Peopling of the New World
Anthropology 6803
The George Washington University
Spring 2014
Tuesday - 5:10 PM - 7:00 PM HAH, Rm. 202

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Office hours: Monday 5:30 PM – 6:00 PM or by appointment

Required book:

Meltzer, David J.

Although I did not order copies for the bookstore, I highly recommend you get the following book, which presents overviews of the latest information on many of the topics we will discuss. Many of its chapters are required readings, which will be on Blackboard for those without a book.

Graf, Kelly, Caroline Ketron, and Michael Waters
2013  Paleoamerican Odyssey. Center for the Study of the First Americans, College Station, TX.

This is not available through Amazon and apparently must be ordered from the Center for the Study of the First Americans’ website: http://www.centerfirstamericans.org/

Additional required readings are posted on Blackboard.

Course Overview
This graduate and upper-level undergraduate course will guide students through the earliest human occupation of the New World: how, when, and from where people arrived more than 13,000 years ago. We will look at the archaeological data from sites in North and South America, northeast Asia, and Europe (along with linguistic, radiocarbon, skeletal, and genetic data) to examine the competing theories about the origins of the first people in the New World. While we will review data collected, we will also focus on the host of difficult epistemological questions

Virtually all the questions concerning the first people in the New World are in dispute: who were they, where did they come from, when did they get here, what route did they take, was there one or multiple migrations, and what did they do when they got here, to name just the most obvious.

Course Goals: Together we will work towards the following objectives.

1. You will be able to identify and explain the competing theories and evaluate the pros and cons for each.

2. You will understand the strengths and limitations of the data and underlying assumptions for the competing theories.

3. By the end of this course, you should be able to carry on an informed conversation with any Paleoindian archaeologist around.

Reading Assignments
In addition to reading from the Meltzer book, we will be reading from 5 – 10 articles or book chapters per week. All readings outside the books are posted to the course Blackboard website in digital form. Some are short, some are
long, some are easy, some are harder, and eventually you will find that you have already read or understand a portion of them, but you need to do all the readings in order to engage in discussion during class. Both your attendance and your participation will count in your final grade, so being prepared for and engaged in class is important. I will also give several quizzes to encourage you to keep up.

Class Participation
Attendance is mandatory. We will meet 14 times this semester, so anyone missing classes will miss an appreciable part of the course content. The in-class format until the last class will consist of discussing the required readings for the week. Each student will lead the discussion for one class. Every student, however, will be expected to have completed all of the readings before the start of class and come prepared to ask and answer questions about them. There will occasionally be quizzes to see that the readings are being done. During some of the class periods I will use Powerpoint images as well as artifact casts to elaborate upon the readings. An electronic projector will be available throughout the course, and may be used in presentations or summations.

Term Paper
A term paper will be required, 4000 words for undergraduates, 5000 words for graduates, including bibliography, doubled spaced. The last week of the class students will present a verbal summary of their papers to the class. The final written version of the paper will be due by 5:00 pm, Monday, May 5, 2014. Use of electronic images (i.e., a PowerPoint or equivalent talk) is mandatory for the in-class presentation of your research. You should decide on a paper topic early in the semester, and I want to see an outline with a list of references by spring break.

Term paper topics can include detailed overviews of specific sites or research projects, or a discussion of a scholarly argument or arguments. The term paper will provide you with the opportunity to (a) explore a particular research topic in more depth than is possible in the classroom; (b) develop your library and computer research skills; and (c) improve your writing skills.

Your paper must make use of the following professional standards:
• A minimum of 10 scholarly references (books and journal articles)
• At least eight must be scholarly books or journal articles (non web-sites)
• Internet resources may be used (but text must be cited if used directly)
• web site addresses and authors must be fully acknowledged for any text or images used.
• Double (not space–and–a–half, not triple) spaced pages (meet the 4000UG/5000G student word length!).
• References must be in American Antiquity style. See examples from the readings, or go to http://www.saa.org/publications/StyleGuide/styFrame.html
• The paper must contain a brief abstract (75-100 words), an introduction, a main body (with subsections as needed), and a conclusion. Look at how the articles assigned for the class are written, and use them as guides to professional writing
• Spell– and grammar–checked
• Page numbers centered at the bottom of the page.

GRADES
Each class activity will be graded as follows:
Class attendance, quizzes, and general participation 30 points
Verbal presentation of the term paper 20 points
Written term paper 50 points

Grading Scale
A+ 100
A 95
A- 92
A-/B+ 90
B+ 88 (etc.)

Attendance and Participation
This class depends on informed and active class participation. Thus, attendance and class participation are crucial to
your getting a good grade. All students are expected to be in class and actively participate in class discussions in a positive and thoughtful manner. I will note attendance and class participation throughout the semester. Attendance and participation scores will be based on the following general grade boundaries (i.e., the actual number can vary between these values depending on the degree of participation):

100 – student attended every class (except excused absences) during the semester and actively participated in class by engaging with others in a positive thoughtful manner.
90  - student attended every class (except excused absences) and participated regularly in class by engaging with others in a positive thoughtful manner.
80 – student regularly attended classes and periodically engaged in discussions.
50 – student did not attend classes regularly or only occasionally engaged in discussions.
0  – student attended less than half the classes or was disruptive during class.

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Week 1: Introduction and Overview


Week 2: History of Research


**Week 3: Evaluation Standards**


Week 4: Migration Theory


Week 5: Migration Theory II


**Week 6: Linguistic and Biological Evidence**


**Week 7: Late Pleistocene Environment & Extinctions**


**Week 8: Settling in to an Empty or Populated (Pre-Clovis) Landscape**


**Week 9: Beringia, Alaska, and the West**


**Week 10: The West Coast and Central and South America**


**Week 11: Plains and the East**


**Week 12: Evaluating the Migration Theories and Reconstructing Lifeways**


**Week 13: Post-Clovis in North America**


**Week 14: Presentations**