

Archaeology in Pop Culture

Anthro 201Q2

Syllabus and Course Schedule

Fall Semester 2022

Classroom:

Lectures:

Credits: 3

e-mail:

Pronouns:

Dr. Kevin Garstki

Office:

Office Hours:

Welcome!

Welcome to Anthro 201Q2: Archaeology in Pop Culture! Archaeology in Pop Culture course is a Quest II and Explore Society (XS) course in the University Studies Program (USP). This course is also a Global Citizenship (GC) course. As part of the [Global Scholar Certificate](#), this Global Citizenship course presents the knowledge of nations, cultures, or societies beyond the U.S.; the recognition of how interaction, interdependence, and inequity among diverse geographical, social, political, or economic systems have shaped historical and contemporary global challenges and opportunities; and the skills to engage with the responsibilities of informed citizenship in a complex, interdependent, and changing world. The USP as a whole is meant to provide students with a firm grounding in a liberal arts education, and this course will help move you towards that goal. This course also serves as an elective for Anthropology majors and minors. There are no prerequisites for this course.

Catalog Description

We will explore how Archaeology and the past are depicted in popular culture. The course will trace the use of archaeology in movies, video games, books, social media, newspapers, and more. Since our understanding of past people greatly influences how we create modern identity and treat those we view as different, the control and depiction of the past also impacts the lives of those in the present and future.

Course Description

This is a Quest II, Explore Course that engages with the question, “How do people understand and bridge cultural differences?” Archaeology is frequently represented in popular culture, in everything from television and movies to books and video games. Many of these media, either using archaeology as a backdrop for a larger story or as the focus itself, are widely successful and often act as the main point of interaction between the public imagination and the ancient past. But from Atlantis to pyramid-building aliens, the ways in which the past is depicted in popular media differs widely from the past that archaeologists seek to expose and share with the public. Furthermore, the ways archaeologists themselves are depicted in media often lean towards the tomb-robbing adventurers (e.g., Lara Croft and Indiana Jones), doing little to help further the goals of cultural heritage protection and preservation. What are the

causes of these stark divides? This course will delve into the different ways in which archaeology and archaeologists are presented in modern popular culture and work to understand the underlying colonial, nationalistic, or racist factors that lead to “alternate archaeologies.” Through this class, you should expect to develop an introductory understanding of archaeology, as well as the scientific process that guides archaeological work. This foundation will allow us to critically investigate claims about the archaeological past in popular culture, such as the influence of aliens on ancient cultures. We will cover topics including Egyptomania, occult archaeology, reality TV, archaeology in and of video games, and future ways to connect through popular media using ethical archaeological narratives. Following completion of this course, you will:

- Understand how archaeologists create narratives about the past, through fieldwork and analysis of materials.
- Develop your knowledge and skills in science communication.
- Gain strategies to read, watch, and assess historical and archaeological claims in popular media, as well as pseudoscientific claims.
- Develop an understanding for how archaeological claims can be misused to support harmful ideologies.
- Develop an understanding for how modern identities are acted out in relation to the past.

The University Studies Program

This course is part of the University Studies Program (USP), your gateway to a 21st century college education at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. In this Explore course, you will have the opportunity to further investigate one of the Signature Questions that are the focus of your Quest courses. These three “Signature Questions” are central to a UW Oshkosh education:

- How do people understand and engage in community life?
- How do people understand and create a more sustainable world?
- How do people understand and bridge cultural differences?

What is an Explore Course and how does it fit with a liberal arts education?

This course is an Explore course for the USP. The Explore classes are designed to provide a solid foundation for the rest of your education here, no matter which major you choose. For further information about the unique general education at UW Oshkosh and the other USP courses that are available, visit the University Studies Program website at uwosh.edu/usp.

Liberal Education is an approach to learning that empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. It provides you with broad knowledge of the wider world (e.g., science, culture, and society) as well as in-depth study in a specific area of interest. A liberal education helps you develop a sense of social responsibility, as well as strong and transferable intellectual and practical skills such as communication, analytical and problem-solving skills, and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings. (AAC&U, <http://www.aacu.org/leap/what-is-a-liberal-education>)

Quest Classes and Quest II Objectives

Quest courses are designated as Quest I, Quest II and Quest III. Students who start their college career at UW Oshkosh take Quest I and II in their first year. In addition to covering disciplinary content, these courses are designed to help you transition to college life. Students take Quest III in either semester of their second year. Learning in Quest III is enhanced by a community engagement experience. As a result of taking this Quest II class, you will:

- Be prepared for Quest III and to serve as a member of a larger community.
- Define and explain ethical reasoning and recognize ethical issues.
- Recognize how humans develop an understanding of cultural differences and similarities.
- Situate yourself within a larger cultural framework.
- Develop a vocabulary for talking about modern and ancient identities, including but not limited to: race, gender, sexuality, class.

