**AHS 1101 Old World Prehistory**

**Course Objectives:** This course aims at surveying the major cultural developments and adaptations in history from the beginning of humankind to establishment of literate complex societies and early civilizations.

**Course Description.**

The first part of the course reviews the evidence for biological and cultural evolution as well as environmental changes from Old World that documents the origin of humanity. It also examines the growing of cultural complexity, the evolution of food production and the beginning of permanent human settlement. Examples are drawn from many regions of the Old World to show commonalities and differences in growth towards cultural complexity. The last part of the course deals with the development of state level societies and comparative civilizations using case studies, and archaeological evidence from Africa, Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

**Assessment:** 30% Course Work; 70% Examination

**Course Outline**

Topic 1: On Studying Old World Prehistory

* 1. What is Prehistory
  2. Why study Old World Prehistory
  3. Sources for Prehistory (archaeology, oral history, linguistic and written record)

Topic 2: An overview of Human Biological and Cultural Evolution

2.1 The Plio-Pleistocene Epoch (geologic time scale, past environments and climates)

2.2 Plio-Pleistocene Hominids and their behaviors

2.3 Mid/late Pleistocene Hominids and their behaviors’

Topic 3: The Mesolithic/Early Complex Societies-Case studies

3.1 Pos-glacial environments and climates in Africa

3.2 Europe

3.3 Asia (Including Middle East)

3.4 Australia

Topic 4: Food Production and Early Farmers- Case studies

4.1 Theories on the origins of animal and plant domestication

4.2 Primary centers of domestication

4.3 Type of proxy data for domestication

4.4 Europe

4.5 Asia

4.6 Africa

4.7 Australia

Topic 5: Old World Civilizations- case studies

* 1. Theories and Models of Civilization
  2. Mesopotamia and the first cities
  3. Ancient Egypt and Nubia
  4. Sub-Saharan Africa
  5. Europe before the Romans
  6. Anatolia, Greece and Italy

**Basic Readings**

Campbell, B. (1985) Human Evolution. New York: Aldine Publishing House

Champion. T, Gamble. C, Shennan. S. ad Whittle.A. (1984) Prehistoric Europe.Toronto: Academic Press

Clark. J. D, and S. A. Brandt (1984) from hunters to Farmers. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Cohen. M. N (1977) The food crisis in Prehistory: Overpopulation and the origins of agriculture. New Haven: YaleUniversity Press.

Fagan. B, (1995) People of the Earth. HarperCollinsCollege Publisher