

Neanderthals and Us

ANTH 2144.001

Time: MW 2:00 pm - 3:15 pm

Location: Fretwell 407



Instructor: Dr. Lydia E. O. Light

Office: Barnard 215

Email: llight1@uncc.edu

Office Hours: T&W 12:30-2:00 pm or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

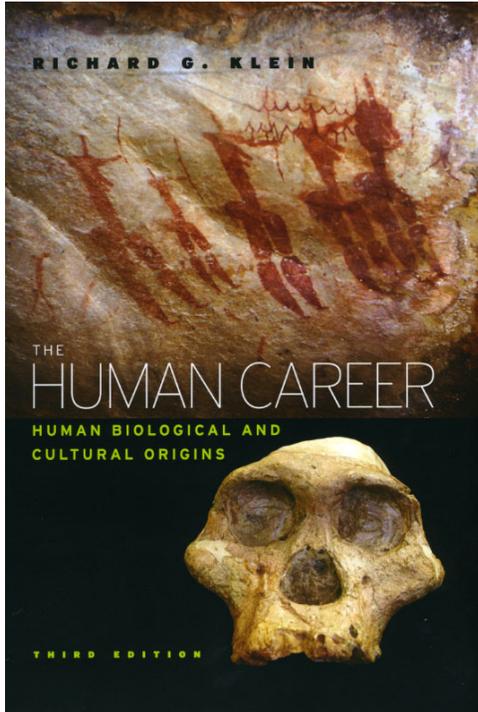
This course will outline Neanderthal biology, behavior, culture, and current debates over the place of the Neanderthals in the human lineage through lectures, relevant films, and in-class discussions. This course explores the life, times, culture and fate of the Neanderthals. Using data derived from the fossil record, archaeology, and genetics, we will examine crucial questions about Neanderthals, including: Who were they? What biocultural adaptations allowed them to expand their geographic range and exploit diverse habitats so successfully? What was their lifestyle like and how were they culturally distinct from previous hominids? What happened to them? Do they have any relationship to modern humans like us?



COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Over the course of human history, perhaps no other prehistoric group has received as much attention as the Neanderthals. The objectives for this course are for students to obtain an up-to-date understanding about who the Neanderthals were, where they lived, how they lived, and their place within the human lineage by examining the paleontological, archaeological, and molecular evidence to date, and its limitations. We will investigate the impacts of climate change and the emergence of modern humans on Neanderthals, and explore the theoretical explanations as to why these archaic forms became extinct. The course will also discuss the history of both scientific and popular perceptions about Neanderthals, and how they have changed over time.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:



TEXT: The majority of the readings are found in the primary text (which may be purchased as either a **hard copy or e-book**).

The Human Career: Human Biological and Cultural Origins

3rd Edition

By RG Klein

University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

READINGS: In addition to the required text, I will be posting a number of required readings on Canvas throughout the semester.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

All students are expected to **take responsibility for their learning** in this course. This includes attending lectures, completing assigned readings, participating in small group and class discussions, completing all lab exercises, turning in all take-home assignment on time and keeping up to date on all information presented via Canvas. Lectures **will NOT be posted** on Canvas. There will be **NO MAKE-UP** opportunities for in-class activities except in the case of **documented, university approved** excuses. Therefore, class attendance is crucial for successful completion of the course. All students are encouraged to visit me during my office hours for assistance. Unanticipated factors such as time constraints and accessibility of reading material may influence the planned topics and schedule. All changes in course content and schedule will be announced as far in advance as is feasible.

READING: Frequent readings will be required for this course. To maximize your chances for succeeding in this course, you should complete the assigned reading **BEFORE** we cover the material in class. Additionally, you should critically engage with the material as you read it.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES: Students will have the opportunity to complete six in-class activities designed to reinforce ideas covered in lecture. Lab exercises will be turned in at the end of the class period and will be graded. Each exercise will be worth 10 points for a total of 60 points. All group members will receive the same grade for the lab exercises. However, feedback will also be collected at the conclusion of each unit. You will be asked to assess the level and quality of participation of your fellow group members. **The in-class activities will count for 25% of your final grade.**

VIDEOS: Throughout the semester, I will be showing videos that help clarify or expand on topics covered in class. The videos do NOT serve to fill empty time, but should instead be considered valuable learning material. Therefore, you will be asked to complete video response papers worth 10 points each for a total of 40 points (9%) towards your final grade. Video response papers are due **at the beginning of the next class** and **CAN** be emailed to me beforehand. Instructions for completing the video response papers will be posted on Canvas.