USP Required Assignments (Dates are not yet set in schedule)

Elevator Pitch and Resume Workshop

This will be held during class time and is MANDATORY! **DATE.**

Alumni Visit

This will be held during class time and is MANDATORY! **DATE**

Career Fair

Each of you **MUST** attend one career fair during the semester. **DATES**

Academic Open Houses

You will each need to attend a minimum of **3** academic open houses. **DATES**

Required Readings

All reading will be posted to the course Canvas site. You will come to class having read all the readings for that class and having access to the material during class, printed out or in digital form.

A full bibliography of required readings is listed at the end of the syllabus.

Assessments

In class activities	30%
Media Response Papers	10%
Article Reviews	10%
Exam 1	10%
Exam 2	10%

Pop Culture Narrative	20%
Quest II Assignments	10%

- In class activities (30%)
In many classes during the semester, you will work on individual or group activities that will elaborate on topics we're covering in class. Additionally, each movie or television we screen in class will also have an accompanying activity. Some of these activities will also require you to find a resource or do some preparation outside of class. These will all be collected during or at the end of the class.
- Media Response Papers (10%)
You will write two response papers (2-3 pages) based on a viewing (outside of class) of movies or TV shows depicting people in the past. The goal of this assignment is to identify how past people are being depicted in these movies or shows, what tropes the creators are utilizing to tell the narrative, and how these depictions might impact modern viewers and their perspectives on living people.
- Article Reviews (10%)
Throughout the semester you will be responsible for finding two newspaper articles and writing a critique (2-3 pages) of the presentation of archaeology and their use of "clickbait" tropes. You will be expected to bring to this critique what you have learned about real archaeological practice in the early part of the semester. Also, you will need to provide alternatives to these presentations (i.e., how would you do it better?).
- Exams (20%)
We will have two exams in the semester, coming roughly 1/3 and 2/3 of the way through the semester. These exams will be take-home and consist of critical thinking short answer/essay questions that examine the topics the class has covered until that point.
- Pop Culture Narrative (20%)
This project will encourage your creative interpretations of traditional archaeological narratives and bring what you've learned through the course together in an ethical narrative in a pop cultural medium. You will choose from a few real archaeological stories and create your own narrative suited for modern popular culture; this can include (but not limited to): a comic strip, board game, fiction work, video, website, social media "story," or video game. While what you choose to create for your narrative is open, you'll still need to make sure you've conveyed all of the important details of the archaeological story, and demonstrate how your narrative presentation is ethically representing the past and its impact on living people.
- Quest II Assignments (10%)

You will have short assignments associated with all of the Quest II activities, some of which will be done outside of class, while others will take place in class.

Grading:

A	93-100%	C	73-76%
A-	90-92%	C-	70-72%
B+	87-89%	D+	67-69%
B	83-86%	D	63-66%
B-	80-82%	D-	60-62%
C+	77-79%	F	0-59%

- I reserve the right to lower one or more of these grade thresholds. Under no circumstance will I raise any of the thresholds. Grades will be posted on Canvas as soon as they are available.
- Cheating will not be tolerated. Evidence of cheating includes (but is not limited to) the following behaviors: (1) talking to your neighbor for any reason during an exam, (2) looking at another person's exam, (3) looking at texts, notes, or any other materials during the exam, (4) having open notes or a textbook in view, or having a cell phone in view, (5) plagiarizing another student's assignments, plagiarizing any resources for assignments, or neglecting to cite any resources used in assignments. Anyone caught in any of these acts is subject to the confiscation of their exam or failure of the essay assignment. If this happens, a grade of zero for that examination or essay will be entered into the class records and a report will be made to the Dean of Students. No make-ups are available in this situation.

Attendance and Class Participation:

Although attendance is not required, we will be covering most of the content during class times. In addition, there will be several in class activities that will serve to assess your participation and to help you master the material covered in the course. Note that I will periodically ask for student participation in class, which will also give me a sense of who is attending class and participating.

Absence Policy:

Throughout the semester, issues in attendance may arise for some students. Any coursework missed due to covid, military leave, religious holidays, and emergency situations will be fully excused when brought to my attention ahead of time. In these instances, work may be made up with no penalty. If you already are aware of potential conflicts, please notify me as soon as possible so accommodations can be made.

