



INTRODUCTION TO
ARCHAEOLOGY
ANTH 1302



Spring 2026

Sul Ross State University

Lecture: TuTh 9:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Room: Lawrence Hall 201

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Office: Ferguson Hall Room 114B
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Office Hours: Thursday 1-2 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Anthropologists study everything from million-year-old fossilized remains of our earliest human ancestors to 20th-century buildings in present-day New York City. Archaeology is one of four subdisciplines of Anthropology, the study of our species. Archaeology focuses on the human past. This course introduces students to the scientific study of the human past across the globe beginning with our earliest ancestors and ending with more recent large-scale civilizations. Throughout we will discuss the method and theory of doing archaeology, in addition to current theories and evidence about the lives of past people.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOS)

- 1) The students will acquire a basic understanding of archaeological methods and objectives, and how these relate to the ever-evolving trajectory of the discipline.
- 2) The students will demonstrate an understanding of the trajectory of archaeological theory and how it is linked to contemporary perspectives.
- 4) The students will be able to demonstrate basic knowledge of human evolution and the trajectory of human cultures from the deep past to today.
- 3) Students will develop principles of social responsibility for living in a diverse world, to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This course aims to familiarize students with archaeology's historical development, methods, associated terms, and current objectives. This approach provides a foundation for students pursuing archaeology or other subdisciplines of anthropology, but is taught with the non-specialist in mind. Anthropology is the only discipline that holistically studies humans at every time and place, and understanding the basic concepts is critical for today's multicultural global world.

Required Text

Feder, Kenneth L.

2019 *The Past in Perspective: An Introduction to Human Prehistory*. 8th ed. Oxford University Press, New York.

Please pay close attention to the Blackboard site and your email for communications related to this course.

GRADING

Your grade in this class is based strongly on your personal commitment to attend lectures, be attentive, take notes, and study them. I will not be taking attendance. Your attendance is up to you, but missing class is the quickest way to damage your grade. Do not expect me to accommodate excessive absences. Lecture materials are structured using the recommended textbook, but the book does not cover all materials in lecture and is not a good substitute for being in class. I have structured this class with four exams and a final project/paper. Extra credit opportunities will be available to raise your grade as much as 10%. Exams, extra credit, and the final project will be made available on Blackboard. Some extra credit days are in-person activities held outside the classroom.

Exams: The majority of your grade will come from four exams. These will be based on materials covered in class up to the date of the exam, with exception of the final exam, which is cumulative. Because exams will be heavily based on lectures I strongly encourage you to take good notes. Lecture slides will be provided on Blackboard but are not stand-ins for good note taking; most slides have pictures and only a few words. Review topics will also be provided prior to exams but again these only give a sense of the topics covered. Please feel free to see me if you need assistance with note taking or other study habits leading up to the exams.

Paper/Project: You will complete a final paper or project to be decided and announced towards the end of the semester. Further instructions will be provided ahead of the due date. This final project is intended to grade you on your understanding of archaeological method and theory, and your own experience with a specific archaeological subject matter. In the event you will be doing a research paper, I strongly encourage you to make use of the writing center on campus. ***Papers must be written by you—use of AI or other plagiarism will result in an automatic F on a paper and must be reported to SRSU administration.***

Extra Credit: During the semester you will have five extra credit opportunities worth 20 pts each (10% of your grade), including readings and videos, and experiential archaeology events using preindustrial technology (the atlatl and dart, flintknapping, etc). These opportunities will be announced in class and on Blackboard ahead of time and instructions will be provided.

Assignments	Points	% of Grade
Exam 1	200	20 %
Exam 2	200	20 %
Exam 3	200	20 %
Project/Paper	200	20 %
Final Exam	200	20 %
	1000	100 %

CLASS POLICIES AND RESOURCES

TECHNOLOGY

With exception of students with university-documented accommodations and those joining us virtually, **electronic devices with screens, cameras, audio recording or audio playback (e.g., phones, laptops, tablets, earbuds, headphones) are not permitted during class.** For both in class and virtual students, notes should be taken using non-electronic methods. Studies indicate improved comprehension of materials when hand-writing over typing notes. Using a computer in class encourages surfing the internet or other distractions, which are also distractions to those around you. Failure to keep technology turned off and put away will result in dismissal from the classroom.

ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mrs. Mary Schwartze Grisham, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director at 432-837-8203 or email mschwartze@sulross.edu or contact Alejandra Valdez, at 830-758-5006 or email alejandra.valdez@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine. Texas, 79832.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

All full-time and part-time students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Student Handbook and the Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog and for abiding by the University rules and regulations. Additionally, students are responsible for checking their Sul Ross email as an official form of communication from the university. Every student is expected to obey all federal, state and local laws and is expected to familiarize him/herself with the requirements of such laws.

DISTANCE EDUCATION

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website.

Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires a secure login. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website. Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the student handbook.

SRSU LIBRARY SERVICES

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and Archives of the Big Bend in Alpine offer FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu/. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or by phone (432-837-8123).

No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and

resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/ or ask a librarian by emailing srsulibrary@sulross.edu. Mike Fernandez, SRSU Librarian, is based in Eagle Pass (Building D-129) to offer specialized library services to students, faculty, and staff. Utilize free services such as InterLibrary Loan (ILL), ScanIt, and Direct Mail to get materials delivered to you at home or via email.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. Students should submit work that is their own and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. Students should also avoid using AI sources unless permission is expressly given for an assignment or course. Using AI generated text on papers and assignments is a form of plagiarism. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of your college degree and higher education overall.

CLASSROOM RESPECT

Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still, we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

Tentative Class Schedule Spring 2026

Date	Topic	Reading
Week 1 1/15	Class 1: Introduction to the course	N/A
Week 2 1/20 – 1/22	Class 2: A deeper dive into Archaeology Class 3: The past is a foreign country?	Feder, Ch. 1: Encountering the Past
Week 3 1/27 – 1/29	Class 4: A history of Archaeological thought Class 5: A history of Archaeological thought	Feder, Ch. 2: Probing the Past
Week 4 2/3 – 2/5	Class 6: Site formation processes Class 7: Site survey and analytical methods	Feder, Ch. 3: African Roots
Week 5 2/10 – 2/12	Class 8: Archaeology and human evolution Class 9: Exam 1	Feder, Ch. 4: The Human Lineage
Week 6 2/17 – 2/19	Class 10: The lower and middle Paleolithic Class 11: Flintknapping extra credit	Feder, Ch. 5: The First Humans
Week 7 2/24 – 2/26	Class 12: The Upper Paleolithic Class 13: Becoming “modern”	Feder, Ch. 6: Expanding Intellectual Horizons
Week 8 3/3 – 3/5	Class 14: Early migrations Class 15: The Earliest Americans	Feder, Ch. 7: Expanding Geographic Horizons
Week 9 3/10 – 3/12	<i>Spring Break, no class!</i>	N/A
Week 10 3/17 – 3/19	Class 16: Pleistocene extinctions Class 17: Exam 2	Feder, Ch. 8: After the Ice
Week 11 3/24 – 3/26	Class 18: Atlatl Day extra credit Class 19: Mesolithic, after the ice	Feder, Ch. 9: Roots of Complexity
Week 12 3/31 – 4/2	Class 20: Origins of domestication Class 21: Origins of complexity, Mesopotamia	Feder, Ch. 10: An Explosion of Complexity
Week 13 4/7 – 4/9	Class 22: Origins of complexity, Africa, Europe Class 23: Origins of complexity, Asia	Feder, Ch. 11: An Explosion of Complexity
Week 14 4/14 – 4/16	Class 24: Origins of complexity, Mesoamerica Class 25: Exam 3	Feder, Ch. 12: An Explosion of Complexity
Week 15 4/21 – 4/23	Class 26: Origins of complexity, S. America Class 27: Origins of complexity, N. America	Feder, Ch. 13: An Explosion of Complexity
Week 16 4/28 – 4/30	Class 28: The myth of the Moundbuilders Final Project: Pseudoarchaeology?	Feder, Ch. 14: An Explosion of Complexity
Week 17 TBA	Final Exam	N/A