EXAMS: Four exams will be given throughout the semester consisting of short answer/essay questions. You will need a blue book for your exams. The exams will count as 50 points each towards your course total and will cover information included in **readings, lectures, videos, in-class exercises, and class discussions**. The exams will not be cumulative; however, key principles from earlier sections may be relevant to later material and may be included on later exams. If time permits, we will have in-class review sessions during the class period prior to the exam. There will be **NO MAKE-UP EXAMS** except in the case of **documented, university approved** excuses. If you do have a valid excuse, I require that you contact me **within 24 hours** from the scheduled time of the exam (or 24 hours from when you are bodily able to contact me) to request a make-up exam.

GRADING:

| Assessment | Point Value | Approximate percent of final grade |
|---------------------|--------------------|---|
| First Exam | 50 points | 14% |
| Second Exam | 50 points | 14% |
| Third Exam | 50 points | 14% |
| Final Exam | 50 points | 14% |
| In-class Activities | 60 points | 17% |
| Final Project | 50 points | 14% |
| Video Worksheets | 40 points | 11% |
| Total | 350 points | 100% |

Final course grades will be assigned as follows:

| | | |
|---|---------|----------------------|
| A | 90-100% | 314 points and above |
| B | 80-89% | 279-313 points |
| C | 70-79% | 244-278 points |
| D | 60-69% | 209-243 points |
| F | <60% | 208 and below |

EXTRA CREDIT: Extra credit assignments will be available at the end of each unit. There will be **NO individual extra credit assignments given at the students' request.**

COURSE UNITS

UNIT ONE – Evolution and Genetics: This unit will present a historical perspective of evolutionary theory and the emergence of early hominids. Students do not need to have previous knowledge of this material, but this section is intended as an overview, rather than an in-depth introduction.

UNIT TWO – Neanderthal Fossil Evidence: This course unit will focus on the physical characteristics that define Neanderthals as a distinct group among late hominids. We will examine much of this information through comparisons with other hominid groups, including predecessors to Neanderthals as well as modern humans.

UNIT THREE – Neanderthal Behavior: Much of the evidence differentiating Neanderthals from modern humans relates to diet and behavior. In this unit, we will consider how the paleoarchaeological and paleoecological records can inform our understandings of Neanderthal lifeways.

UNIT FOUR – Neanderthal Demise: We will explore several theories explaining the disappearance of Neanderthals from the fossil record after the arrival of modern humans in Europe.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

My classroom is a place where open-minded, independent thinking is encouraged. To facilitate this environment, all students are expected to act with respect and maturity towards their fellow students, the instructor, and any visiting speakers.

This course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is indicated on the class roster, please let me know. Feel free to correct me on your preferred gender pronoun. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I hold the following expectations for my students:

