

## UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS-ARLINGTON SYLLABUS

**Course:** ANTH 2359

**Course title:** Myths and Mysteries in Archaeology

**Course description:**

This course will critically examine pseudoscience, cult archaeology and creationism from a scientific perspective. Through the close examination of case studies we will dispel archaeological myths and mysteries which are often depicted as fantastic or cult archaeology. This course will demonstrate that a strong adherence to scientific investigation can uncover facts about prehistory that are as interesting as the myths. This is a course that specializes in the critical thinking and uses examples about the human past to do so. The goal of the course is to develop is to provide students with a rational toolkit with the ability to think critically about the human past and the human present.

**Course Credit Hours:** 3 units

**Professor's Information:**

Instructor: Keith Eppich

Email: TBA

Office phone number: TBA

Office: TBA

**Class information:**

Class hours: Tuesdays- Thursday, 3:40-4:50

Classroom: SH 331

**UT-Arlington Grade Replacement Policy:**

Upon earning a grade of D or F in a course, a student has the opportunity to replace the original grade when repeating the course. Some schools and colleges have restrictions on repeating courses. A grade replacement means that the prior course grade of D or F will not be used in the GPA calculation; however, the first attempt course will remain on the official transcript. If simply repeating a course rather than replacing it, the original D or F grade will continue to be calculated into the GPA. Petitions for grade replacements must be filed in the Office of Records.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to do the following:

1. Understanding archaeology as a problem-solving methodology to answer questions about the human past
2. Articulating the usage of the scientific method and critical thinking skills as applied to the human past
3. Recognizing of pseudoscience and pseudoscientific claims, particularly involving the human past
4. Understanding the role and popularity of pseudoscience within American history and

culture

5. Explaining how the concepts and findings of science or technology in general, or of particular sciences or technologies shape our world.
6. Displaying all the above in a single case study

***Required Texts:***

*Archaeological Fantasies: how pseudoarchaeology misrepresents the past and misleads the public*, Garrett G. Fagan, editor (2006)

**ISBN-10:** 0415305934 \$41.82

*The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark*, Carl Sagan (1997)

**ISBN-10: 0345409469** \$12.34

*The Kensington Runestone, Approaching a Research Question Holistically*, Alice Kehoe (2004)

**ISBN-10:** 1577663713 \$14.02

*Chariots of the Gods*, Erich von Daniken (1968)

**ISBN-10:** 0425166805 \$10.75

***Method of Evaluation:***

The pedagogical model used in this course is called “participatory lecture,” in which the instructor provides a body of knowledge and sets up the classroom for an enlightened discussion. Come to class prepared to ask and answer questions, but there is no participation grade. There are numerous sources of grades: quizzes, reading assignments, out-of class essay sets and a critical term paper. There is a lot of reading and writing involved in this class. This is a university course and will generally require 6 to 8 hours of reading and writing outside of class per week.

**10 Vocabulary Quizzes (10 points for 100 point maximum)**

The last fifteen minutes of every class on Thursday will conclude with a vocabulary quiz, although some flexibility must be built into the schedule. Each quiz includes five identifications taken from the lecture. Each definition should identify the term and **give its importance**. The definitions will be chosen from a cumulative list that continues to build throughout the semester. A running glossary, constructed from the lectures is **highly recommended**.

**10 Reading Assignments (10 points each for 100 points maximum)**

Generally, homework assignments, taken from provided study guides, will be due first thing in class on Tuesday morning. The assignments will consist of 10 questions about an assigned section of reading. The study guides are available through the course’s Blackboard site. No late assignments will be accepted.

**3 out-of-class essay tests (50 each, with the final being 100, for a total of 200 points)**

Throughout the semester, generally on Thursdays, the class will be assigned take-home, opennote (but not open-source) essay tests. These are given out on a Thursday and due, first thing, in class the following Tuesday. The tests will consist of two to three full-length essay questions taken from the lectures in which the student will be expected to articulate and understanding of the scientific material presented in class. However, this is not a writing course. The students will be graded in their ability to argue convincingly and think critically about the

material presented in class, not any rhetorical ability or lack thereof. The student should state the topic, support it with evidence, and move on from there. Simple and straightforward answers are considered best. Use of first person is heavily discouraged.

### 1 term paper (50 points)

Using the skills acquired in class, student will read two texts, van Daniken and Kehoe in addition to three other scholarly articles. The arguments of either van Daniken and Kehoe are each to be evaluated in a three to five page paper. Students are expected to read the arguments and evaluate the strength and weaknesses of each author's argument in light of additional resources and the material presented in lecture.

