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ANTY 450.01: Archaeological Theory

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ANTHROPOLOGY 450

ARCHAEOLOGICAL THEORY, FALL 2015

Class: Tuesday/Thursday, 9:40-11:00, Native American Center 202

Instructor: Doug MacDonald, Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Montana

Office Hours: Social Science 216, 11-12, T, Th; 406-243-5814; douglas.macdonald@mso.umt.edu

Course Description & Learning Outcomes

In ANTY 450—Archaeological Theory—students will learn the history and major traditions of American archaeological theory, especially those useful in interpreting prehistoric archaeological sites, including: 1) culture history; 2) processual theory; 3) behavioral theory; 4) evolutionary theory; 5) post-processual theory; and 6) processual-plus theory. A prerequisite is ANTY 250, Intro to Archaeology. Students will learn how to use theory to interpret archaeological data and how to evaluate theoretical arguments of their peers and in readings. Archaeological problem solving and the development of writing skills will be a major focus of class activities. The class has three sections: **Section 1: Lecture** (Weeks 1-4); **Section 2: Debate** (Weeks 5-8); and **Section 3: Solving Research Problems** (Weeks 9-15). ANTY 450 is an Upper Division writing course and will require students to effectively present their archaeological interpretations orally, visually, and in writing. Information literacy is expected of students, meaning that you will need to know how to use the library and online data sources to conduct research.

Course Requirements

The main objective of students is the preparation of a ±20-page term paper and an associated visual presentation at the end of the semester. In the paper, each student will address a major archaeological issue, such as “The Anasazi in the American Southwest” or “Bison Hunting in the Great Plains”. Students will use one or more theoretical perspectives from class (or another from outside class) to interpret the archaeological issue. A term paper guide will be distributed.

Prior to submission of the final paper, a variety of other writing assignments are due over the course of the semester. Students will write three 5-page papers (50 points each; 150 points total), which relate topically to the final paper. In Essay 1 (due Sept. 15), each student will write a 5-page culture history of the region and time period in which they’ve chosen for their final paper. Essay 2 (due October 8) will approach the term paper topic from either an evolutionary, processual and/or a behavioral archaeology position, while essay 3 (due October 27) will approach it from a post-processual perspective. Each student will also submit a draft term paper (due November 12; 50 points) and a final paper (Thursday, December 8; 100 points). The visual presentations (25 points) will be presented by students the final two weeks of class prior to finals week.

In Section 2 of the course (Weeks 5-8), students will also participate in four group debates. Students will be assigned randomly to debate teams; each team will be evaluated based on their participation and preparation of their 1-page debate statement to be submitted and read prior to each debate. Each debate is worth 25 points (100 total points).

To summarize the grade requirements, there are three 5-page essays (worth a total of 150 points), a draft term paper (50 points), a final term paper (150 points), the debates (100 points), and the class presentation (25 points). Finally, attendance (taken randomly over the semester) is worth 25 points. The total points available in the class are 500, with grading based on a standard percentage of 100 (e.g., 450 points is 90% and is an A-).

We will use Moodle during this course for submission of all student assignments, for the gradebook, for weekly assignments/announcements, as well as for posting of readings for download.

Required Books & Readings

1) Archaeological Theory (AT), ~\$40 at bookstore (used and new copies available)

2) MOODLE readings; articles will be posted from major archaeology journals, including *American Antiquity*

WEEKLY SYLLABUS & SCHEDULE

Week 1: September 1-3

Topics: Class Overview—Archaeology and the Role of Theory

Readings: 1) AT: Preface & Chapter 1

Week 2: September 8-10 (Paper Topics Due this week)

Topics: Culture History & Processualism

Readings: 1) Moodle: Binford’s *Archaeology as Anthropology*

2) AT: Chapter 2

Week 3: September 15-17 (Essay 1 due on Moodle Tuesday, Sept. 15)

Topics: Formation Theory/Behavioral Archaeology and Evolutionary Archaeology

Readings: 1) Moodle: Schiffer and Dunnell articles

Week 4: September 22-24

Topics: Post-Processualism and Processual-Plus archaeology

Readings: 1) AT: Chapters 6-7;
2) Moodle: Hegmon article (Setting Theoretical Egos Aside)

Week 5: September 29-October 1

Archaeological Debate 1: How relevant are processual and behavioral theories in modern archaeology?

Readings: 1) Moodle: Kelly article

Week 6: October 6-October 8 (Essay 2 due on Moodle October 8)

Archaeological Debate 2: Behavioral versus Evolutionary Archaeology

Readings: 1) Moodle: Schiffer and O'Brien articles

Week 7: October 13-15

Archaeological Debate 3: Ancient Human Remains and Modern Native Americans

Readings: 1) Moodle: Read Kennewick Man and Anzick site articles
2) watch video clips on human remains sites

Week 8: October 20-22

Archaeological Debate 4: What is the relevance of the study of prehistoric archaeology to modern life?

Readings: Moodle: TBA

Week 9: October 27-29 (Essay 3 due on Moodle Oct. 27)

Research Problems: Rock Art Studies

Readings: Moodle: TBA

Week 10: November 3-5

Research Problems: Technological Organization

Readings: Moodle: Nelson and Schiffer articles

Week 11: November 10-12

DRAFT TERM PAPERS ARE DUE THURSDAY, NOV. 12

Research Problems: Monumental Architecture in Prehistory

Readings: Moodle: TBA

Week 12: November 17-19

Research Problems: Research Problems: Sedentism, Complexity, and Violence

Readings: Moodle: TBA

Week 13: No class this week; work on your term papers

No Class this week; Work on your term papers!!!!

Week 14: Dec. 1-3

Student Presentations/Discussions

Week 15: December 8-10

Student Presentations/Discussions

*December 10: Final Papers are due on Moodle the last day in class (do not email papers)
No Class, No final during Finals Week*

SUMMARY & SCHEDULE OF ANTY 450 ASSIGNMENTS

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS	DUE DATE
Final Term Paper topic due	5	September 10
Essay 1 due	50	September 15
Debate 1 Statement	25	October 1
Essay 2 due	50	October 8
Debate 2 Statement	25	October 8
Debate 3 Statement	25	October 15
Debate 4 Statement	25	October 22
Essay 3 due	50	October 27
Draft Term Papers due	50	November 12
Student Presentations	25	December 1, 3, 8, and 10
Final Papers Due	150	December 10
Attendance	20	Random attendance
Total Points	500	