

Las Positas College
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Course Outline for ANTR 8

WORLD PREHISTORY IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Effective: Fall 2018

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

ANTR 8 — WORLD PREHISTORY IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE — 3.00 units

Survey of world prehistory as reconstructed through archaeological evidence. Topics include Paleolithic cultural practices from early tool use and mobile communities through settled living in complex agricultural societies to the establishment, rise and collapse of the first major civilizations in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, the Americas and Oceania. Subsistence, economic networks, social systems, power distributions, symbols and ideology will be discussed, as well as ecological effects of urbanization in the past.

3.00 Units Lecture

Grading Methods:

Letter or P/NP

Discipline:

	<u>MIN</u>
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Total Hours:	54.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Discuss the evidence for the evolution of human ancestors and early cultural development.
- Recognize key transitions in prehistory from domestication of plants to the rise of cities.
- Identify how social stratification developed in different ancient civilizations around the world.
- Understand the factors involved in the collapse of prehistoric civilizations.

V. CONTENT:

- Introduction
 - Prehistory as anthropological culture studies
 - Using the scientific method to investigate prehistory
 - Dating methods for artifacts and other evidence of human prehistory
- Paleoanthropology and human origins
 - The human lineage and invention of stone tools
 - Origin and evolution of the first bipeds in cultural context: Australopithecines
 - Evolution of the genus Homo: Homo habilis, Homo naledi and Homo erectus
 - The first humans: Homo sapiens and our early cousins
 - Evolution of Homo sapiens sapiens and Homo sapiens neanderthalensis
 - Cultural development and differentiation in early Homo sapiens
 - Pre and post Ice Age Human migrations: mobile hunter/gatherer communities
 - Homo sapiens sapiens as the last surviving humans
 - Cultural adaptations, language and migrations of early humans around the world
- First farmers and sedentary populations
 - Food production, trade and expanding communities
 - How and why did transitions from hunter/gatherer groups to sedentary farmers occur?
 - Early complex social systems and social stratification around the world
 - Domestication of plants, animals and people over time
 - Archaeological sites and the evidence for early civilizations
 - Factors that can lead to socially stratified communities
- Cultural Complexity: the rise and fall of prehistoric civilizations
 - Old World and New World cultural development and social structures
 - Comparison of ancient social structures in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas
 - How do we evaluate social hierarchies and symbols of power?
 - Compare familiar and not-so-familiar ancient civilizations
 - Mesopotamia, Egypt, Great Zimbabwe and Crete
 - European ancient communities and enigmas
 - Stonehenge, Ice Man and Bog People
 - Compare and contrast similar cultural adaptations to very different environments

- a. Indus Valley and Ancient China
- 5. Cultural diffusion, international connections and shared ideology
 - a. Mesoamerica, South America and North America
- 6. Factors that can lead to the collapse of prehistoric civilizations
 - a. Environmental degradation, over population, climate change, loss of faith in leadership

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Lecture** -
- B. **Demonstration** -
- C. **Audio-visual Activity** -
- D. **Guest Lecturers** -
- E. **Discussion** -

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Critical analysis essay on assigned reading topics
- B. Oral presentation on assigned topics, group project on aspects of prehistoric communities
- C. Analysis of videos on a particular prehistoric culture
- D. Study guide preparation for in-class discussions

VIII. EVALUATION:

A. **Methods**

- 1. Exams/Tests
- 2. Quizzes
- 3. Research Projects
- 4. Papers
- 5. Oral Presentation
- 6. Class Participation

B. **Frequency**

- 1. Midterm test and final exam
- 2. One research paper
- 3. One video analysis
- 4. Assorted quizzes and presentations throughout the semester

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

- 1. Feder, K. (2016). *The Past In Perspective* (7th ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- 2. Chazan, M. (2015). *World Prehistory and Archaeology* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge Press.
- 3. Fagan, B. (2016). *World Prehistory: A Brief Introduction* (9th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge Press.
- 4. Scarre, C. (2013). *The Human Past: World Prehistory and the Development of Human Societies* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Thames & Hudson.
- 5. Fagan, B., & Durrani, N. (2015). *People of the Earth: An Introduction to World Prehistory* (14th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge Press.
- 6. Olszewski, D.I. (2015). *Archaeology and Humanity's Story: A Brief Introduction to World Prehistory* (1st ed.). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: