Seminar in Archaeological Theory and Method

Dr. Kenneth Hirth
115 Carpenter
Office Hours: TBA
email: kgh2@psu.edu

Ant 588
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Phone 863-9647

Course Outline

The purpose of this course is to provide an overview of the main theoretical and methodological approaches used in archaeology. While we will occasionally read material from the Old World the course will focus specifically on theoretical issues within Americanist Anthropology. We will try to achieve four goals during the semester. The first is to identify and define the major theoretical paradigms currently in use in archaeology. This basic knowledge is necessary for you to comprehend the trajectory of contemporary research and to formulate feasible research problems of your own. Second, the course will provide a sense of both the history of archaeology and how investigators are debating, applying, or addressing theoretical issues in the current literature. Third, the course will examine some of the methodological approaches used to operationalize anthropological/archaeological theory. Because the focus of this course is theory, discussion of method will be highly selective. Fourth and finally, the course will attempt to develop the verbal acumen needed in our academic and research profession.

Course Organization

The course will be organized and conducted as a seminar. This is not a lecture class! Lectures may be used to provide supplementary data but the preponderance of information will come through class readings and discussions. I will provide a weekly bibliography of required reading for each topic. I am deeply committed to, and believe that the seminar format is the best method for graduate education. Seminars among peers are settings to exchange information, sharpen analytical abilities and develop communication skills. Seminars foster critical and creative thinking because the recitational format stimulates individuals to reach their own understanding of the topic. I believe research insights are created, not received, and the seminar format helps develop the intellectual skills needed for professionalization. Therefore, come prepared to discuss the weekly topics and ask questions! Read and critique each article and be prepared to share your views in class. Where voluntarism fails I will direct discussion by calling upon individuals to share their insights about the readings.

Grading

From my perspective the purpose of this seminar is to educate students rather than to issue grades. Nevertheless, formal grading is a University requirement, helps students to evaluate how well the information has been synthesized, and identifies areas that need work.
The final grade will be determined from the following course components. You are expected to follow the Penn State guidelines of academic integrity (i.e. no cheating, plagiarism, etc.),

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral Class Participation</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research critiques</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Grading of Oral Participation for seminar participants will be based upon the information volunteered and presented by each student within each seminar meeting. Grading will take into consideration both the content of the discussion and the quality of questions asked. For each seminar meeting students will be asked: 1) to identify the most important research issues that emerge from the week’s readings, and 2) to reflect on the general applicability of the issues to your area of interest or experiences in archaeology/history.

Students will also prepare written Research Critique on one of the weekly articles assigned for discussion (see below). A copy of this critique must be emailed to the instructor no later than 8:00 am of the day of the seminar. Critiques should be concise analytical summaries of the major points in each article (see below). One single spaced page is normally appropriate. Students will present their critiques orally in class. Oral presentations should be concise (about 5 minutes in length) and identify the article’s major points or problems. This will be followed by 10-15 minutes of discussion led by the student; this discussion can include questions, commentary and further discussion by members of the seminar. Students will normally write one critique each week. The size of the class will determine who is able to present their observations during each meeting.

The Research Paper must be on a topic that is relevant to the broad objectives of the course. Papers may examine a current theoretical issue (e.g. agricultural origins, postmodernism, etc.), research the theory/method relations of an analytic approach (e.g. bone chemistry to evaluate migration), or evaluate the applicability of one or more theoretical issues using archaeological data (e.g. the relevancy of population pressure models in North American cultural development). Whatever the specific theme, papers must focus on cultural processes within a diachronic perspective. Students should look at the research paper as an opportunity of exploring a topic of personal interest to them. The only requirement is that the topic fit the broad objectives of the course.

All topics must be approved by the course instructor. The paper topic and a preliminary descriptive statement (3-4 paragraphs in length) must be turned in during the week of 2/5. An expanded statement of the paper topic (Introduction) with an outline and bibliography is due on 3/5. Final papers must be typewritten and double spaced. The length of papers will vary with the problem selected. The best papers are those with well defined problems and specific goals. Papers should average about 25 pages in length. In an effort to foster concise presentation I will not accept a paper over 30 pages long (excluding bibliography) unless a compelling reason can be presented. Follow the American Antiquity citation format. Final papers are due on Friday 5/4 at 10:00 a.m. Students are required to turn in one paper copy and one electronic copy of the research paper to the instructor.
The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access you need to let the instructor know during the first week of class.

