

COURSE OUTLINE - Winter 2026

AN2190(A3): World Prehistory - 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours for 15 Weeks

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

INSTRUCTOR: Matt Longstaffe

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OFFICE: C402

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OFFICE HOURS: Wednesdays 12:30 – 14:00

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: An introductory archaeology course that provides an overview of New and Old World prehistory; spans the earliest origins of humans, the spread of anatomically modern humans, the development of hunting and gathering societies, the origins of food production, and the emergence of ancient urban societies.

PREREQUISITE(S):

None

COREQUISITE(S):

None

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Feder (2024) *The Past in Perspective: An Introduction to Human Prehistory*, 9th Ed., Oxford University Press.

DELIVERY MODE(S): On-Campus

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of this class, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate the use of the vocabulary and concepts of archaeological anthropology.

- Apply critical thinking skills to access, evaluate, and interpret information to draw conclusions and shape arguments.
- Demonstrate a scholarly mindset open to different perspectives, acknowledge the provisional nature of knowledge, and identify the limits of research and understanding.
- Express ideas clearly and effectively in writing.
- Act with honesty and integrity to complete academic work and conduct themselves in an academic environment.

TRANSFERABILITY:

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page <http://www.transferalberta.alberta.ca>

**** For courses with alpha (letter) grading, a grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability**

EVALUATIONS:

Assessment	Weight
8 reading quizzes, 5 points each, for 40 points total	20%
2 media assignments, 30 points each, for 60 points total	30%
1 midterm exam for 40 points total	20%
Final exam for 60 points total	30%
Total = 200 points	100%
Note: All points are weighted equally for 200 points total	

Reading Quizzes (8 reading quizzes at 5 points each for 40 points total)

You will be given 8 reading quizzes covering your syllabus and chapters in our textbook throughout the semester. Each quiz will consist of a small number of questions (multiple choice, matching, etc.) and are intended to encourage you to keep up with your readings. They are not worth a whole lot of points in the grand scheme of things but could mean the difference between one letter grade and the next; don't let them slip past you! **Reading Quizzes are to be completed on our myClass page, will open Mondays at 8 am of the week assigned, and close Sundays at 11:59 pm (see due dates on schedule).**

Media Assignments (2 assignments at 30 points each for 60 points total)

Over the course of the semester, you will be expected to write up **two** brief summaries (each approximately 500 words; about 1 page single-spaced) on "tales of archaeological discovery" covered by the media. I want you to tell me what **you think** about the discoveries. Are they well

covered? What do you find interesting? What new questions does the story raise? What more do you want to know? In your response, **you must refer** to at least one concept, site, or culture that we've discussed in class that helps you understand this story more fully. Be specific. How does what we've studied help you contextualize or question the article? **Ensure that you choose a story with sufficient detail to meet these guidelines.** You must cite your article in a format that allows me to locate it (i.e., author, title, webpage, link, etc.). Feel free to use any source, from televised media to traditional print and web pages, but make sure that the find discussed is RECENT (i.e., was found within the last 2 years). New discoveries about previously known sites are fine but avoid stories such as "Ten things you didn't know about Egypt's pyramids", etc., and make sure that the story is legitimate (i.e., no pseudo-archaeology). **Media Assignments are to be completed on our myClass page and will open Mondays at 8 am of the week assigned and close Sundays at 11:59 pm (see due dates on schedule).**

Midterm Exam (40 points total)

You will write a midterm exam in this class. It will be worth 40 points and will consist of multiple choice, true-false, and short answer questions. Your midterm will be completed during class time (see schedule).

Final Exam (60 points total)

You will have a scheduled final exam in this class; HOWEVER, your exam WILL NOT require you to be physically present on campus. Your exam is a TAKE HOME. As we will be invoking concepts that are foundational to the discipline of anthropology, it WILL build on the material covered throughout the course. Your final exam will be worth 60 points and consist of an essay question and response that will be provided in advance. **Your final is to be completed on our myClass page and will open on Monday (at 8 am) of the last week of scheduled classes. The exam is due and will close by 11:59 pm on the date scheduled by the registrar. I will let you know when this information is available.**

GRADING CRITERIA:

Please note that most institutions will not accept your course for transfer credit IF your grade is less than C-.

