# HRS 356

**Archaeology & Politics**  
Who Owns the Past?  
SYLLABUS DRAFT

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Dr. Erin Walcek Averett</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>LECA 114</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:erinaverett@creighton.edu">erinaverett@creighton.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>402.280.2261</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lecture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>TBA, and by appointment</td>
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## Course Description
This course explores the dynamic issues surrounding the political use of the past with a focus on archaeological and artistic cultural monuments in the ancient Mediterranean and Near East. The way the past is studied, interpreted, presented, and conserved is becoming an increasingly hot topic in today’s politicized global environment. Modern political ideologies such as colonialism and nationalism, wars, poverty, and a thriving illicit antiquities market are closely intertwined with how past cultural heritage is collected, interpreted, presented, and maintained.

This class will analyze the political use of the past with a focus on the 19th – 21st centuries through student presentation and discussion. The class format is seminar-style, with emphasis on discussion, debate, and active student learning. Issues to be addressed will include: why preserve the past, and in what form? How has past cultural heritage been used and abused for political purposes in different historical and cultural contexts? How do museums, collections, restitution of cultural property, and the illicit traffic in artifacts contribute to this situation? What solutions have been tried or proposed to mitigate the ongoing struggle for control of the past? Students are encouraged to apply these principles to other global cultures in their individual research projects.

## Course Objectives
Students who successfully complete this course will have demonstrated the ability to:

- Identify and describe the methods and approaches employed in the discipline of archaeology
- Articulate in discussion and writing the complex role contemporary political and cultural environments play in studying, interpreting, and conserving the past
- Understand the ethical need to preserve and study our past and appreciate its value in contemporary societies around the world and be able to write and speak about this from an informed perspective
- Hone critical thinking, discussion, and writing skills through careful digestion of readings, active class participation, short papers, and an independent research project
Assessment of these objectives will be based on participation and discussion, short papers, exams, and a research project.

**Course Materials**

**BlueLine2 and CU mail:**
I will post essential items & announcements on the course BlueLine2 site & CU mail. You are expected to check this site regularly and download course materials.

**Textbook and Readings:**

For each class you will read PDF versions of articles or book selections on BlueLine2. You will find a complete bibliography at the end of this syllabus for the readings as well as resources for your research project.

**Course Requirements & Grading**

Your grade will be determined based on the following:

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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Leader</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Project</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation &amp; Discussion</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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**Discussion Leaders**

Each student will be assigned a discussion topic to lead together with a classmate. As discussion leader, you will be responsible for creating a handout summarizing the readings and outlining the class discussion for that day. During the discussion you will pose thought-provoking questions that will lead to dynamic discussion in the classroom. Questions should not simply ask the class about the content of the reading, but should engage in critical inquiry, raise related issues, bring up points of debate and controversy, and relate the readings to past class readings and discussion. Guidelines will be provided.

**Research Project: Presentation & Paper**

Each student will choose a topic to research for this project. The topic can be a more in-depth study of a topic covered in class or the application of the approaches used in class to other global cultures and topics. This research project consists of individual research on an approved topic, a prospectus, a 10-minute presentation followed by discussion, and a final polished paper (10 pages). The project will be graded based on the quality of research, strength of the argument, quality/clarity of the presentation, and quality of writing. An extensive Research and Writing Guidelines booklet will be provided and students are encouraged to meet individually with me for guidance throughout the project.

The project will be completed in 4 phases:

1. **Choose your topic**

   I will hand out a list of possible paper topics, but do not feel limited to these. A good topic is one that will not simply review or summarize others’ works, but puts forth an original idea, argument, or view of the historical evidence. I encourage you to choose a topic related to what we covered in class.
2. **Prospectus**
This includes a working title, 200-word abstract, outline, and preliminary bibliography for your paper. I will provide feedback that should be incorporated into your final presentation, paper, and bibliography.

3. **In-Class Presentation**
Each student will be assigned a presentation day. You should prepare a well-organized visual presentation that informs the class of your topic, your approach, argument, and conclusions. You should plan to generate discussion following your presentation. The presentation should be 10 minutes with time for discussion afterwards. All images should be of high quality and properly labeled (title, date, findspot or location, period or culture, etc).

4. **Final Paper**
A polished final paper will be due at the end of the semester. The papers should be 10 pages, with additional pages for bibliography and illustrations. Papers should be properly cited with a formatted bibliography.

