



DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
ANTH 2151 WAO Ancient Peoples and Places
Winter 2026

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:00 – 5:30 PM
Room: OA 2015
Instructor: Dr. Rachele Andrea Bianchi

CONTACT INFORMATION

Office Location: on the 3rd floor of Simcoe Hall
Office Hours: in person by appointment
E-mail: rbianchi@lakeheadu.ca
Course Website: <https://mycourselink.lakeheadu.ca/d2l/home/173786>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An overview of Old and New World archaeology, with particular emphasis on the development of humans and culture from hunting/gathering to agricultural and ancient urban societies in Mesoamerica, Europe, Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley and China.

SUPPLEMENTARY COURSE DESCRIPTION

To the list above, add Central Asia.

This course is an archaeological survey of human cultural development from a global perspective. In comparative perspective, we will take up fundamental questions concerning the origins and development of culture after the appearance of *Homo sapiens*. We will investigate different aspects of past ways of life, including the elaboration of material culture; the expansion of social inequality; the development of diverse food procurement (hunter-gatherer-fisher) and food production (herding-agricultural) economies; and the changes in patterns of mobility over time and between world areas, with the growth of village and city life.

As we delve into the fascinating stories archaeologists have reconstructed for humankind's path from past to present, you will also have the chance to engage with the current state of archaeological research and some of the major issues archaeologists address in their archaeologically-based recreations of human history.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Recognize major themes and methods in archaeological re-creations of past human cultural development worldwide
- Articulate general and specific levels of knowledge regarding world prehistory
- Recognize the similarities and differences in the human past around the world
- Apply archaeological data to create narratives of the past
- Critically evaluate existing research results and methods to discuss issues in the creation of narratives of the past

REQUIRED READINGS

- Chazan, M., (2021), *World Prehistory and Archaeology: Pathways Through Time*. 5th edition. NY: Routledge (price for a new copy from the bookstore: CAD 177.95)
- Other materials online provided under each module (on MyCourseLink)

COURSE ASSESSMENTS

- Tests 2 x 22.5% = 45%
- Term Project = 15% (see below)
- Final Exam = 35%
- Participation in Class Activities (3) = 5%

Tests

Two in-class tests evaluate your understanding of material presented in lectures, the textbook, and other required readings. These are meant to provide you with a good understanding of what you have retained from class, and what you might need to review before the final exam.

Test 1 covers Weeks 1-4 only (February 5th). Test 2 covers Weeks 5-9 only (March 12th). Formats TBA.

Term Project, Scaffolded and Embedded in the Final Exam:

This semester you will select an ancient people and/or place from among the people and places treated in the textbook. You will be tasked to find relevant peer-reviewed sources (articles in scholarly periodicals and books) to further expand on either (a) the archaeological evidence underpinning the archaeological narratives concerning the your selected people or (b) a prehistoric site as revealed by archaeological survey and excavation.

You will learn more than the textbook's account of (a) or (b), and by the end of the semester, you will be able to provide a more extensive description of current archaeological knowledge on the topic, and an assessment of the subject's significance.

The assessment will take place in three parts:

Topic selection (People and/or place) – 0% (you will need approval to continue)

Identification of sources (at least 3) – 5%

Answering specific questions (embedded in the final exam) – 10%

Detailed instructions will be posted on MyCourseLink.

Final Examination

This course's final examination will take place during the April Examination Period at a time and place set by the Registrar's Office, TBA. The final examination consists of two parts. Part 1 (worth 35% of your mark in this course) consists of questions covering the entire semester; they will be based on lectures, the textbook, and other required readings. Format TBA. Part 2 (worth 10% of your mark in this course) consists of questions directly concerning the research you did for your term project.

Participation

5% of your final grade will be based on your participation during three hands-on activities scheduled to take place during class on Thursday (see schedule for specific dates). These activities are designed to give you the chance to engage in some tasks that will teach you core skills you will find useful in approaching critical understanding of archaeological data and interpretations.

Important Dates

Winter Study Break: Monday, February 16th – Friday, February 20th, 2026. No classes.

Final Day to Drop This Course: Friday, March 6th, 2026.

Exam Period: April 10th – 19th, 2026.

DO NOT MAKE ANY TRAVEL PLANS UNTIL AFTER THE EXAM DATE FOR THIS COURSE HAS BEEN POSTED.