Other Information:

- Students needing accommodations: If you need accommodations (e.g., testing, note taking, etc. through Project Success or Accessibility Services) please talk to me

about this within the first two weeks of class. It is helpful for me to know who you are ahead of time, so I can make sure you get the accommodation you need.

- The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. It is the University's policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students who have documented disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements.

Students are expected to inform Instructors of the need for accommodations as soon as possible by presenting an Accommodation Plan from either the Accessibility Center, Project Success, or both. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared Instructor and student responsibility.

The Accessibility Center is part of the Dean of Students Office and is located in 125 Dempsey Hall. For more information, call 920-424-3100, email accessibilitycenter@uwosh.edu, or visit the [Accessibility Center Website](#).

- Academic Misconduct: Under no circumstances will this be tolerated. Any person caught is subject to review and failure.
- Sexual Harassment: Zero tolerance.
- Bias Response: All participants in this course deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. This campus will not tolerate acts of discrimination and the use of language that's sole purpose is to injure another does not reflect who we are as Titans. Civility is a campus value at UW Oshkosh. If an instance of bias occurs, either inside or outside the classroom, students are encouraged to fill out the Bias Incident report - <https://uwosh.edu/police/bias-incident-report/>
- Reporting Discrimination or Harassment: UW Oshkosh is committed to providing the safest campus possible for our students, faculty and staff. Students experiencing any form of prohibited discrimination or harassment, including but not limited to sex or gender-based violence, can report it by contacting Equal Opportunity, Equity & Affirmative Action/Title IX office (920-424-1166), or Dean of Students office (920-424-3100). If you choose to contact one of these offices, your information will be private but may not remain confidential. You may also call the [Campus Survivor Advocate](#) (920-424-2024) for confidential help and resources. You can also find more information on policies and resources at uwosh.edu/titleix/, uwosh.edu/equity/ and uwosh.edu/hr/policies-procedures/.

Please note that I am a responsible employee for UW Oshkosh and therefore have an obligation to report incidents of sexual violence and misconduct that are brought to my attention to the Title IX Coordinator. For more information about my reporting requirements visit uwosh.edu/titleix/employee-responsibilities/. Under [Executive Order 54](#), I am a mandatory reporter and also have an obligation to report child abuse/neglect.

- Grading Problems: Please consult the instructor.
- Email and Canvas: Canvas is the central hub for our class – it is where assignments, readings, changes to the course schedule, etc. are posted. You are required to use it, and to check it regularly. If you have difficulty using Canvas, please let me know ASAP and we can work through the problem or set up a training session for you. Email is also an official form of class business. This means I expect you to check your UW-Oshkosh email account daily on the weekdays, and to read my emails as

they are official class announcements. Email is also an excellent way to reach me, but please don't expect me to respond right away on weekends, if I am away at a conference, or over a break. Giving me at least 24 hours to respond is a good general guideline.

- **Early Alert:** After the third week of class, you will receive a grade for your overall progress in this course and each of the courses you are taking in the University Studies Program. This process is called "Early Alert." You will receive this information in an email during the 5th week of classes. Early Alert is designed to help you evaluate your study skills and your class attendance so that you know if you are on the right track. If you need to make some changes, there are resources available to support your academic success. These Early Alert Grades are not permanent and will not appear on your transcript.
- **Course Schedule:** If any substantive changes are made in the course syllabus, notification will be provided in a timely manner and a revised syllabus made available. Feel free to give feedback on the speed of the class or the choice of topics.
- Students are advised to see the following URL for disclosures about essential consumer protection items required by the Students Right to Know Act of 1990: <https://uwosh.edu/financialaid/consumer-information/>

Campus Resources:

At UWO we want you to be successful. Please visit this [resource page](#) to read about all the campus services available to support your success. Some of the more relevant resources are listed below:

- **Center for Academic Resources:** The Center for Academic Resources (CAR) provides free, confidential tutoring for students in most undergraduate classes on campus. CAR is located in the Student Success Center, Suite 102. Check the Tutor List page on CAR's website (car.uwosh.edu) for a list of tutors. If your course is not listed, click on the link to request one, stop by SSC 102 or call 920-424-2290. To schedule a tutoring session, simply email the tutor, let him/her know what class you are seeking assistance in, and schedule a time to meet.
- **Writing Center:** The Writing Center helps students of all ability levels improve their writing. Trained peer consultants help writers understand an assignment, envision possibilities for a draft, and improve their writing process. They even help writers learn to identify their own proofreading errors. Students can make a free appointment or stop by to see whether a consultant is available. For more information, view their website (writingcenter.uwosh.edu), call 920-424-1152, email wcenter@uwosh.edu, or visit them in Suite 102 of the Student Success Center.
- **Reading Study Center:** The Reading Study Center is an all-university service whose mission is to facilitate the development of efficient college-level learning strategies in students of all abilities. The center offers strategies for improved textbook study, time management, note-taking, test preparation, and test taking. For more information, email readingstudy@uwosh.edu, view the website

(uwosh.edu/readingstudycenter), visit them in Nursing Ed Room 201, or call 920-424-1031.