**Participation & Discussion**
Attendance is crucial in order to perform well in this class. Absence does not relieve you of your responsibility for material covered in discussion. If you must miss class, you are responsible for obtaining all notes and relevant materials. To make the course enjoyable and interesting, all students are expected to participate actively. You should come to class with your readings (and notes) completed, ready to participate in discussions. You will be graded based on the quality of your **active participation** in class. If students do not consistently come to class prepared to discuss the readings, quizzes will be given. Three or more unexcused absences will result in an F for the course. Distracting use of cell phones and laptops will negatively impact your participation grade. The following criteria might start you thinking about your participation:

- **A**: means that you are speaking regularly, giving your full attention to others, and working with them effectively. Your command of the reading is consistently strong, and it’s obvious that you’re trying to read critically, not just taking things at face value.

- **B**: means that you not only speak, but also help to set an agenda for discussion. You often respond to earlier comments, and relate big ideas to particular passages from the readings. It’s also clear that you’re not just talking to score points or boost your grade.

- **C**: indicates that you’re doing average work, speaking occasionally. To raise this grade, tie your comments to passages from the text and earlier remarks from classmates.

- **D**: indicates that you’re speaking occasionally, but not very often. Your comments may come out of nowhere, and they may not have much to do with our readings.

- **F**: indicates you haven’t been participating at all. You may also create distractions, show up without your books, or convey disrespect for others.

**Midterm and Final Exams**
There are two exams in this class. The exams will cover material covered in your readings, lecture, and discussion and will consist of short answer and essay questions. A study guide will be provided.

**Grading Scale**
All work will be graded on a scale of 100 points. These will be the corresponding letter grades:

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<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>100-90</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>89-88</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>87-80</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>79-78</td>
<td>C+</td>
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Make-up Policy

No special accommodations will be made for the final exam. No late assignments will be accepted without an excused absence. As a general rule, I do not give extra credit or approve incompletes. These will be permitted ONLY IN SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES and with PRIOR approval. All dates and deadlines are listed in the syllabus, so you have ample opportunity to manage your time and make arrangements to complete the required assignments. If you are ill or encounter an emergency, you must email me within 24 hours of the exam or due date. If you foresee problems, please come talk to me.

Academic Honesty

Each student should do all work for this course (including readings, writing, and exams) independently. Although each student is responsible for the required readings and lecture notes, I encourage you to form discussion or study groups outside of class to prepare for class and tests. Any student who engages in academic dishonesty as described in the University Bulletin will receive a zero (0) for the test/assignment and risks failing the course depending on the severity of the infraction. For information on Creighton’s policy on academic integrity, please see:


If you feel overwhelmed or confused about any of the course requirements at any time during the semester, PLEASE come talk with me.

Class Cancellation Policy

In the case of a weather emergency, I will notify you via the BlueLine2 site and CU Mail if classes is cancelled. If the class has not been cancelled, you are not expected to come to class if you feel that doing so would put you in danger. If I have to cancel class for any other reason, I will notify you via CU mail and BlueLine2.

Disruption of Normal Classroom Activities

In the event of disruption of normal classroom activities due to a widespread medical/disease outbreak or other emergency, the format for this course may be modified to enable completion of the course. In that event, you will be provided an addendum to this syllabus that will supersede this version.

Classroom Etiquette

To create a pleasant learning environment, I encourage students to speak up and participate in lecture. The focus should be on learning and listening to both the professor and fellow students. To facilitate this, please silence your cell phones and other mobile devices during class. Laptops and mobile tablets are permitted in class ONLY for note-taking purposes. Many students have said that they find it distracting to see their classmates using computers for non-course related purposes, so keep in mind that surfing the internet, facebooking, emailing, or doing other work during lectures on your laptop or phone is extremely disrespectful both to me and to your classmates (in addition to detracting from your own learning). If I find that the use of laptops/tablets is having a disruptive effect on the class, I will ban them from the classroom. If you disrupt class, you will be asked to leave and will receive a zero for participation.

