

ICE AGE PEOPLES OF THE AMERICAS (ANTH 4014)

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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 early 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:

- **Critique of a far-fetched (pseudo-archaeological) theory (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. You will be evaluated based on: writing quality, quality of your research, and independent thinking.
- **Graphical/Visual abstract (15%):** produce an original graphical/visual abstract for any published journal article that addresses the subject of the course. The article that you choose is open but it must not already have a graphical abstract. Your graphical abstract will consist of a diagram or illustration summarizing the research question, method(s), and main findings, along with a ~200 word abstract in your own words and using accessible language. Recommended (no cost) software: PowerPoint or Inkscape. Save your diagram in a raster format such as JPEG and embed it in a Word document with your abstract. I will provide some examples for you to follow. Make sure to include the journal article (PDF) with your assignment when you submit it in D2L.
- **Short paper (25%):** 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. Length: approx. 7 pages, double-spaced, not including references or figures. Format (style guide): APA.

- **Participation (5%):** In-class participation in this course is encouraged. Ask questions, engage with the subject matter, debate concepts and interpretations.
- **Midterm exam (20%):** essay-style (in class).
- **Final exam (20%):** essay style (in class).

Grade Distributions (from LU Calendar):

A+	90-100%	B	70-79%	D	50-59%	F	0-39%
A	80-89%	C	60-69%	E	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.
- **A breach of Academic Integrity is a serious offence.** The principle of Academic Integrity, particularly of doing one's own work, documenting properly (including use of quotation marks, appropriate paraphrasing and referencing/citation), collaborating appropriately, and avoiding misrepresentation, is a core principle in university study. Students should view the Student Code of Conduct – Academic Integrity – for a full description of academic offences, procedures when Academic Integrity breaches are suspected and sanctions for breaches of Academic Integrity.
- **ChatGPT** and similar generative AI tools: Generative artificial intelligence (Generative AI or GenAI) is a category of AI systems capable of generating text, images, or other media in response to prompts. These systems include ChatGPT and its variant Bing (built by OpenAI) and Bard (built by Google) among several others. Other generative AI models include artificial intelligence art systems such as Stable Diffusion, Midjourney, and DALL-E. Any use of GenAI systems to produce assignments for this course is **not permitted**. All work submitted for evaluation in this course must be the student's original work. The submission of any work containing AI generated content will be considered a violation of academic integrity ("Use of Unauthorized Materials").
- As a university student, you may sometimes experience mental health concerns or stressful events that interfere with your academic performance and negatively impact your daily activities. All of us can benefit from support during times of struggle. If you or anyone you know experiences academic stress, difficult life events or feelings of anxiety or depression, Lakehead has resources available to you. Check in with the [WellU Key](#) to find the mental health resources you are looking for. Remember that getting help is a smart and courageous

thing to do- for yourself, for those you care about, and for those who care about you. Getting support sooner rather than later is almost always helpful.

- **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>.

Module	Topics	Readings
1 + 2	Setting the scene (Ice Age environmental history) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to course, rationale • Unpacking colonial “baggage” • Pleistocene environmental history 	Meltzer ch. 1 & 2 Steeves (2021) ch.2
3	Paleolithic (Siberia) and the Bering Land Bridge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geography • The Upper Paleolithic of Northern Asia • What was Beringia and what was it like? 	
Sept. 27	Pseudo-archaeology assignment due	
4 + 5	Pathways to the New World <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background • Some recent genetic studies • Northwest Coast route: evidence • Is the Ice Free Corridor idea dead? 	Meltzer ch. 5 & 6
Oct. 9-13	Fall Study Break (no classes)	
Oct. 18	Midterm exam (in class)	
6	Pre-Clovis sites (Part I) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Far-fetched (?) sites 	Meltzer ch. 4 Article: “What happens when archaeologists challenge mainstream scientific thinking?”
7	Pre-Clovis sites (Part II) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controversial and legit (?) sites 	Meltzer ch. 4
8	The Paleoindigenous/Paleoamerican tradition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background • Early and Late Paleoindigenous tradition (N. America) • South American Paleoamerican tradition 	Meltzer ch. 3,6,7-9
Nov. 8	Graphical abstract due	
9	Subsistence and the Ice Age Megafauna <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pleistocene subsistence and diet • Background: Pleistocene megafauna • The extinction debate • The Younger Dryas ET hypothesis • NOVA documentary 	Meltzer ch. 3,6,7-9
10	Submerged sites and underwater archaeology: The new frontier <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Research methods • Oceanic coastal sites (Florida) • Great Lakes underwater archaeology 	Meltzer ch. 3,6,7-9
11	Local/Ontario archaeology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profile of an early local site • Voluntary fieldtrip* 	TBD
TBA	Final exam	
Dec. 4	Short paper due	

* This voluntary component will be moved to earlier in the term (due to weather) and will occur outside of class time.

