**

- **Concepts and Misapprehensions**
Readings: Fagan, Chapters 1, 7, 8

Aug. 31: **From the Paleolithic to the Neolithic Revolution**
Readings: Fagan, Chapter 5; Reader No. 1

► **Submission of autobiographies, hard copy, in class**

► **Attendance Sign-in begins today**

Sept. 5 & 7: **Settled Populations and Food Production**

- **Early Settlement**
Readings: Fagan, Chapter 5; Reader No. 2
- **Early Food Production**
Readings: Fagan, Chapter 6; Reader No. 2.

Sept. 12 & 14: **Lessons from a Classical Civilization**

- **Mesopotamia**
Readings: Fagan, Chapter 9; Reader Nos. 3, 4
- **The Fertile Crescent**
Readings: Fagan, Chapter 9

Sept. 19: **Archaeology and Iraq Today**
Readings: Reader No. 5

Sept. 21: **Iraq, Yesterday and Today—the Connections**
+ Film

Sept. 26: **Egyptian Origins: Ties to the Nile**
Readings: Fagan, Chapter 10; Reader No. 7

Sept. 28: **Egyptian Florescence**
Readings: Fagan, Chapter 10, Reader No. 8
+ Film

► **Map Quiz**

Oct. 3: **Social Complexity in Europe: Europe and the Megaliths**

Readings: Reader No. 6

Oct 5: **Megalithic Mysteries: Stonehenge Rethought**

+ Film

► **Mid-Term**

Oct 10: **Saba and Civilization in Southern Arabia**

Readings: Reader Nos. 13, 14

Oct. 12: **Trade and the Origins of Civilization in the Horn of Africa: Aksum in Ethiopia**

Readings: Reader Nos. 15, 16

Oct 17: **The Greater Asmara Civilization**

Readings: Reader Nos. 17, 18

Oct 19: **The Greater Asmara Civilization (Cont).**

Readings: Reader Nos. 17, 18

Oct 24: **Mostly Unknown—Sigiriya of Sri Lanka**

Readings: Distributed via Elearning

Oct 26: **The Most Unknown—Anuradhapura of Sri Lanka**

Readings: Distributed via Elearning

Oct 31: **The Harappa Civilization**

Readings: Fagan, Chapter 11

Nov. 2: **The Swahili City States**

Readings: Reader Nos. 21, 22, 23

Nov. 7 and 9: **The Unknown Interior of Africa: How archaeologists reconstruct low-visibility Civilizations: Buhaya**

Readings: Reader No. 10

Film: “The Tree of Iron”

➤ **Submission of Special Project Reports--Nov. 9**

Nov. 14 and 16: **Lessons from Contemporary Tanzania**

Readings: Reader No. 24

➤ **Film Quiz--Nov. 16**

Nov. 21 and 23: **Thanksgiving Vacation**

Nov. 28: **Jenné-jeno: Gold and Glory & The Problem of Lost Heritage in Mali**

Readings: Reader Nos. 11, 12; Fagan, Chapter 10

Nov. 30: **The Origins of Great Zimbabwe: Mapungubwe**

Readings: Fagan, Chapter 10; Reader Nos. 19, 20

Dec. 5. Quiz: **Identification of Sites and Artifacts**