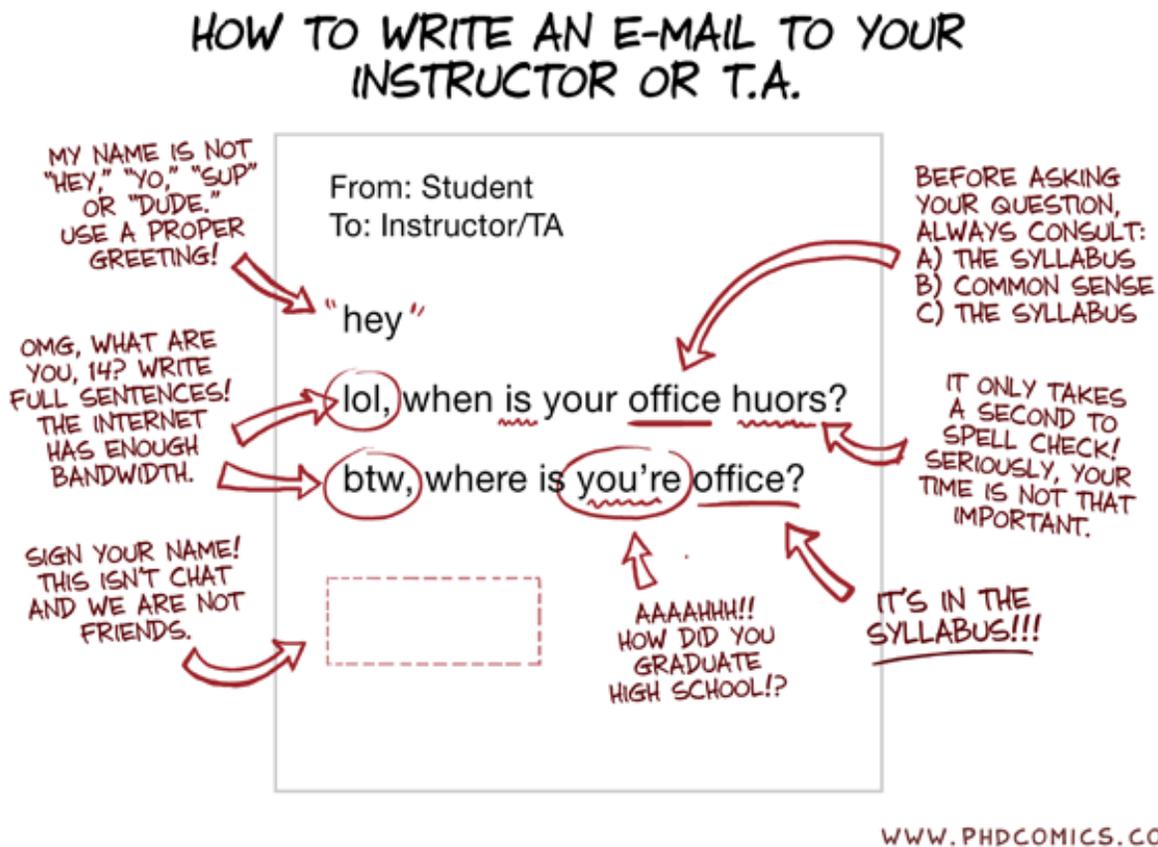
- 1) All cell phones (smart or dumb) and other personal electronics must be **turned off before the start of class** and kept out of sight. If you are using a laptop, I ask that you use it **only for taking notes or completing in-class activities**. If you have extenuating circumstances, please contact me.
- 2) To reduce in-class distractions, please **remain seated during lectures**. If you know you need to leave prior to the end of class, please speak to me before class begins.
- 3) Please save your personal discussions for after class and avoid interrupting classmates.
- 4) Arrive **on-time** for class and refrain from packing up your belongings before the lecture is finished. While it is reasonable to be late occasionally, habitual tardiness is not acceptable. If you have extenuating circumstances, please contact me.
- 5) Some of the material covered in class may be perceived as controversial. Please remain respectful of your classmates (and instructor) during discussions of such nature. Each of us may have strongly differing opinions on the various topics of class discussions. The orderly questioning of the ideas of others, including mine, is similarly welcome. However, I will exercise my responsibility to manage the discussions so that ideas and

argument can proceed in an orderly fashion. You should expect that if your conduct during class discussions seriously disrupts the atmosphere of mutual respect I expect in this class, you will not be permitted to participate further and may subsequently lose opportunities for course credit.

This syllabus contains the policies and expectations I have established for the Neanderthals and Us course. Please read the entire syllabus carefully before continuing in this course. These policies and expectations are intended to create a productive learning atmosphere for all students. Unless you are prepared to abide by these policies and expectations, you risk losing the opportunity to participate further in the course.

COMMUNICATION POLICY

I try to be available to students as much as possible. In addition to being available during office hours, feel free to email me at l1ight1@uncc.edu with questions. I will respond to emails within 24 hours, but usually much sooner. However, if there is no question in the email that needs to be answered or the question is explicitly stated here in the syllabus, I will not respond to the email. Also, if the email is not written in a professional manner, I will request ONCE that you follow proper formatting, after which I will stop communicating with you via email.



ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE & ACCOMMODATIONS

I encourage all of my students to seek out additional assistance if they are concerned about their academic performance (and even if they are not). I am always available to meet with students either during my office hours or by appointment. In addition, the university provides a number of services designed to help students excel academically.

