

## **UHON 222-002 The Legacy of Ancient Technology**

The University of New Mexico, Spring 2012

Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00-3:15pm, SHC 8

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<http://www.unm.edu/~lovata/spring12/ancienttech>

Office Hours (Honors Room 2B): 12:45-1:30 and 3:15-4:00 Tuesdays and Thursdays and by appointment.

### **SYLLABUS**

**REVISED March 5, 2012**

#### **Course Description**

This course is focused on the construction, use, and hands-on study of ancient technologies. Understanding the past requires more than knowledge of the dates of momentous events or the names of significant persons. The material culture and evidence of the everyday and the ubiquitous are keys to explaining what happened in the past and why people made the choices they did. Ancient technologies set the stage for modern tools and artifacts serve as important comparisons to how and why we use technology today. Students in this course will study ancient technology first-hand. They will test and apply what they will learn about how the past worked. Students will construct and experiment with a range of tools used in many different aspects of past people's lives--from grinding corn to crafting stone tools, from making cordage to casting adobe block. This course will also expose students to issues of both historical and modern resource use, preservation, consumerism and fashion, and our relations to both the larger natural world and the built environment.

#### **Grading**

As with all University Honors courses, only three grades are possible in this class—"A", "Credit", or "No Credit". There are no fractional grades (A+, A-, B+, etc...). This departmental policy encourages students to take demanding coursework without detriment to one's grade point average. Grades are based on a 1000 point scale with 10 points equaling 1% of the final grade and grades based on a 10% scale (an "A" is earned at 90% or 900 points). There is no "curve" or grade adjustment--everyone has the opportunity to earn the highest grade. There is no extra-credit in this course.

Assignments are due at the beginning of class of the due date. Any work that may be done online is due at 10PM. Work that is turned in late (without an excuse) will be docked 10% per day. In-class presentations CANNOT be done later or for partial credit unless the absence is excused. If you know you must miss a class in which you are to present a project, please contact me before the absence. Several of the projects in this course are cooperative, group work in which a single, same grade is given to the group as a whole. However, if a student fails to participate in the group, that individual may be given no credit for the project.

Grades are based on the completion of a series of written and creative assignments from each topic (stone tools, cordage, adobe, etc...). These are generally based on a worksheet that requires the student to make notes, document what they've done and contemplate the meaning of their work. There are no tests or final exams. Class participation, and therefore attendance, is also an essential part of this course. Therefore, you are expected to come to class and talk. Attendance may not be taken everyday, but attendance will be noted at a variety of points throughout the

semester.

Grading breaks down as follows:

Projects...500 points (5 projects @ 100 points each)

Museum Report...200 points

Attendance and Participation...300 points

### **Readings**

Students are required, no matter what format they are in, to have completed and be ready to discuss weekly readings by the first class period of each week. The Whittaker (Flintknapping) text is available for purchase in the UNM and regular bookstores.

Readings/Texts:

*Flintknapping: Making and Understanding Stone Tools*

by John C. Whittaker, University of Texas Press; 1st edition.

ISBN: 029279083X

A course reader available from UNM's E-reserves at:

<http://ereserves.unm.edu/eres/coursepass.aspx?cid=10633>

Use the password "honors" to access the reader. You are expected to print out each relevant article or chapter (listed in the course schedule) and bring it to class during the appropriate seminar.

### **Absences**

Unexcused absences will severely and negatively impact your final grade. If you miss class and have a valid excuse, you must provide evidence (doctor's notes, etc...) as soon as possible. If you know you will miss class before hand, notify the instructor prior to the absence. Students with three or more unexcused absences will be docked 50 points for each absence.

### **Accommodations for Disabilities**

Students who have special needs that may affect their ability to participate in this course are asked to disclose those needs to me as early as possible so appropriate accommodations can be made. For more information consult UNM's Accessibility Resource Center (<http://as2.unm.edu/>).

### **Safety**

In the design, construction and use of various ancient technologies you will use various tools that require safe and conscientious operation (such as knives, saws and sharp sticks). You are expected to handle these tools appropriately and with caution. If you do not know how to handle any tool in a safe manner, you are expected to consult with your instructor for a demonstration of their proper use. You are required to wear safety gear for many assignments—wear the gear that you are provided! Safety starts and ends with your actions. You are responsible for the safe operation of tools.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Students are expected to act according to the Student Code of Conduct as outlined by the University. Work done in this class is essentially creative and should be of your own making. Plagiarism will severely impact your grade in a negative way. Remember that if you improperly use material from the web, it is easily discerned as such. Your instructor will gladly provide you help in properly citing and crediting other's work and ideas in your assignments.

## Writing

Written material will form a large component of your class work. Even Honors students and experienced writers can benefit from proofreading, editing, rewriting and practice. There are many, free services available on campus to improve your writing skills. Especially useful is the CAPS program located in the Zimmerman library. You are encouraged to take advantage of these services and, even in cases of individually written papers, consult with others in the class for proofreading and review of drafts. I will gladly review rough drafts of written work if they are given to me sufficiently ahead of time.

## SCHEDULE

Readings, except for chapters from the Whittaker book, are available from E-reserves. You are required to bring copies of *all* readings to class on the days listed (either print out or bring a laptop).

January 17 First day of class

Introduction to class policies and procedures

Begin discussion of Tools, Ethnoarchaeology and the Modern meaning of Pre-industrial Technology

Read: Chapters 6 from David and Kramer's *Ethnoarchaeology in Action* and Stiles' 'Ethnoarchaeology'.

19 Stone Tools: Grinding

Read: Adams' 'Use Wear Analysis of Manos...' and 'Refocusing the Role of Food Grinding Tools' and Mohr's 'Deep Basin Metate...'.

24 Stone Tools: Grinding cont'd

26 Stone Tools: Knapping

Read: Whittaker chapters 1-7.

31-February 2 Stone Tools: Knapping cont'd

Read: Whittaker chapters 8-10.

Assignment 1 Due February 31

7-9 Stone Tools: Knapping cont'd

14-16 Stone Tools: Knapping cont'd

21-23 Projectiles

Read: Cotterell and Kaminga's 'Projectiles'; Frison's 'Experimental Use of Clovis Weaponry and Tools on African Elephants'.

Assignment 2 Due February 21

28-March 1 Projectiles cont'd

6 Projectiles cont'd

8 Projectiles cont'd

Atlatl test day

13-15 Spring Break, No Scheduled Class

20-22 Cordage

Read: Kidder's 'Making Cordage by Hand'; selections from Gill's 'Practical Basketry'; Thomson's 'A Bark Sandal from the Desert of Central Western Australia'.

Assignment 3 Due March 20

27 Theories of Skill

Read: Ingold's 'Beyond Art and Technology: The Anthropology of Skill and Thought'; Keller's 'Production: Insights of the Practitioner'.

29 Cordage cont'd

Project test day

April 3-5 No Scheduled Class

10-12 Adobe

Read: selections from Romero and Larkin's *Adobe: Building and Living with Earth*.

Assignment 4 Due April 10

17-19 Adobe cont'd

Read: Oliver's 'Earth as a Building Material Today'; Brown and Clifton's 'Adobe I: The Properties of Adobe'; Brown, Robbins and Clifton's 'Adobe II: Factors Affecting the Durability of Adobe Structures'.

24-26 Adobe cont'd

May 1 Adobe cont'd

3 Adobe cont'd

Last Day of Class: Required attendance, Course Evaluations

Museum Assignment Due

7 Assignment 5 Due via Email

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