Kafir Kala – Uzbekistan
Photos by Rachele A. Bianchi

Course Schedule
(Subject to change as circumstances warrant)

	Date	Topic	Readings
1	TUE - Jan. 6	Course Introduction	Familiarize yourself with the syllabus Start looking at the case studies for the final project: Editors (2025) Top 10 discoveries of 2025. <i>Archaeology</i> 77(1) https://archaeology.org/collection/top-10-discoveries-of-2025/
	THU – Jan. 8	Required Background - Artefacts and Ecofacts - Time and Archaeology - Narratives	Chazan: Ch. 1 - sections 1.4 and 1.5 – pp.20-24 Ch. 1 - sections 1.8, 1.9, 1.11 – pp 28-32, 34-35 Ch. 2
2	TUE – Jan. 13	Module 1: Paleolithic (worldwide, but especially in Europe)	Chazan Ch 5 – section 5.5 and 5.6 – pp.139-150 Ch. 6
	THU – Jan. 15	Transitioning lifeways: Mesolithic-Neolithic, Archaic (worldwide)	Olszewski, Deborah I. (2019) <i>Archaeology and Humanity's Story: A Brief Introduction to World Prehistory</i> . Second edition. Oxford University Press. Pp.132-153, 164-166 (provided on MyCourseLink)
3	TUE – Jan. 20	Module 2: Mesopotamia Settling down and breaking ground: Early Agriculture in Mesopotamia	Chazan Ch. 7 – sections 7.4 – 7.7 – pp. 200-215 Ildun, O., (2024), Discovering a New Neolithic World, <i>Archaeology</i> , March/April issue. https://archaeology.org/issues/march-april-2024/features/discovering-a-new-neolithic-world/ . (provided on MyCourseLink)
	THU – Jan. 22	Module 2: Mesopotamia Villages, Cities, States, and Empires	Chazan pp.262-269 Ch. 11 - section 11.1 – pp.298-308

4	TUE – Jan. 27	Module 2: Mesopotamia Villages, Cities, States, and Empires (continued)	Lawler (2013) The everlasting city. <i>Archaeology</i> 66(5): 26-32. Editors (2016) The world's oldest writing. <i>Archaeology</i> 69(3): 26-33. J. Oates, et al. (2007). Early Mesopotamian urbanism: a new view from the north. <i>Antiquity</i> 81: 565-600. (all provided on MyCourseLink)
		TOPIC SELECTION DUE	
	THU – Jan. 29	Module 3: Similarities and differences Complexity without the state	Chazan Ch. 10 – pp.270-294
5	TUE – Feb. 3	Activity 1: Skill development – sketch mapping	
	THU – Feb. 5	Test 1	
6	TUE – Feb. 10	Module 4: Mesoamerica Early agriculture, Formative & Classic	Chazan Ch.8 – pp.216-236
	THU – Feb. 12	Module 4: Mesoamerica From city to empire: the Maya and the Aztecs (Mexico)	Chazan Ch. 13 – pp.356-382
7		Week 7 – reading week – NO CLASS	
8	TUE – Feb. 24	Module 5: Similarities and differences: The Andes	Chazan Ch.14 –pp.386-404
	THU – Feb. 26	Activity 2: Skill development – typologies	
		IDENTIFICATION OF SOURCES DUE	

9	TUE – Mar. 3	Module 6: China Early agriculture, villages in China	Chazan: Ch 9 – section 9.4 – pp. 254-260 Lobell, J.A., (2023), Like Water for Wheat, <i>Archaeology</i> , March/April https://archaeology.org/issues/march-april-2023/collection/like-water-for-wheat/the-ancient-promise-of-water/ https://www.bowers.org/index.php/collections-blog/neolithic-chinese-vessel Liu L. Setting the scene. In: <i>The Chinese Neolithic: Trajectories to Early States</i> . New Studies in Archaeology. Cambridge University Press; 2005:1-5 (all provided on MyCourseLink)
	THU – Mar. 5	Module 6: China Urbanism and State(s) in China	Chazan Ch 12 – sections 12.2 and 12.3 – pp.341-354 Xin, L. (2024), The Many Faces of the Kingdom of Shu, <i>Archaeology</i> , November/December https://archaeology.org/issues/november-december-2024/features/the-many-faces-of-the-kingdom-of-shu/ (provided on MyCourseLink)
10	TUE – Mar. 10	Module 7: Similarities and differences: Egypt and Indus	Chazan Ch. 11 – section 11.2 – pp.308-319 Ch. 12 – section 12.1 – pp.334-341
	THU – Mar. 12	Test 2	
11	TUE – Mar. 17	Module 8: Central Asia Domesticating the land: agriculture or pastoralism?	Read summary provided in the module
	THU – Mar. 19	Module 8: Central Asia Networks of interaction and exchange: the Central Asian Bronze Age	Read summary provided in the module
12	TUE – Mar. 24	Summary and exam preparation:	Read through your notes on readings and questions and come to class with questions for the exam. Indicate where you have gaps in your notes!
	THU – Mar. 26	Activity 3: Skill development – archaeological illustration	

Assignment Submission Policy

Assignments will usually be submitted to the instructor in person at the end of each in-class session. In case of a disruption to the term, should an assignment require online submission via the course website, full instructions will be provided on the assignment and on the course website.

Late Assignments

The assignments in this class will usually be carried out and turned in during class; therefore, generally **no late assignments will be accepted** for this class.

Should there be any occasion on which assignments are due after the class session ends, such as a disruption to the term, the following late penalty will be applied:

- A late assignment will be accepted with a late penalty of 10% per day (including weekends) for up to 5 days.
- After 5 days, late assignments will not be accepted.

Missed Term Tests

Students who miss a term test will be assigned a zero mark for that test unless they are granted special consideration (see below).

- A make-up test will be scheduled for students who have been granted special consideration (the week following the test; exact date and location to be provided).
- The make-up test will be primarily short answer and short essay.
- Students who miss the make-up test will be assigned a zero mark unless they are granted a second special consideration (see below).
- If a second make-up test is scheduled, it will necessarily be primarily an essay test.

Special Consideration For Missed Academic Term Tests

Students who miss the term test because of a temporary absence for a legitimate reason will receive reasonable academic consideration, such as the opportunity to write a make-up, without the need to provide supporting documentation.

Legitimate reasons for absence include:

- Illness or injury
- Personal or family emergencies
- Bereavement
- University sponsored events

The following are not considered legitimate reasons for absence:

- Personal social obligations
- Travel unrelated to the student's academic program
- Technological issues
- Avoidance of assessment or deadlines

To receive academic consideration for legitimate reasons, within 48 hours of the missed test students must use the Lakehead departmental process for special consideration. Students

with departmental approval for special consideration will be given the opportunity to write the make-up test ONLY at the date and time scheduled.

Missed Final Exams

Students who miss the scheduled final exam MUST file a petition with the University within 2 business days for consideration for the opportunity to write a Deferred Exam. If you miss an exam, you MUST follow the instructions on the link below – the instructor and the department cannot assist with Exam make-ups.

<https://www.lakeheadu.ca/studentcentral/exams/Final-Exam-Deferral>

The Deferred Exam will be primarily short answer and short essay.

Course Policies

COURSE COMMUNICATION

You must use your lakeheadu.ca email address when corresponding with the instructor to ensure that your email messages are not filtered out by spam software. Please include "ANTH2151" in the subject line for priority responses. I will try to reply to all appropriate emails within 48 hours on business days (not including weekends).

Please keep your emails brief, and come to our office hours for longer discussions.

CLASSROOM CONDUCT

- No cellphones may be out during lectures, except with explicit permission of the Instructor or as an accommodation. Use of laptops is usually not allowed during in-class practical activities to avoid damage to artifacts; please consult with the Instructor as needed.
- Be sure to bring pencils/pens to your practical sessions!
- Additional practical conduct rules will be provided at the beginning of each activity.
- All cellphones must be silent during the lectures.
- You are expected to abide by the University's code of student conduct.
- Students who do not abide by the code of conduct will be asked to leave the lecture.

FINAL MARKS

Final marks are tentative until approved by the Department of Anthropology Chair, the Office of the Dean, and recorded in the Office of the Registrar.

RE-GRADING POLICY

You must follow the official re-grading policy to request a re-mark of any piece of term work. Please see the full policy at:

<https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/risk-and-privacy/student-appeals/academic-appeal-forms-new-page->

Note that the entire piece of work will be re-marked, so the final mark may be raised or lowered.

STUDENT CONDUCT

If a student wishes to record, photograph, or otherwise reproduce lecture presentations, course notes or other similar materials provided by instructors, they must obtain the instructor's written consent beforehand. Otherwise, all such reproduction is an infringement of copyright and is absolutely prohibited. In the case of private use by students with disabilities, the instructor's consent will not be unreasonably withheld.