Americans with Disabilities Act - Statement

If you have a disability that will require academic accommodations, you need to do both of the following as soon as possible: 1. Contact the Office of Disability Accommodations located in Harper, Suite 4008 and 2. Make an appointment with your instructor to go over this letter and discuss what reasonable accommodations can be made.
**Course Schedule**

This schedule lays out our weekly topics and readings. All readings can be found on BlueLine2. Since this is a discussion class, you are required to read all assigned readings before the class and expect to participate actively in discussion. I will do my best to stick to this schedule, but minor adjustments may be necessary. Exam and due dates are firm.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Introduction: Archaeology in a Global Context</strong></td>
<td>Kosso, P. “Introduction: the Epistemology of Archaeology” in <em>Archaeological Fantasies</em>.</td>
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| **Week 2** | **Discussion: Fantastic Archaeology: the Dangers of Pseudo-Science** | “Archaeology Barbie”: [http://www.kerrins.co.uk/articles-recommended/archaeology-barbie](http://www.kerrins.co.uk/articles-recommended/archaeology-barbie)  
Fagan Ch. 1 “Diagnosing Pseudoarchaeology” and Flemming Ch. 2 “The Attraction of Non-Rational Archaeological Hypotheses” in *Archaeological Fantasies* |
| | **Discussion: Pseudoscience and Postmodernism?** | Feder Ch. 3 “Skeptics, Fence Sitters, and True Believers” and Arnold Ch. 7 “Pseudoarchaeology and Nationalism” and Sokal Ch. 12 “Pseudoscience and Postmodernism: Antagonists or Fellow Travelers” in *Archaeological Fantasies* |
| **Week 3** | **Discussion: Case Studies in Pseudoscience** | Pick one of the case study chapters in Feder and write a 2-page summary to discuss:  
| Week 4 | **War & Archaeology in Iraq & Afghanistan**  
*Readings:*  
**Discussion: War & Archaeology**  
| --- | --- |
| Week 5 | **Creating an Egyptian Past**  
*Readings:*  
**Discussion: Summing up Archaeology & Politics**  
Why do you think archaeological research lends itself particularly well to political manipulation? How important a role do you think archaeological research plays and has played in recent political events? Cite specific examples from the readings to support your conclusions. |
| Week 6 | **Midterm Exam**  
**Early Travellers and the Grand Tour: Greece & the European Imagination**  
*Readings:*  
Lord Byron and John Keats, selected poems |
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<td>Lefkowitz Ch. 8 “Archaeology and the Politics of Origins: the Search for the Pyramids of Greece” in <em>Archaeological Fantasies</em></td>
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<td>Cyprus: Archaeology in a British Colony and Occupied Country</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK – No Class</td>
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| Week 12 | **The Legal Side: Looting, Collecting, and Legislation**  
*Case Studies: Iraq, Greece, Afghanistan, Africa, Turkey*  
**Readings:**  
**Discussion: The Elgin Marbles**  
**Readings:**  
| Week 13 | **The Past on Display: the Museum (Class at the Joslyn)**  
*Reading:*  
**No Class: Individual Meeting for Research Project** |
| Week 14 | **Presenting the Past: Archaeology and the Public**  
**Discussion: the Public Face of Archaeology**  
| Week 15 | **Student Research Presentations** |
**Week 16**

**Student Research Presentations**

**Summary & Review**

**Reading:**
Levitt Ch. 11 “The Colonization of the Past and the Pedagogy of the Future” and Fagan Ch. 13 “Concluding Remarks” in *Archaeological Fantasies*

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**Final Exam**

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**Possible Research Project Topics:**

- Genocide and Archaeology
- The Politics of Human Remains (US, Israel, Australia)
- The Archaeology of Genocide
- The Parthenon Marbles and the New Acropolis Museum
- Vikings in Minnesota and Viking Heritage
- Nationalism and Postwar Japanese Archaeology
- Archaeology and Nationalism: case studies
- Presenting Archaeology to the Public
- Soviet Archaeology
- Art & War: Who Owns The Spoils of War
- Looting and Identity in Sudan
- The Use and Abuse of Biblical Archaeology
- Freud and Archaeology
- Ancient Greece in modern poetry
- Ancient Greece in modern art
- Racism and/or Anti-semitism in archaeological scholarship
- Archaeology in Iran
- Archaeology in Spain
- Inventing the Celts
- Museums and the Display of the Past
- The Past in America
- Archaeologists and Aboriginal Communities
- Pseudoarchaeology: Atlantis
- Pseudoarchaeology: Tomb of Jesus
- Indoeuropean Controversies

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**Bibliography**

*(includes class readings and research material for presentations and papers):*


Snodgrass, *Archaeology and the Emergence of Greece*. Cambridge UP.