UNC Charlotte is committed to access to education. If you have a disability and need academic accommodations, please provide a letter of accommodation from Disability Services early in the semester. For more information on accommodations, contact the Office of Disability Services at 704-687-0040 or visit their office in Fretwell 230.

SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY

While I recognize that adjusting to college academics can be a challenging time, I do not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty in my class. I will not tolerate any attempts to manipulate grading opportunities or misappropriate credit for work done and will penalize any student violating the university policies on scholastic dishonesty. I reserve the right to ask students to produce identification at examinations and may require students to demonstrate that graded assignments completed outside of class are their own work. All students are required to read and abide by the Code of Student Academic Integrity. Violations of the Code of Student Academic Integrity, including plagiarism, will result in disciplinary action as provided in the Code. Definitions and examples of plagiarism are set forth in the Code. The Code is available from the Dean of Students Office or [online](#).

TITLE IX REPORTING POLICY

UNC Charlotte is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these incidents, know that you are not alone. UNC Charlotte has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

Please be aware that many UNC Charlotte employees, including all faculty members, are considered [Responsible Employees](#) who are required to relay any information or reports of sexual misconduct they receive to the Title IX Coordinator. **This means that if you tell me about a situation involving sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, I must report the information to the Title IX Coordinator.** Although I have to report the situation, you will still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need.

If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can contact any of the following on-campus resources, who are not required to report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator: (1) University Counseling Center (counselingcenter.uncc.edu, 7-0311); (2) Student Health Center (studenthealth.uncc.edu, 7-7400); or (3) Center for Wellness Promotion (wellness.uncc.edu, 7-7407). Additional information about your options is also available at titleix.uncc.edu under the “Students” tab.

REVISIONS POLICY

The standards and requirements set forth in this syllabus may be modified at any time by the course instructor. Notice of such changes will be by announcement in class or by changes to this syllabus posted on the course in Canvas.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

| | Week | Date | Class Topic | Assignment Due | |
|---------------|--|-------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Unit 1 | 1 | Aug. 24 | Introduction | | |
| | 2 | Aug. 29 | Evolutionary Theory | | |
| | | Aug. 31 | Genetics | | |
| | 3 | Sept. 5 | NO CLASS – LABOR DAY | | |
| | | Sept. 7 | Speciation | Reading 1 | |
| | 4 | Sept. 12 | Geologic Time | | |
| | | Sept. 14 | Hominid Evolution | | |
| | 5 | Sept. 19 | Video | | |
| | | Sept. 21 | Exam 1 | Response Paper Due! | |
| | | 6 | Sept. 26 | Early Archaic <i>H. s.</i> Fossil Evidence | |
| Sept. 28 | | | Early Archaic <i>H. s.</i> Sites | | |
| 7 | | Oct. 3 | Neanderthal Morphology | | |
| | | Oct. 5 | Video | | |
| 8 | | Oct. 10 | Neanderthal Variation | Response Paper Due! | |
| | | Oct. 12 | Exam 2 | | |
| Unit 3 | 9 | Oct. 17 | Paleoecology | | |
| | | Oct. 19 | Tool Technologies | | |
| | 10 | Oct. 24 | Neanderthal Diet | | |
| | | Oct. 26 | Neanderthal Trauma | | |
| | 11 | Oct. 31 | Video | | |
| | | Nov. 2 | Interaction with Modern Humans | Response Paper Due! | |
| | 12 | Nov. 7 | Art and Symbolic Thought | | |
| | | Nov. 9 | Exam 3 | | |
| | 13 | Nov. 14 | The “Demise” of the Neanderthals? | | |
| | | Nov. 16 | Video | | |
| | 14 | Nov. 21 | Denisovans and Human Diaspora | Response Paper Due! | |
| | | Nov. 23 | NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK | | |
| | 15 | Nov. 28 | Recent Genetic Discoveries | | |
| | | Nov. 30 | | | |
| | 16 | Dec. 5 | Student Project Presentations | | |
| | | Dec. 7 | Final Thoughts | | |
| | FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, December 12 2:00 – 4:30 pm | | | | |