Taping / Recording / Photographing Lectures is otherwise NOT ALLOWED

Academic Integrity Statement:

I understand and agree that:

(1) Unless otherwise allowed by the course instructor, I must complete the assignments in this course without the assistance of anyone else.

(2) Unless otherwise allowed by the course instructor, I must not access any sources or materials (in print, online, or in any other way) to complete any course exam.

I further understand and agree that, if I violate either of these two rules, or if I provide any false or misleading information about my completion of course assignments or exams, I may be prosecuted under the Lakehead University Student Code of Conduct – Academic Integrity, which requires students to act ethically and with integrity in academic matters to demonstrate behaviours that support the University's academic values.

University Related Requirements:

Regulations

It is the responsibility of each student registered at Lakehead University to be familiar with, and comply with all the terms, requirements, regulations, policies and conditions in the Lakehead University [Academic Calendar](#). This includes, but is not limited to, Academic Program Requirements, Academic Schedule of Dates, University and Faculty/School Policies and Regulations and the Fees and Refund Policies and Schedules ([University Regulations](#), accessed December 22nd, 2025).

Academic Integrity

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 are strongly advised to familiarize themselves with the Student Code of Conduct - Academic Integrity ("[The Code](#)") - and, in particular, **sections 26 and 83 through 85**. Non-compliance with the Code will NOT be tolerated in this course and the Code will be adhered to in terms of disciplinary action. The Code provides a full description of academic offences, procedures when Academic Integrity breaches are suspected and sanctions for breaches of Academic Integrity.

Potential offences to the code of academic integrity include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing unauthorized aids.
- Looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test.
- Misrepresenting your identity.

In academic work:

- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes.

On sharing instructor's intellectual property covered by the Canadian Copyright Act:

- Posting test, essay, or exam questions to message boards or social media.
- Creating, accessing, and sharing assessment questions and answers in virtual course groups.

Lesser-known academic offenses:

- Accessing unauthorized resources (search engines, chat rooms, Reddit, etc.) for assessments.
- Using technological aids (e.g. software) beyond what is listed as permitted in an assessment.
- The unauthorized use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to assist in academic work.

Copyright

Students should be aware that all instructional, reference, and administrative materials prepared for this course are protected in their entirety by copyright. Students are expected to comply with this copyright by only accessing and using the course materials for personal educational use related to the course, and that the materials cannot be shared in any way, without the written authorization of the course instructor. If this copyright is infringed in anyway, students may be prosecuted under the Lakehead University Student Code of Conduct – Academic Integrity, which requires students to act ethically and with integrity in academic matters and to demonstrate behaviours that support the University's academic values.

Copyright Compliance:

I understand and agree that all instructional, reference, and administrative materials to which I am given access in this course (the "course materials"), whether they consist of text, still or kinetic images, or sound, whether they are in digital or hard copy formats, and in whatever media they are offered, are protected in their entirety by copyright, and that to comply with this copyright and the law

(1) I may access and download the course materials only for my own personal and non-commercial use for this course; and

(2) I am not permitted to download, copy, or store (in any medium) any text, image, or sound component of the course materials for any other purpose whatsoever, or to forward or share, transmit, broadcast, show, post or play in public, adapt, or change in any way any text, image, or sound component of the course materials, except as expressly authorized, and only to the extent authorized, in writing, by the course instructor."

I further understand and agree that, if I infringe the copyright of the course materials in any way, I may be prosecuted under the Lakehead University Student Code of Conduct – Academic Integrity, which requires students to act ethically and with integrity in academic matters and to demonstrate behaviours that support the University's academic values.

Supports for Students – there are many resources available to support students. These include but are not limited to:

- [Health and Wellness](#)
- [Student Accessibility Centre](#)
- [Library](#)
- [Academic Support Zone](#)
- [Indigenous Student Services Centre](#)
- [International](#)
- [Student Central](#)

Lakehead University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities and/or medical conditions 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 contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (Thunder Bay: SC0003, (807) 343-8047 or sas@lakeheadu.ca Orillia: OA 1030, (705) 330-4010 ext. 2103 or oraccess@lakeheadu.ca)

Mental Health Syllabi Statement

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, Student Health and Wellness is here to help. Their services are free for Lakehead Students and appointments are available. You can learn more about confidential mental health services available on and off campus at lakeheadu.ca/shw.

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. Asking for support sooner rather than later is almost always helpful.