



ANTHROPOLOGY 2261G-001

Adventure in Pop Culture Archaeology

Department of Anthropology

Course Outline

Winter 2022

Version date: Jan 7, 2022

Class day/time: Tuesdays 1:30-4:30 pm

Classroom: SSC-3026

Instructor: Rebecca Goodwin

Teaching Assistant:

Office: SSC-3328

Office hours: Thursdays 12:00-1:00 (on Zoom) or by appointment

Email: rgoodwi3@uwo.ca

Credit Value: 0.5

Requisites:

Antirequisites: None.

Prerequisites: None.

Course Description:

Archaeologist and their narratives have captured the public imagination for hundreds of years, woven into the tapestry of popular culture both in North America and abroad. These narratives appear on television and movie screens, in video games, on the internet and in other new and emerging media, both fictionally and factually. Students in this course will have the opportunity to consume and analyze a portion of this media to better understand what public perceptions of archaeology reveal about the relationship between archaeology and modern society. We will tackle inaccurate representation, pseudoarchaeology and bad science amongst other topics!

Course Materials:

All assigned readings can be found in the syllabus and are available in digital format through the "Course Readings" feature on the course OWL site and often as hyperlinks in this syllabus.

In addition to the readings, students will be expected to view 1-2 pieces of media each week. Links will be provided to view these materials.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Write an essay
- Explain what archaeologists do and why
- Critically assess portrayals of archaeology aimed at non-archaeologists
- Articulate and defend an opinion about what these portrayals imply about archaeology, archaeologists, "the public", and the role of the past in the present.
- Provide your classmates with constructive feedback on their written work
- Effectively revise your own written work to incorporate constructive feedback
- Use a range of media to effectively convey archaeological information to non-archaeologists

Evaluation:

Timeline and Summary of Assignments:

- Participation – 10%
- Social Media Post – 15% *due Feb 11th*
- Media Analyses – 25% *rolling due dates*
- Capstone Project – 50%
 - Public Outreach Project – 30% *due April 5th*
 - Personal Reflection – 20% *due April 12th*

Participation - 10%

This course will rely heavily on group discussion as a means for analysis and learning. This means students should come to class prepared to discuss the readings and other media. There will be flexible options for participation grades for students who are not comfortable speaking in class, or for students who must miss class for legitimate reasons. Your participation grade will reflect your attendance, preparation for class, engagement with the material and contribution to the conversation. Participation grades can also be earned by participating in the online class discussion board, reflection questions or bringing in resources related to course topics. A thorough description on how participation is graded will be presented in the first class. Students are encouraged to check in regularly about their participation grade and to let the instructor know before you need to miss class.

Social Media Post – 15%

Students will write a 500–600 word social media post for the class social media page about a particular archaeological site or artifact, aimed at a non-academic audience. We will decide on our intended audience and goals as a class and each blog post should conform to our chosen demographic. You must be able to respond to any pseudoarchaeological information that exists about your chosen topic using archaeological evidence. For more information, please see the assignment instructions and list of proposed topics. Social Media posts are due February 11th with a grace period until Feb 15th.

Media Analysis – 25%

Students will write a short media analysis (800-1000 words) that explore how one or more course themes apply to a piece of media on the required viewing list. Each analysis should incorporate critiques, commentary or theories drawn from course content (including readings), but students must also include their own opinions as well. This assignment has rolling due dates, with each analysis due in class on the week the chosen media is assigned. In addition, you will be required to generate three discussion questions prior to class. These questions will count towards your participation grade and will also be posted to the course discussion board. Please see the assignment instructions for more information.

Public Outreach Project & Personal Reflection – 50%

Throughout the semester we will have a chance to discuss the ways the general public understands and responds to archaeological narratives and evidence. This assignment is *your* chance to respond to this discourse, and provide accurate, up-to-date information, drawn from archaeological evidence. You will work either alone, or collaborative with >5 students to generate an outreach project that relates to or expands on course themes. You can choose any format (a list of suggested formats is available in the course syllabus) or topic, but it must be approved by the instructor. Each group will present their outreach projects to the rest of the class at the end of the semester. These portions of the assignment will be graded collectively. However, each student will also be required to submit a short 1000-1200 word reflection paper, detailing their experience with the project and class in general. These reflection papers are designed to allow students to discuss the goals and intended audience of their projects in greater depth as well as describe some of the successes and challenges they faced throughout the process. These reflection papers will be individually graded. Please see the assignment instructions for more information. Projects are due April 5th and reflection papers are due on April 12th.

Essay Courses

This is an essay course, which must involve total written assignments equal to at least 2500 words. The structure of an essay course must be such that in order to pass the course, the student must exhibit some minimal level of competence in essay writing and the appropriate level of knowledge of the content of the course.