Penn State also requires that students must conform to the University statement on academic integrity (Faculty Senate Policy 49-20). Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, inhibiting the work of others, or submitting work of another person as your own. Students found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and will be reported to the University’s Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary sanction.

Suggestions for Critique Writing

Critiques should be no longer than 1 page single spaced (do not double space them). They should be succinct summaries of the article’s main points and your evaluation of how successfully or unsuccessfully they were met. Each critique should contain, but should not necessarily be limited to, the following points:

1) Full citation of the piece being critiqued. Place the citation at the top of the page.
2) Identify the main goal or goals of the paper. What are the broad questions or specific hypotheses being asked? Are they theoretical, methodological, cultural historical or a combination of the above?
3) Identify the main assumptions and/or definitions used. These may be unstated rather than stated, but try to figure out what is behind the propositions presented. Does the author betray any particular bias or theoretical school (with its own assumptions) that is important to understand the direction of the argument?
4) Discuss the reasoning, argumentation or rational used in the discussion. Does it make sense and is it supported by evidence? If so, what is it? This can address the relationship between method and data if it’s a scientifically oriented article. If it is a theoretical piece than you should identify the rationale, philosophy or reasoning used.
5) Identify the main conclusions or opinions reached by the author
6) Finally, what is your evaluation of the article? This is where you demonstrate your own thinking and insight about the author’s views. Look for the good and the bad. This is an important component of the critique.
# Topical Course Outline

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of</th>
<th>Topic for Discussion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/24</td>
<td>Introduction and course organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/31</td>
<td>1) Early Foundations of Archaeology I</td>
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<td>9/7</td>
<td>2) Early Foundations of Archaeology II</td>
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<td>9/21</td>
<td>4) Demography and population models in archaeology</td>
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<td>9/28</td>
<td>5) Population and Warfare Models in Archaeology; Final problem statement for Term Papers, initial bibliography</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/5</td>
<td>6) Cultural Evolution I: Anthropological foundations</td>
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<td>10/12</td>
<td>7) Cultural Evolution II: Sociopolitical development</td>
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<td>10/19</td>
<td>8) Cultural Ecology</td>
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<td>10/26</td>
<td>9) Cultural Materialism and Marxism</td>
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<td>11/2</td>
<td>10) Cultural Interaction Theory I</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/9</td>
<td>11) Cultural Interaction II and World Systems Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/16</td>
<td>12) Ideology and Post-modernism</td>
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<td>11/23</td>
<td>Fall Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/30</td>
<td>AAA meetings/ Hirth in Philadelphia</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/7</td>
<td>Research paper presentations; Research Paper due on Thursday 12/10 at 10:00 a.m. One paper copy and one electronic copy are required.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/14</td>
<td>Research paper presentations; (Final Exam Week, if necessary)</td>
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Suggested Reading Order
Willey & Sabloff: Chaps 1-4
Ceci (Ethnohistory)  
Sheehy (Ethnographic Analogy)

Required Reading
Ceci, Lynn

Sheehy, James

Smith, Michael

Willey, Gordon and Jeremy Sabloff

Recommended Reading
Deetz, James and Edwin Dethlefsen (Style and archaeology)

Trigger, Bruce (History & Ethnohistory)
Topic 2: The Early Foundations of Archaeology: 2

Suggested Reading Order
Willey & Sabloff: Chapt 5  Abrams (Experimental Archaeology)
Malville (Ethnoarchaeology)  Trigger (Settlement Patterns)
Schiffer (Formation process)  Taylor (Conjunctive Approach, Special report)

Required Reading
Abrams, Elliot

Malville, Nancy

Schiffer, Michael

Taylor, Walter

Trigger, Bruce G.

Willey, Gordon and Jeremy Sabloff

Recommended Reading
Ford, James

Inomata, Takeshi and Kazuo Aoyama

Spaulding, Albert
Suggested Reading Order

Binford 1962                       Dumond
Binford 1968a                   Reid et. al.
Binford 1968b     Clark and Parry

Required Reading

Binford, Lewis R.
1968b  Some comments on historical versus processual archeology," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 24:267-75

Clark, John and William Parry

Dumond, Donald

Reid, J. Jefferson, Michael Schiffer, and William Rathje

Recommended Reading

Fritz, John M. and Fred T. Plog
1970   The nature of archaeological explanation. *American Antiquity* 35:405-412

Hill, James

Longacre, William
Topic 4: Demography and Population Models in Archaeology

Suggested Reading Order
Malthus    Wood
Boserup    Hammel & Howell
Carneiro   Brown

