

# ARCHY 4xx: Archaeological Theory

Location and Time: TBD

Instructor: Erik W. Gjesfeld

Office: TBD

Office hours: TBD

## **Introduction**

This course is designed for you to evaluate the various ways in which archaeologists make inferences about human behavior. Throughout this course, we will be exploring a wide range of approaches with the goal of better understanding how these theoretical approaches can potentially benefit your current and future research interests. By the end of the course, you will:

- ◆ Be familiar with the basic theoretical approaches previously and currently used by archaeologists to understand human behavior and knowledge of how these approaches influence contemporary archaeological thought
- ◆ Demonstrate competency in how different theoretical approaches relate as well as how broader social and political contexts have and continue to influence archaeological theory
- ◆ Identify which elements of the various theoretical approaches can help address questions associated with your own research interests

## **Course Text**

Required:

Johnson, M. (1999). *Archaeological theory: an introduction*. Oxford, UK, Blackwell Publishers.

In addition, you will be required to read numerous articles and journal publications in addition to the texts. These articles as well as the reading schedule will be available on the course website and distributed in class.

## **Class Structure**

This structure of this class is based primarily on group discussion. Occasionally, I will provide background information about theoretical approaches in a lecture-type format but for the most part I will be relying on our group discussions to introduce and evaluate course material. Because of the importance of group discussions to this course I expect that each student will be adequately prepared for each session by reading all of the assigned work and able to critically evaluate the readings for discussion purposes.

## Grading and Evaluation

There will be 500 total points in this course awarded in a variety of formats including exams, reading responses, opinion papers and overall participation. Student performance will be evaluated on the basis of the following:

	<u>Points</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Exams (2)	100 points / 200 total	20% / 40% total
Reading Responses (6)	25 points / 150 Total	5% / 30% total
Opinion Paper (1)	100 points	10%
Participation and attendance	50 points	10%

Percentage	Points	Letter Grade	GPA Value
90-100	450-500	A+	4.0
85-89	425-449	A	4.0
80-84	400-424	A-	3.7
77-79	385-399	B+	3.3
73-76	366-384	B	3.0
70-72	350-365	B-	2.7
67-69	335-349	C+	2.3
63-66	316-334	C	2.0
60-62	300-315	C-	1.7
57-59	285-299	D+	1.3
53-56	266-284	D	1.0
50-52	250-265	D-	0.7
0-49	<250	F	0.0

**Exams:** Each exam will be taken in-class and designed to test your knowledge of the topics presented lecture and class discussions. The first exam will take place at the end of week 5 and will include all topics discussed in weeks 1-5. The second exam will take place at the end of the quarter and will include all topics discussed in weeks 6-10. The exams will largely consist of essay questions and will be taken in class. There will be **NO** make-up examinations except for **documented** emergencies

**Reading Response:** Given the complex themes discussed in the course, reading responses are designed to provide you with an opportunity to express in own opinion about the merits of particular theoretical approaches or any concerns you have about them. Most importantly, I want reading responses to reflect your opinion on the approaches, I do not want a summary of the readings or approaches.

**Opinion Paper:** The final project of this course will be an opinion paper that highlights the use of a theoretical approach given a set of archaeological data. I will present the archaeological data through my lectures and the opinion paper should be reflect the theoretical approach that you feel is most appropriate. I will not be grading this

assignment based upon the approach you promote but rather the quality of your argument for the use of the approach.

**Class participation:** This class will rely heavily on classrooms discussions about will assigned readings, so please be prepared for class. Your opinions, questions and commentary are always welcome as long as your opinions respect other students in the course and your instructors. I will not tolerate any disrespectful comments towards student or instructors..

**Course Policies**

**Absences**

Your attendance and class participation is critical to your success in this class. If you have a legitimate excuse for missing a lab, an alternative assignment will be available.

**Missed and late assignments/exams:** Points will be deducted for assignments that are handed in late (10% per day late). This rule will be strictly enforced. Missed exams and exercises may not be made up without documentation of an officially excused absence (e.g. a doctor’s note). If you will be missing class for an excused reason, please notify me as soon as possible.

**Class Schedule**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
W1	<b>Antiquarianism and Archaeology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The First “Archaeologists”</li> <li>• Progressive evolution and early American Archaeology</li> <li>• The pillaging of Near East</li> </ul>	Trigger Chp. 2 & 3
W2	<b>The Culture-Historical Approach</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The culture concept</li> <li>• Diffusion and migration</li> <li>• Nationalism and archaeology</li> </ul>	Johnson Chp. 1 & 2 Hawkes 1954  <b>Reading Response Due</b>
W3	<b>Archaeology as Anthropology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The “New Archaeology” / Processual Archaeology</li> <li>• The role of science in social “science”</li> <li>• The generalization of behavior</li> </ul>	Johnson, Chp. 3 Binford 1962 Clarke 1973  <b>Reading Response Due</b>
W4	<b>The Processual Critique</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behavioral Archaeology</li> <li>• Formation processes</li> <li>• Middle Range Theory</li> <li>• Evolutionary Archaeology</li> </ul>	Schiffer 1972 Wylie 1985 Flannery 1982 Raab & Goodyear 1984  <b>Reading Response Due</b>

W5	<p><b>Cultural Evolution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The many faces of cultural evolution</li> <li>• The emergence of political complexity</li> <li>• Review</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>EXAM 1</b></p>	Johnson, Chp. 9 Flannery 1986 Shennan 1993
W6	<p><b>The Evolutionary Analysis of Culture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evolutionary Archaeology (Darwinian)</li> <li>• Evolutionary Ecology / Behavioral Ecology</li> <li>• Dual-inheritance &amp; cultural transmission</li> </ul>	Dunnell 1978 Shennan – Chp. 1 Lipo & Eerkens 2005  <b>Reading Response Due</b>
W7	<p><b>Post-Processual critique</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency and Identity</li> <li>• Practice theory</li> <li>• Social theory</li> <li>• Theoretical tensions in archaeology</li> </ul>	Johnson, Chp. 7 Gardner 2008 Dobres and Robb 2000 Shanks and Tilley 1987  <b>Reading Response Due</b>
W8	<p><b>Feminist and Gender Critiques</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sex and gender in archaeology</li> <li>• Gender and social organization</li> <li>• Feminism and the power structure of archaeology</li> </ul>	Johnson, Chp. 8 Wylie 2007 Wyle 2001 Conkey 2007  <b>Reading Response Due</b>
W9	<p><b>Archaeology Ethics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repatriation and understanding stakeholders</li> <li>• Stewardship and the archaeological record</li> <li>• Developing countries and World Heritage</li> </ul>	Thomas 2001 Lynott and Wylie 1995 Leask and Fyall, Chp. 1
W10	<p><b>Contemporary Issues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous archaeology</li> <li>• Complex systems and archaeology</li> <li>• Theory and Cultural Resource Management</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>EXAM 2</b></p>	Atalay 2006 Kohler 2012
W11	<b>Opinion Paper due at end of finals period!</b>	