

Course Syllabus

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ANG 6110 Archaeological Theory

31356 Section A434

M| Period 2 (8:30 AM - 9:20 AM)

W| Period 2 - 3(8:30 AM - 10:25 AM)

FLG 0275 [Florida Gymnasium Room 275 1864 STADIUM RD](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

Lecturer: Dr. Augusto Oyuela-Caycedo

Office Hours: You can come to my office, and we can meet after class any Tuesday or Thursday. If it is not possible for you, we can arrange an appointment by email.

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Introduction

This graduate course won't just survey theories - it's an intellectual excavation, unearthing the strengths and cracks in dominant approaches. We'll dissect classic frameworks like environmental determinism and processualism, then grapple with cutting-edge debates on agency, identity, and social complexity.

Course Objectives:

Learn and understand why the discipline must have a solid theoretical basis and a framework of thinking in the practice of the archaeological field.

This research asks: why is archaeology a conceptual field? By analyzing the historical development of key concepts and contemporary challenges, it seeks to understand how these concepts have shaped and continue to shape the discipline's research agenda.

Archaeology is rooted today not just in anthropology but also in other theories from different fields:

- In anthropology: Delve into the cultural tapestry of human diversity, adaptation, and resilience around the planet by producing diverse models employed in archaeology to interpret the archaeological record.

- History gives us the basis for stitching together timelines and narratives, revealing the silent echoes of forgotten voices.
- Biology Unearth the delicate dance between humanity and its environment, from migration patterns to ancient diets. Study current theoretical approaches that help us to understand human-environment interactions through time in a changing planet.
- Sociology: Unmask the social forms and structures that shaped daily life, from hunter-gatherer bands to monumental empires, by looking at theories on social systems, organization, and communication
- Religion: Explore the non-human dimensions of the past, uncovering beliefs and rituals etched in stone and bone.

STEM theories bridge the theoretical gap between the humanities and hard sciences, using technology to understand the past.

It is expected that the student can evaluate approaches and opportunities for moving toward an archaeological theory to the present and future of humanity on a changing planet.

Textbook chapters from this books:

Praetzellis, A. (2023). Archaeological Theory in a Nutshell (2nd ed.). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003282594>[Links to an external site.](#)

[praetzellis archaeological theory](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

Chapman, R. (2022). Archaeological Theory: The Basics (1st ed.). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315657097>[Links to an external site.](#)

Exams and Grading

This course has two take-home exams (each one is 20% of the total final grade). Both exams will be in essay format and have more extended essay questions.

Students are also required to write a term paper during the semester. The paper is expected to be 6000 words approximate, typed, and double-spaced. The paper should follow the format guidelines of the journal American Anthropologist. **It is on a topic of your choice** but approved ahead of time. I'll send you detailed directions and a list of suggested topics next week. Students must submit a brief proposal (4% of the grade) to facilitate their writing, outlining the paper topic and critical sources. The paper is worth 16 % of the final grade.

Because of the discussion-oriented nature of the class, students will be graded on the quality of class participation. Participation is a constructive activity, which means you must have interesting and valuable things to contribute to the discussion and remain sensitive to others in

the classroom. Being disrespectful of other opinions or hogging the spotlight is just as bad as not saying anything. Your participation grade is worth 20 points (20% of your final grade); this is a manageable course component.

Because actual participation remains an unusual component of most college classrooms, I should add that "participation" and "discussion" are not unstructured activities. Instead, much of the discussion is guided by instructor questions about the readings and in-class discussions of particular topics.

In summary, the grade breakdown for the course looks like the following:

First take-home exam	20 points
Second take-home exam	20
Proposal term paper	4
Term Paper 6000 words approx.	16
Participation in class	20
Attendance	20
Total	100

Letter grades are as follows:

A	93 – 100%	C-	70 – 72.9%
A-	90 – 92.9%	D+	68 – 69.9%
B+	88 – 89.9%	D	63 – 67.9%
B	83 – 87.9%	D-	60 – 61.9%
B-	80 – 82.9%	E	0 – 59.9%
C+	78 – 79.9%		
C	73 – 77.9%		

A complete listing of university policies on grades may be found at <http://graduateschool.ufl.edu/files/handbook.pdf>

The paper should follow the format guidelines of the journal American Anthropologist.

There is a large amount of literature to be covered in this class, and each student must be able to discuss each article. You are responsible for all of the readings. It always helps to write a review

on each article or chapter you read and have notes on the topics relevant for the discussion and questions on the take-home on the aspects that you need help understanding.

Disclaimer: Some adjustments may be made to the schedule and course requirements during the semester. All changes will be announced.

ATTENDANCE is required.

There is no extra credit offered for this course.

Course Policies

Electronics. Cell phones must be turned off during class. Social media sites must be off if you insist on a laptop (not entirely necessary, as I will post any power points I might use). A significant body of research demonstrates that students who use laptops during class do significantly worse than students who do not.