- Dean of Students Office: The Dean of Students Office (DOS) helps students in navigating the university, particularly during difficult situations, such as personal, financial, medical, and/or family crises. DOS assists students with Out of Class Letters to faculty, Late Withdrawals/Drop for personal or medical issues, advocacy, and coordinates care for students through the Student Care Team. Please visit <http://www.uwosh.edu/deanofstudents> for more information.

Class Schedule

Week	Date	Topics	Readings and Assignments
	Th	Introduction to the Course What is Anthropology?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Syllabus
1	Tu	Epistemology: How do we know what we know?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feder Ch. 1 and 2
	Th	Archaeological fieldwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bahn Intro and Ch.1 • <i>Time Team</i> screening
2	Tu	What is it and when is it from?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bahn Ch. 2 and 3 • Artifact identification activity
	Th	How do archaeologists create interpretations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bahn Ch. 4 - 6
3	Tu	Archaeology as Adventure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Romancing the Stones: Archaeology in Popular Cinema” • “The Public Image of the Female Archaeologist: The Case of Lara Croft.”
	Th	Archaeology as Adventure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Indiana Jones</i> screening and activity
4	Tu	Archaeology as Treasure Hunting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Portable Antiquities: Archaeology, collecting, metal detecting.” • “Diggers Evaluating Diggers: A collaboration between SAA and the National Geographic Channel”
	Th	Archaeology as Treasure Hunting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Diggers and Legends of the Lost with Megan Fox</i> screening and activity
5	Tu	Atlantis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feder Ch. 8
	Th	Atlantis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Atlantis Rising</i> screening and activity
6	Tu	Ancient Aliens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excerpts from <i>Chariot of the Gods</i>
	Th	Ancient Aliens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Chariot of the Gods</i> and <i>Ancient Aliens</i> Screening and Activity
7	Tu	Egyptomania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Unwrapping the Mummy: Hollywood Fantasies, Egyptian Realities” • “Egyptomania! What accounts for our intoxication with things Egyptian?” • Excerpts from Amelia Peabody book

	Th	Egyptomania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Mummy</i> screening and activity
8	Tu	Nation Building & Nationalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Skull Wars”: Prologue, Ch. 4, and 5.
	Th	Nation Building & Nationalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feder Ch. 5, 6, 7 • “Journeys to Complete the work” (Comic)
9	Tu	Nation Building & Nationalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Brexit hypothesis and prehistory” • “Pseudoarchaeology and nationalism: essentializing difference” • “Out ancestors the Gauls”
	Th	Nation Building & Nationalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Imaging Blackness: Archaeological and Cinematic Visions of African American Life” • “The myth of Irish Slaves”
10	Tu	Archaeogaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Archaeogaming: An Introduction to Archaeology in and of Video Games” Ch. 1. • Discussion and viewing of short film on the “Legacy Hub Archaeology Project”
	Th	Archaeogaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing through examples games together in class • In class activity
11	Tu – Th	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
12	Tu	“Old” Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper clippings through time • “The Serialized Past: Archaeology News Online”
	Th	“Old” Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What’s the meaning of Stonehenge” (Comic)
13	Tu	Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Digital Media in Public Archaeology”
	Th	Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archaeological Twitter threads
14	Tu	Course wrap-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop Culture Narrative Due
	Th	NO CLASS - *Unless weather, illness, etc. require a make-up	

Course Bibliography

Arnold, B. 2006 "Pseudoarchaeology and nationalism: essentializing difference"

Atalay, S., Shannon, Swogger 20.. *Journeys to Complete the Work: ...and changing the way we bring Native American ancestors home.*

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Richardson, L.-J., and T. Pickering. 2021. "What's the Meaning of Stonehenge?". *Epoiesen*. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22215/epoiesen/2021.7>

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Van Daniken, E. 1968. *Chariot of the Gods*.

Zorpidu, S. 2004 "The Public Image of the Female Archaeologist: The Case of Lara Croft." In *The Interplay of Past and Present*. Hans Bolin, ed.