Required Reading
Boserup, Ester
1965    The Conditions of Agricultural Growth. pp. 15-42. Aldine, Chicago

Brown, James

Carneiro, Robert

Hammell E.A., and Nancy Howell

Malthus, Thomas

Wood, James

Recommended Reading
Feinman, Gary and Linda Nicholas

Hassan, Fekri
Topic 5: Population Models in Archaeology

Suggested Reading Order
Netting
Webster, G.
Storey
White et al.
Crumley

Required Reading
Crumley, Carol

Netting, Robert McC

Storey, Rebecca

Webster, Gary

White, Christine, Rebecca Storey, Fed Longstaffe, and Michael Spence

Recommended Reading
Milner, George

Webster, David
Suggested Reading Order

White
Beck (choice)
Flannery
Feinman and Neitzel
Brumfiel and Earle
Friedman (choice)

Required Reading

Beck, Robin

Brumfiel, Elizabeth, and Timothy Earle

Feinman and Neitzel

Flannery, Kent

Friedman, Jonathon

Hirth, Kenneth

White, Leslie

Recommended Reading

Morgan, Lewis H.
1877 Ancient society. chapt. 1, World Publishing Co., Cleveland.

Sanders, William and David Webster

Spencer, Charles

Steward, Julian
Suggested Reading Order
Dunnell                     Flannery
Boone and Smith    Hayden 2001
Weissner     Blanton et al.

Required Readings
Boone, James and Eric Alden Smith

Blanton, Richard, Gary Feinman, Stephen Kowalewski, and Peter Peregrine

Dunnell, Robert C.

Flannery, Kent

Hayden, Brian

Weissner, Polly

Recommended Reading
Schiffer, Michael

Johnson, Allen and Timothy Earle

Park, Thomas
Suggested Reading Order

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<tr>
<th>Author</th>
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Required Reading

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<th>Author</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bliege Bird, Rebecca</td>
<td>Risk and reciprocity in Meriam food sharing.  Evolution and human behavior 23:297-321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evans, Susan</td>
<td>The productivity of maguey terrace agriculture in Central Mexico during the Aztec period.  Latin American Antiquity 1:117-132.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Suggested Reading Order
Harris
Kohl
Terray

Required Reading
Costin, Cathy

Hagstrum, Melissa

Harris, Marvin

Kohl, Phil

Smith, Michael

Terray, Emanuel

Recommended Reading
Costin, Cathy

Ferguson, James

Janusek, John Wayne

Kohl, Phil

Legros, D.

Wolf, Eric
Suggested Reading Order
Polanyi          Peregrine        Ona and Kusimba
Dalton          Flannery         Hirth

Required Readings
Dalton, George

Flannery, Kent

Hirth, Kenneth

Peregrine, Peter

Polanyi, Karl

Ona, Rahul, and Chapurukha

Recommended Reading
Adams, William, D. Van Gerven and R. Levy

Santley, Robert
1993 Late Formative society at Loma Torremote: a consideration of the redistribution vs. the great provider models as a basis for the emergence of complexity in the Basin of Mexico, in *Prehispanic domestic units in Western Mesoamerica*, R. Santley and K. Hirth eds., pp. 67-86. CRC Press, Boca Raton.

Schortman, Edward
Smith Kipp, Rita, and Edward Schortman
Topic 11: Cultural Interaction and World Systems Theory

Suggested Reading Order
Renfrew   Kohl   Dreiss and Brown
Wallerstein   Blanton and Feinman   Schortman and Urban

Required Reading
Blanton, Richard, and Gary Feinman

Dreiss, Meredith, and David Brown

Kohl, Philip

Renfrew, Colin

Schortman, Edward, and Patricia Urban

Wallerstein, Immanuel

Recommended Reading
Blanton, Richard

Curtin, Philip

Renfrew, Colin
Topic 12: Ideology and Post-modernism

Suggested Reading Order
Demarest
Knapp
Anschuetz et al.
Dillehay
Spielmann

Required Reading
Anschuetz, Kurt, Richard Wilshusen, and Cherie Scheick

Demarest, Arthur

Dillehay, Tom

Knapp, A. Bernard

Spielmann, Katherine

Recommended Reading
Bliege Bird, Rebecca, and Eric Smith
2005 Signaling theory, strategic interaction, and symbolic capital. *Current Anthropology* 46:

Hodder, Ian

Leone, M., P. Potter, and P. Shackel

VanPool, Christine, and Todd VanPool