

## ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE FIRST ANCESTORS IN THE AMERICAS (ANTH 4811 FDE)

Instructor: Dr. Matthew Boyd

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Office hours: After each class and/or by appointment



### Course description:

This course provides an in-depth examination of the first peopling of the Americas during the Ice Age—from Siberia to South America—emphasizing the latest evidence and controversies. Topics include: Pleistocene environmental history; Paleolithic archaeology of Northeast Asia; genetic clues (e.g., ancient DNA); pathways to the New World; the earliest archaeological sites; and new developments in underwater archaeology. Lectures will be supported by videos, a required textbook and, when feasible, a voluntary fieldtrip to an Ice Age archaeological site in the local region. In addition to learning the latest scientific facts and theories, this course will help you develop academic critical thinking, and written communication, skills. Students participating in this class are expected to have a basic and broad understanding of modern archaeological methods and techniques.

### Required text:

Meltzer, David. 2009. First Peoples in a New World: Colonizing Ice Age America. Berkeley: University of California Press, 446 pp.

### Assignments and Exams:

- **Pseudo-archaeology critique (15%):** write a brief critique of the Winters (2015) paper (“The Paleoamericans came from Africa”), backing up your statements/arguments with peer-reviewed sources. Length: approx. 5 pages, double-spaced, not including references or figures.
- **Short paper (30%):** write a brief synthesis of a topic of interest related to the course. It could be a site report, a description of the biology, ecology, and extinction history of a Late Pleistocene megafaunal species, a summary of a theory pertaining to the first peopling of the Americas, or anything else that catches your interest. Make sure to run the subject of your paper past the instructor for input. Length: approx. 7 pages, double-spaced, not including references or figures. Format (style guide): APA.
- **Midterm exam (25%):** essay-style
- **Final exam (30%):** essay style

### Grade Distributions (from LU Calendar):

<b>A+</b>	90-100%	<b>B</b>	70-79%	<b>D</b>	50-59%	<b>F</b>	0-39%
<b>A</b>	80-89%	<b>C</b>	60-69%	<b>E</b>	40-49%		

## Other information

- Students are responsible for ensuring that they are properly registered in this class.
- See the LU Calendar for information on academic integrity, examinations, grade appeals, and other important regulations of which you should be aware.
- Late term papers and other assignments will be deducted **10% per day** from the final grade for that assignment.
- In this course, in the context of remote instruction and participation, video and audio recordings of class activities will be made to ensure students' and instructors' easy and comprehensive access to those activities. The recordings are confidential and are intended only for the use of the course students and instructors. They may otherwise not be used or disclosed. During recording, to protect others' privacy, each student should ensure that no one else is present in the location where they are being recorded without that non-student's consent. The recordings are made under the authority of sections 3 and 14 of *The Lakehead University Act, 1965*. Questions about the collection of the images and sounds in the recordings may be directed to Dr. Todd Randall, Dean of the Faculty of Science and Environmental Studies, Thunder Bay campus.
- STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES Lakehead University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you are a student with a disability and think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and register as early as possible. For more information, please visit <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/sas>.

<b>Module</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>
1 + 2	Setting the scene (Ice Age environmental history) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to course, rationale</li> <li>• Pleistocene environmental history</li> </ul>	Meltzer ch. 1 & 2
3	Paleolithic of Siberia and the Bering Land Bridge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geography</li> <li>• The Upper Paleolithic of Northern Asia</li> <li>• What was Beringia and what was it like?</li> </ul>	
<b>Oct. 7</b>	<b>Pseudo-archaeology assignment due</b>	
4 + 5	Pathways to the New World <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background</li> <li>• Some recent genetic studies</li> <li>• Northwest Coast route: evidence</li> <li>• Is the Ice Free Corridor idea dead?</li> </ul>	Meltzer ch. 5 & 6
<b>Oct. 19</b>	<b>Midterm exam</b>	
6	Pre-Clovis sites (Part I) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Far-fetched (?) sites</li> </ul>	Meltzer ch. 4
7	Pre-Clovis sites (Part II) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Controversial and legit (?) sites</li> </ul>	Meltzer ch. 4
8	The Paleoindian/Paleoamerican tradition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background</li> <li>• Early and Late Paleoindian tradition (N. America)</li> <li>• South American Paleoamerican tradition</li> </ul>	Meltzer ch. 3,6,7-9
9	Subsistence and the Ice Age Megafauna <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pleistocene subsistence and diet</li> <li>• Background: Pleistocene megafauna</li> <li>• The extinction debate</li> <li>• The Younger Dryas ET hypothesis</li> <li>• NOVA documentary</li> </ul>	Meltzer ch. 3,6,7-9
10	Submerged sites and underwater archaeology: The new frontier <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction</li> <li>• Research methods</li> <li>• Oceanic coastal sites (Florida)</li> <li>• Great Lakes underwater archaeology</li> </ul>	Meltzer ch. 3,6,7-9
*11	Local archaeology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Profile of an early local site</li> <li>• Voluntary fieldtrip??</li> </ul>	
<b>TBA</b>	<b>Final exam</b>	
<b>Dec. 7</b>	<b>Short paper due</b>	

\* This module may be moved to earlier in the term in order to accommodate a voluntary fieldtrip in the Thunder Bay region (if feasible).