### Final Grade:

Grades are determined by the total number of points accumulated throughout the semester. As currently planned, the course includes a maximum of 450 points. However, the test schedule and point total remain flexible due to the vicissitudes of the semester. It should be understood that the goal of the class is the acquisition of knowledge, not the assignation of grades. The final grade will be based on a 10 point scale, as follows

**A 90+% 405-450 points**

**B 80-89% 360-404 points**

**C 70-79% 315-359 points**

**D 60-69% 270-314 points**

**F < 59% less than 270 points**

Extra credit is available, but is assigned only on an individual basis. For extra credit, students must come to the instructor's office for small individualized projects.

If you have any questions about your grade I shall be happy to reread your work. I will not quibble about addition or division— I shall assume that my calculations are correct. Your option, in the event of any dispute or discussion, is to have me reread and reconsider the work you have done. The points awarded may go up, go down, or remain the same. If, prior to the end of the semester or in the case of the final exam, you want me to examine a single piece of work, I will be happy to do so and to provide you with an explanation of the grade. If you want me to reconsider your final course grade, I will need to be able to reexamine all of your work so keeping all graded work is highly recommended.

### **Attendance Policy:**

Students are expected to attend each class session. Students are responsible for officially withdrawing themselves from the course; failure to do so will result in a performance grade of "F". Exams, quizzes, and material missed due to official excused absences are generally due before the missed class.

### **Excused Absence Policy:**

The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs provides lists of students who have absences authorized by the University (e.g., participation in athletic events or scholastic activities that are officially sponsored University functions—these are primarily activities that are funded by the University). Sponsoring departments must submit a list of students and id numbers to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs **TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO TRAVEL**. The

student must contact the instructor **ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE** of the excused absence and arrange with the instructor to make up missed work or missed examinations. Instructors will provide those students an opportunity to make up the work or otherwise adjust the grading to ensure that the student is not penalized for the absence. Failure to notify the instructor or failure to comply with the arrangements to make up the work will void the excused absence.

If the student is called to active military duty or participates in active military service for a reasonably brief period, the student will be allowed to complete an assignment or exam within a reasonable time after the absence (Section 51.9111 Texas Education Code; 19 Texas Administrative Code §4.9.) Students called to active duty for longer periods of time, should contact the Office of Admissions, Records and Registration (Section 54.006).

### **Religious Holy Days:**

Students who must miss an examination, work assignment or other project because of an observance of a religious holy day will be given the opportunity to complete the work missed within a reasonable time after the absence (19 Texas Administrative Code §4.4).

A religious holy day means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20 of the Tax Code. A student will be excused from attending classes or completing other required activities, including examinations for the observance of a religious holy day. The period of the excused absence will include time for any travel needed to fulfill that religious obligation. The student will be given the opportunity to complete the work missed, within a reasonable time period following the absence, provided the student has properly notified the instructor. The instructor must be notified in writing at least **ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE** of the absence and the student must arrange with the instructor to make up missed work or examinations. The instructor is under no obligation to accommodate students who are absent or miss work without prior notification and make-up arrangements. Students who have properly notified the instructor will not be penalized for the absence. However, the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete the assignment or examination satisfactorily within the time limit following the absence set by prior arrangement.

If the instructor and the student disagree about whether an absence constitutes a religious holy day as defined above, or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the Office of the Provost. The decision of the Provost is final.

### **Disability Accommodations:**

The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

## **ACADEMIC HONOR CODE:**

### **UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON HONOR CODE**

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence. I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or that I contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

### **OFFICE OF STUDENT CONDUCT**

The Office of Student Conduct is responsible for the implementation of the Student Conduct & Discipline Handbook of Operating Procedures and the Regents' Rules and Regulations at the University of Texas at Arlington. We strive to uphold and support standards of personal honesty and integrity for all students consistent with the goals of a community of scholars and students seeking knowledge and responsibility.

Within the Office of Student Conduct we receive, manage and complete all disciplinary referrals from around campus, including:

- Scholastic dishonesty referrals
- Apartment and residence life referrals
- Campus community referrals

Consistent with this goal, the office is engaged in the task of educating the community regarding standards for student behavior and procedures used in the resolution of student disciplinary allegations. The Office of Student Conduct sponsors several large scale programs across campus, smaller residence life focused programming efforts and training for students, staff and faculty throughout the year.

If you have questions and would like to speak to a staff member within the Office of Student Conduct you can set up an appointment by calling 817-272-2354 or send an email to [conduct@uta.edu](mailto:conduct@uta.edu).

**Plagiarism** is the use of an author's words or ideas as if they were one's own without giving credit to the source, including, but not limited to, failure to acknowledge a direct quotation.

**Cheating** is the willful giving or receiving of information in an unauthorized manner during an examination; collaborating with another student during an examination without authority; using, buying, selling, soliciting, stealing, or otherwise obtaining examination questions in advance, copying computer or Internet files, using someone else's work for assignments as if it were one's own; or any other dishonest means of attempting to fulfill the requirements of a course.

