

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF NEANDERTHALS & OTHER EARLY HUMANS

Term 2, 2022-2023

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Seminar: Weds 8.30–11.20am ETB 228

Office Hours: email to arrange a Zoom meeting

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Course Description

This course engages with current debates in Palaeolithic archaeology. Starting with recent discoveries in Africa, our focus is Early – Late Pleistocene Eurasia and Neanderthal - early modern human populations. While a weekly short intro lecture provides you with contextual details, most of our learning occurs via presentations and debate, with an emphasis on teamwork and working to in-class deadlines.

Course Objectives

The class has an emphasis on weekly productivity in the form of written précis (to develop your concise writing skills), and in-class presentations, working in a randomly generated team-format (which changes weekly). Thus, the course aim is to employ current debates in human origins' studies as a means of not only gaining an insight to one of the most exciting, and rapidly changing fields of anthropological archaeology, but also to develop a series of transferrable skills that will benefit the student in a grad school and/or professional environment (as has previously benefitted students from Arts & Sciences, Commerce, Humanities, iSci, Science, and Social Sciences).

In this course we cover 3.4 million years of human activity from our earliest ancestors onwards, engaging with such debates as:

- Representing the Palaeolithic: the science and politics of how we see our early ancestors
- What's in a name? The science and politics in defining new hominin species
- The catalysts for human evolution
- What distinguishes *Homo sapiens* from other members of the genus *Homo*?
- Neanderthal / early modern human relations
- The origins and significance of symbolic behaviour
- The implications of new ancient DNA studies

At the end of this course, you should thus have developed:

1. Understanding of the major debates in human origins' / Palaeolithic archaeology.
2. The ability to work in teams.
3. The ability to represent complex ideas and data in a succinct & accessible manner.
4. Presentation skills and the ability to work within tight schedules.

To satisfy the course's pedagogical aims, all required presentations, written précis, seminar debates, and long paper must be completed.

Required Materials and Texts

NO TEXTBOOK! – I will not be using a textbook for reasons I will detail in class.

Class Format

Lecture / seminar: Wednesdays 8.30 – 11.20 am; *Weekly Details* information provided in that week's content folder on A2L.

Course Evaluation – Overview

Weekly lecture/seminar attendance and participation are **mandatory** grades are not reweighted if missed (see below).

Group presentations (n=10 / 11)	-	25%
Peer-reviews (n=10 / 11)	-	5%
Debate engagement (n=10 / 11)	-	20%
Précis writing (n=10 / 11)	-	25%
Long paper proposal	-	5%
Long paper	-	20%

Course Evaluation – Details

Group presentations – weekly presentations (5 slides / 5 minutes) in a randomly generated group, detailing material provided in-class; each student must complete 10/11, their average presentation mark comprising **25%** of their final grade.

Peer-reviews – at the end of each group presentation, the student submits a peer-review grade on their other team members; each student must complete 10/11, their average peer-review mark comprising **5%** of their final grade.

Debate engagement – based on the student's participation in 10/11 general post-presentation class discussions, their average engagement mark comprising **20%** of their final grade.

Précis writing – submission of short (average 250/300 words) responses to readings that set the stage for that week's seminar content; based on the student's submission of 10/11 précis, their average mark comprising **25%** of their final grade.

Long-paper proposal – a long-paper proposal is to be submitted before the class on Weds. 22nd March by email (stringy@mcmaster.ca). It should include a title, a 250-word statement about the proposed topic, and at least 5 appropriate sources (value **5%**).

Long-paper – A final 8-page paper is due by 4pm Friday April 14th; format details to be provided in class (value **20%**).

Weekly Course Schedule

Week 1 (Weds. 11th Jan.)

Introduction to the course: Aims, scope, requirements.

Presentation #1

Week 2 (Weds. 18th Jan.)

'Man the mighty hunter': Representing Early Prehistory

Presentation #2

Week 3 (Weds. 25th Jan.)

What makes a new species? Lumpers & splitters in hominin studies

Presentation #3

Week 4 (Weds. 1st Feb.)

Fire / meat and the radiation of Homo erectus beyond Africa

Presentation #4

Week 5 (Weds. 8th Feb.)

Archaic hominins & the birth of seafaring?

Presentation #5

Week 6 (Weds. 15th Feb.)

The Neanderthals: origin and behavioural complexity

Presentation #6

Week 7 (Weds. 22nd Feb.)

MID-TERM RECESS (no classes)

Week 8 (Weds. 1st March.)

Neanderthal diet: Meat, medicine and cannibalism

Presentation #7

Week 9 (Weds. 8th March)

Sex strikes, serpents, and the origins of symbolic culture

Presentation #8

Week 10 (Weds. 15th March)

Modelling *Homo sapiens*' dispersal routes and their chronology

Presentation #9

Week 11 (Weds. 22nd March)

Neanderthal / early modern human interaction.

Presentation #10

Submit: long paper proposal (value **5%**)

Week 12 (Weds. 29th March)

Denisovans, Flores, and *Homo luzonensis* et al.

Presentation #11

Week 13 (Weds. 5th April)

Current debates in Palaeolithic rock art: From Indonesia to Lascaux

Presentation #12

Week 14 (Weds. 12th April)

Class discussion / feedback on final paper completion.

Submit: Long paper – 4pm Friday April 14th (value: **20%**)

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

Assignments must be submitted by email (stringy@mcmaster.ca) by the assigned date.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

Late projects are penalized **5%** of the mark per day including weekends and holidays with a maximum of **3 days late** after which a 0 grade will be awarded. Extensions can only be gained if the student provides an appropriate note/letter from SAS, or other university certification system (e.g., MSAF – see below). Assignments are to be submitted to the instructor via email (stringy@mcmaster.ca).

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

An arrangement can be made for a missed mid-term exam to be taken at a later date if the student provides an appropriate note/letter from Faculty office, or SAS (see below).

No grade / reweighting policy - grades will **not** be reweighted, i.e., if a bell-ringer exam is missed, then a make-up exam must be taken, the grade is not just added to the next requirement.

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) policy

- The MSAF should be used for medical and non-medical (personal) situations.
- Approval of the MSAF is automatic (i.e., no documentation required)
- Rules governing the MSAF are as follows:

The timeframe within which the MSAF is valid has been reduced from 5 days to 3 days.

The upper limit for when an MSAF can be submitted has been reduced from 'less than 30%' to 'less than 25%' of the course weight.

The 'one MSAF per term' limit is retained.

As per the policy, an automated email will be sent to the course instructor, who will determine the appropriate relief. Students must immediately follow up with their instructors. Failure to do so may negate their relief.

Policy: The MSAF policy can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar under General Academic Regulations > Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work or here:

http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests_for_Relief_for_Missed_Academic_Term_Work

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, usernames for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

University Policies

Online Elements

This course includes on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, usernames for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour 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. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

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

Authenticity/Plagiarism Detection

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g., A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster’s use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g., use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”. <https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work>

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their

instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Privacy Protection

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. Similarly, grades for assignments for courses may only be posted using the last 5 digits of the student number as the identifying data. The following possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

- Direct return of materials to students in class;
- Return of materials to students during office hours;
- Students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with assignments for return by mail;
- Submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements for the return of assignments from the options above will be finalized during the first class.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

