

ARCHAEOLOGICAL THEORY
2015 Fall term
ANT 4110 (223G)

Lecturer: Dr. Augusto Oyuela-Caycedo
Lecture sessions: R (Periods: 7-9), 1:55 PM – 4:55 PM
Location: MAT 0114
Office: 131 B Turlington
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Office hours: 11 am- 1 PM: or by appointment.

DESCRIPTION:

The objective to this course is to create a solid foundation in the study of the theories and methods in archaeology today. This will be accomplished by evaluating the different trends that have driven American archaeology in the last 100 years. The first part of the class will focus on the different epistemological approaches. We will look at the kinds of questions asked and the methodologies employed to answer them. The last part of the course will emphasize the relationship between archaeology and anthropology by examining the role of “middle range theory” and ethnoarchaeology and the future of archaeology. In this process we will examine the epistemology of archaeology, as well as its relationship to other disciplines. We will look at where the theories come from and critically examine their power of explanation. We will look at how the theories are evaluated and what factors favor their success or abandonment.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Orser, Charles E. 2015. *Archaeological Thinking: how to make sense of the past*. Rowman & Littlefield.
Johnson, Matthew. 2010. *Archaeological Theory: An Introduction*. Willey-Blackway.

EVALUATION:

Evaluation will be based on the accumulation of points up to 100 (100 points =100 %).

Final grades will be based on books and article reviews (total of 30 %), a final RESEARCH PAPER (40 %), and class participation and attendance (30 %). The book reviews should be 3 to 5 pages in length, double-spaced. The topic of the final paper should be discussed with the professor in advance. The paper should be 10 to 15 pages in length, double-spaced including bibliography.

There is a large amount of literature to be covered in this class and each student must be able to discuss each of the articles. You are responsible for all of the readings. It always helps to write a review on each article or chapter that you read, and have notes on the topics that are relevant for the discussion, as well as questions on the aspects that you do not understand.

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

ATTENDANCE is required.

GRADE SYSTEM:

A= 90-100 %

B= 80-89

C= 70-79

D= 60-69

F= Below 59

FIRST PART: GENERAL APPROACHES TO ARCHAEOLOGY

Week 1. August 27: Introduction: Concepts and questions.

Week 2. September 3. Archaeological Thinking: how to make sense of the past.

Readings: Orser, Charles E. 2015. Chapters 1-4.

Week 3. September 10: Archaeological Thinking: how to make sense of the past

Readings: Orser, Charles E. 2015. Chapters 5-8.

Week 4. September 17: Origins of theories and methods in archaeology and Cultural particularism.

Readings: Johnson, Matthew. 2010. Preface and Chapter 1.

Week 5. September 24: New archaeology.

Readings: Johnson, Matthew. 2010, Chapter 2 & 3.

PROPOSAL FOR PAPER DUE ON MAJOR TRENDS OF ARCHAEOLOGY

Week 6. October 1: New and processual archaeology.

Readings: Johnson, Matthew. 2010, Chapter 4 & 5.

Week 7. October 8: Postprocessual archaeology.

Readings: Johnson, Matthew. 2010, Chapter 7& 8

Week 8. October 15: Other new approaches to archaeology with roots in cultural evolution and Darwinian evolution.

Readings: Johnson, Matthew. 2010, Chapter 9 &10

Week 9. October 22: Other new approaches to archaeology with roots in history, politics and cultural studies.

Readings: Johnson, Matthew. 2010, Chapter 11& 12 and 13.

RESEARCH PAPER IS DUE

Week 10. November 5: Social archaeology, economic archaeology.

PART II: ARCHAEOLOGICAL THEORIES OF THE BIG QUESTIONS. Why?

Week 11. November 12: Historical ecological archaeology

Presentation, discussion and reading assigned by the team group on topics in agreement with the professor.

Week 12. November 19: cognitive archaeology, and other entanglements

Week 13. November 26: THANKSGIVING

Week 14. December 3: **FINAL REVISED VERSION OF PAPER DUE.**

Week 15. December 10: Reading week.