Academic Honesty. Unless it is connected explicitly to assigned collaborative work, all work should be individual. Evidence of collusion (working with someone not connected to the class or assignment), plagiarism (use of someone else's published or unpublished words or design without acknowledgment), or multiple submissions (submitting the same work for different courses) will lead to the Department's and the University's procedures for dealing with academic dishonesty. All students are expected to honor their commitment to the [University's Honor Code \(Links to an external site.\) \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#)

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the [Disability Resource Center \(Links to an external site.\) \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#). The DRC will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. **Please make requests.**

UF Counseling Services. Resources are available on campus for students who have personal problems or need more clear career and academic goals that interfere with their academic performance. These resources include:

1. [University Counseling and Wellness Center \(Links to an external site.\) \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#), 3190 Radio Road, 392-1575. Personal, career, and emergency counseling.
2. [Career Resource Center \(Links to an external site.\) \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#), Reitz Union, 392-1601, Career development assistance and counseling
3. [Writing Studio \(Links to an external site.\) \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](#) 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Writing assistance, study skills, test preparation

Course Evaluations. Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing [online evaluations \(Links to an external site.\) \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#). Evaluations are typically open during the last 2-3 weeks of the semester, but students will be notified of specific times when they are open. [Summary results \(Links to an external site.\) \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#) Of these assessments are also available to students.

Course Outline

The following course outline is approximate. We may spend more or less time on specific topics as class interest dictates. Exams will occur as scheduled and are not subject to change.

W1: Introduction: what is a theory?

Reading, Chapman Ch 1

W2: What is an archaeological theory in archaeology? Why do we need archaeological theories?

Readings: Praetzellis Ch 1, Kuhn 1962, Lakatos 2014,

W3: Archaeology of things, artifacts, and objects.

Readings: Kroeber 1916, Ford 1964, Schiffer and Skibbo 1997. *Priority:* Engel 1876, Mussi 2023. Bennet 2010

W4: Historical

Why does history matter in archaeology? What kind of theories do archaeologists and concepts use? Why is historical particularism relevant today? e theories of Cultural particularism in the past and today? Which historical theories and concepts are used, and how and why are they used in the present?

Readings: Braudel [1958] 1980 Frieman 2023 Optional: Feinmann and Neitze 2020, Beck et al 2001, Dawdy 2015

W5: Evolutionary legacy

Why does evolution matter in archaeology when it engages in biology, ecology, population, and resource issues? Which theories does archaeology use, and what kind of problems are studied?

What was the theoretical foundation from the new archaeology to processual archaeology? What concepts are relevant in their approach to the archaeological record? How it is framed theoretically today.

Readings: Chapman ch 3, Praetzellis ch 2 Optional: Flannery 1995, Boivin 2016, Steiner 2020, Løvschal 2022

W6 Human patterns of behavior and agency

Chapman ch 4, Praetzellis ch 3 and 11 Optional: Binford 1980, Earle and Preucel 1987, Flannery 2009

The first take-home exam is due February 12

W7 Economic theories and archaeology

How and why does archaeology use economic theories, and what kinds of problems do different theories help to explain? What critical concepts are used, and do they help understand the archaeological record?

Readings: Chapman ch 2, Praetzellis ch 3, *Optional:* Marx Capital ch 1 part 1. Marx precapitalism part I and II

W8: Theories of capitalism in archaeology about Consumption, commodity, and fetishism.

Readings: Praetzellis ch 4, 5. Matthew 2002, Leone 1987, Stahl 2004, Furholt 2022, Beck 2012, *Priority:* Saito 2019, Graeber 2005, Papadopoulo 2019

Term Paper Proposal, Due February 28 at 8 a.m.

W9: Social theory and archaeology The theories behind praxis archaeology

Readings: Mauss, the gift (any edition). Ch 2 of the Feast from Hyden, Graeber 2001 ch 6

W10: Social theory and archaeology The theories behind praxis archaeology

Readings: Wortmann 2012, Ayaz 2022

W11: Gender,

Readings: Conkey and Gero 1997, Joyce 2005, Vos 2000, Shaan 2006, Pretzellis ch. 9,

W12: Materiality

Readings Praetzellis 16, Chapman 5. Bennet 2010, Miller 2005, Miers 2005, *Priority:* Leamonnier 2012a and 2012b, Latour 2014.

Term Papers are due April 2 at 8 a.m.

W13: Immateriality and Ontology or relational or correlative archaeology

Readings: Praetzellis ch 6, 7, Walt 2013, Enote and Seowtewa 2022, Tantaleán 2019, Antczak and Beudry 2019, McGuire 2021, Creallin ch 2 2021

W14: Organize with the students

Readings: to be defined

W15: Organize with the students

The second take-home exam is due April 15 at 8 a.m.

W16: Organize with the students.

Readings: to be defined

CRITICAL DATES

Term Paper Proposal, Due February 8 at 10 a.m.

First, the take-home exam is due at 8 a.m. February 12.

Term Papers are due April 2 at 8 a.m.

The second take-home exam is due April 15 at 8 a.m.