Grading Chart

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines
A+	4.0	95-100	C+	2.3	67-69
A	4.0	85-94	C	2.0	63-66
A-	3.7	80-84	C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	77-79	D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	73-76	D	1.0	50-54



B-	2.7	70-72		F	0.0	00-49
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COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

Week	Date	Topic(s)	Reading(s)
Getting Started			
1.2	Jan 7	Introduction to the course	Syllabus
Homework: Reading Quiz 1 – Due Sunday Jan 11, 11:59 PM			
2.1	Jan 12	What is archaeology? What is a social science?	Chapters 1 & 2
2.2	Jan 14		
Homework: Reading Quiz 2 – Due Sunday Jan 18, 11:59 PM			
Module 1: Our Origins			
3.1	Jan 19	Before we were us	Chapters 3 & 4
3.2	Jan 21		
Homework: Reading Quiz 3 – Due Sunday Jan 25, 11:59 PM			
4.1	Jan 26	Our spread around the world	Chapters 5 & 6
4.2	Jan 28		
Homework: Media Assignment #1 – Due Sunday Feb 1, 11:59 PM			
Module 2: Increasing Complexity			
5.1	Feb 2	First Farmers	Chapter 8
5.2	Feb 4		
Homework: Reading Quiz 4 – Due Sunday Feb 8, 11:59 PM			
6.1	Feb 9	First Farmers	Chapter 8
6.2	Feb 11	Midterm Exam	
7.1	Feb 16	Reading Break – No Classes	
7.2	Feb 18		
8.1	Feb 23	Origins of complexity	Chapter 9
8.2	Feb 25		
Homework: Reading Quiz 5 – Due Sunday Mar 1, 11:59 PM			
Module 3: Early States			
9.1	Mar 2	SW Asia and the Mediterranean	Chapter 10
9.2	Mar 4		
Homework: Reading Quiz 6 – Due Sunday Mar 8, 11:59 PM			
10.1	Mar 9	Egypt	Chapter 10
10.2	Mar 11		
Homework: Reading Quiz 7 – Due Sunday Mar 15, 11:59 PM			
11.1	Mar 16	South Asia and China	Chapter 11
11.2	Mar 18		
Homework: Reading Quiz 8 – Due Sunday Mar 22, 11:59 PM			
12.1	Mar 23	Mesoamerica	Chapter 12
12.2	Mar 25		
Homework: Media Assignment #2 – Due Sunday Mar 29, 11:59 PM			
13.1	Mar 30	The Andes	Chapter 13

13.2	Apr 1		
14.1	Apr 6	North America	Chapter 14
14.2	Apr 8	Wrap-up	None
15.1	Apr 13		
Final Exam - Date TBD			

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Late Assignment/Make-up Policy: You are expected to follow the schedule as posted and **late assignments will not be accepted, except with my permission.** Make note of the due dates (and as you see, there is a lot of flexibility to complete and submit the assignment, BEFORE the due date)

Attendance and Participation: Attendance will not be taken, and no part of your grade is directly tied to attendance/participation. You are paying good money for this class and committing a significant amount of time to it. To get the most for your money and effort, **attendance is strongly encouraged.**

Classroom Climate Expectations: To create and maintain a safe and productive learning environment in the classroom, standards of behaviours are expected as follows:

1. **Listen** attentively and TAKE NOTES.
2. **Communicate** clearly and actively when asking questions or during discussions.
3. **Be respectful** when asking questions/discussing topics with EVERYONE. This does not mean that you need to agree with all the views/opinions expressed but note that there is a difference between being critical or engaging in a productive conversation and being confrontational or abusive.
4. **Refrain** from excessive talking or use of technology for NONACADEMIC PURPOSES. You are supposed to be in class, so BE IN CLASS.

Use of Generative AI in Assignments and Exams: We all know that Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) can create pieces of writing and other creative outputs. These tools include ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Microsoft Copilot, and so on. These tools are now with us, so it is important to learn how to use them responsibly. You may use AI tools to learn and practice concepts in this course but remember to use a critical eye to what it is telling you. However, you **may not** use AI to write your class assignments or exams for you. This course policy is designed to promote learning and development and help you reach the course learning outcomes. You're here to learn and learning how to communicate ideas through writing is one of the most important parts of being a student.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:



Academic Misconduct will not be tolerated. For a more precise definition of academic misconduct and its consequences, refer to the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy available at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/polytechnic-leadership/policies-directory>.

**Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.