**Collusion** is intentionally or unintentionally aiding or attempting to aid another in an act of scholastic dishonesty, including but not limited to, failing to secure academic work; providing a paper or project to another student; providing an inappropriate level of assistance; communicating answers to a classmate during an examination or any other course assignment; removing tests or answer sheets from a test site, and allowing a classmate to copy answers.

## TENATIVE COURSE CALENDAR:

### Week 1

**Introduction to the Course.** Class expectations and the syllabus.

### Week 2

**Why people believe things.** Subjective human perception and the tools of objectivity. Truth? Not here. Space-turtles and floating dragons. Subjective Realities and Human Culture. Rational actors. Pointing the Bone. The Prophetess of the Xhosa.

### Week 3

**Forbidden Archaeologies.** The Story of the Cardiff Giant. The Case of the Piltdown Man. Barry Fell. Ancient Aliens. The Hidden History of the Human Race. Atlantis. Lemuria. Fairies and Giants. African colonists. The Lost Tribes of Israel. America B.C.

### Week 4

**What is Archaeology?** Introduction and definitions. A Scientific Archaeology. Why investigate the past? What archaeology does well. Archaeology as the scientific methodology that investigates the human past through the medium of the archaeological record.

### Week 5

**Archaeological Case Study: Who Built the Pyramids of Egypt?** Why study the human past? Archaeology as a scientific methodology. A tradition of mastabas. Step-pyramids and Bent Pyramids. The graveyard of the workers. Graffiti and Bronze.

## TEST ONE

### Week 6

**Science and Critical Thought.** Can one teach critical thinking? Occam's Razor and Reason. Roman coins and TPQ. The two burials of Chak K'in. Questioning everything. Extraordinary Claims require what? Carl Sagan's invisible floating dragon. Bigfoot, Nessie, and Cryptozoology. Crystal Skulls and Atlantean ruins. Aliens!

### Week 7

**Rational Thought in Action.** Luis Alvarez and Cosmic Death for the Dinosaurs. How to shift a paradigm. The First Americans, Niéde Guidon and Pedra Furada. Leif Ericson, the Ingstads, and Iron Age Vikings in Native America. Ancient Aliens.

### Week 8

**Rivals for the First Americans.** Zhang He, Betty Meggers, and 1491. Van Sertima and the African Olmec. Basque Whalers and the Grand Banks. Thor Heyerdahl and *Ra*. The Kennewick Man. Barry Fell and *America, BC*. Mormonism and Mesoamerica. Aliens?

Week 9

**Archaeological Case Study: Who Built Stonehenge?** Lane-Fox Pitt-Rivers. Who built Wor Barrow? What is a Henge Complex? The Rude Giant of Cerne. Druids and Romans. Bell Beakers. Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age. Human Ecology and the human ecology of Megalithic Europe. Stonehenge in its Landscape. Mike Parker Pearson and the journey from life to death. Why build Stonehenge?

Week 10

**Scientific Debate and the Ancient Past.** Evolutionary adaptation, or how to build a civilization in a jungle. The rise and fall of the Classic Maya. Outstanding debates. Did the Maya have true “cities”? The Native American urban tradition. The Maya urbanism debate. Welcome to El Perú-*Waka'*. Twelve years in the jungle.

## TEST TWO

Week 11

**Archaeological Case Study: the Classic Maya Economy.** Debates within a scientific archaeology. Market distribution or State redistribution? Pottery and obsidian, Tikal's East Plaza. Distributional approaches and statistical techniques. Where's the evidence? Calakmul and the murals of Chiik Naab. Why? What does it matter?

Week 12

**Evolution and Intelligent Design.** Real world applications. Inside Darwin's Black Box. The irreducible complexity of the eye. Creation Science. *Of Pandas and People*. Intelligent design on trial. Evolutionary mechanism. Darwin's pigeons and Darwin's finches. Evolution and Texas. “The Revisionaries”

Week 13

**Archaeological Case Study: Rubbish! The Archaeology of Garbage.** Garbage in and Garbage out. William Rathje. What is Freshkills? A sad catalog of self-delusion. Changing American diets, or when rabbits became pets. The garbage crises?

Week 14

**Modern Controversies and Critical Thought.** Extraordinary Delusions and the Madness of Crowds. The Cult of the Icelandic Banker. Save the Whales! Phrenology. The Lobotomies, Lysenko. Virus Theory. Tectonic plates. Is String Theory real? The Science of Climate Change. Does ADHD exist?

## FINAL (SECOND TERM PAPER DUE)

## **UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS- ARLINGTON ACADEMIC CALENDAR, FALL 2014**

*August 21* First day of Classes

*August 21-August 27* Late Registration

*September 1* Labor Day- NO CLASS

*September 8* Census date

*October 29* Last Day to Drop Classes

*November 27-28* Thanksgiving Holidays

*December 3* Last Days of Classes. Finals given.

*December 6-12* Final Exams