

**COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON**  
***Ancient Egyptian Life and Society***

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**Time: T, Th 12:15-1:30 pm, Maybank 306**

**History 270.01**

**Spring 2012**

Course Web Page: URL <http://www.cofc.edu/~piccione/270/>

Username: **+++++++** Password: **+++++++** (necessary for accessing reading assignments and images)

*A copy of this syllabus is also located on the class Web pages, and students should consult it regularly for any changes in the reading and assignment schedule.*

**Course Description:** Using Egyptian texts and archaeology as a basis, this course introduces daily life issues and social history in ancient Egypt from its historical origins, ca. 5000 BC, to the Persian conquest of 525 BC. The goal of this course is for students to understand how a study of historical texts and material culture (objects) can combine to reveal aspects of life and society. Topics include: anthropological origins and ethnicities, historical development, language, writing and education, social institutions, status and roles of women, love and marriage, sex and sexuality, medicine and medical practice, warfare, religion and magic, games, athletics and sports. The class will also consider Egypt's social legacy to Africa.

A focal point of the course is a final group project (in place of a term paper) consisting of a student-organized virtual museum exhibition on the daily life of the ancient Egyptians. This exhibit will bring together a virtual collection of Egyptian objects from museums around the world, complete with detailed descriptive labels, explanatory essays, and final project reports. Its purpose is to demonstrate and analyze the historical and archaeological issues discussed in the class through the medium of Egyptian material culture. History 270 can also be applied to credit in African Studies and Archaeology with the permission of the directors of those programs.

### **Course Requirements**

***Virtual Museum Exhibit: Life and Society in Ancient Egypt:*** As a final project, students will join in a group effort to create a virtual museum exhibition in the class on the subject of Egyptian daily life and social history. They will form into object-theme groups, each based on a general social theme. Each student will serve as a curator for a number of objects of their own choosing within the group. He/she will formulate specific questions or thesis statements about Egyptian society, then research, identify and assemble images of actual objects that demonstrate the issues or which answer the questions, or validate the thesis. They will prepare museum labels for each object and short explanatory essays for display with the objects. The specific expectations, requirements and policies for the exhibit and related project report are located under the "Final Project"-link on the Web pages. Completion of the exhibition project and report are required to pass this course. Students are graded according to three criteria: (1) their individual contribution to their groups (choice of objects, labels, essay & presentation); (2) the common group effort; (3) students also grade each other within the groups to insure a consistent effort by all.

***Project Report:*** Each student will draft a 5-6 page final report (separately graded) as an historiographical essay on his/her contribution to the exhibition and the object-theme groups.

***Examinations:*** This course includes two (2) interim exams, essay only, drawn from the lectures, readings, and videos. There is no formal final examination. (See "Reading Assignments"-page below for specific time).

***Attendance and Participation:*** Discussion figures prominently in the class-program, and class participation and attendance do constitute a percentage of the course grade. Attendance and participation improve the functioning of the class as well as students' grades. According to College policy, attendance

will be taken daily; any and all unexcused absences will result in automatic grade reductions (see below for policies on athletes and consequences on missing 30% or more of classes).

Absences are excused by presenting written documentation to the Office of Associate Dean of Students. Undocumented and self-documented ("self-reported") excuses are not acceptable. Running errands is not a valid excuse. Students are responsible for all the material in the readings, videos, lectures, etc., whether they are present or not in class. Students should never telephone the instructor on the same day to say they will be absent, nor should they ever(!) call the History Department office to report their absence.

If the instructor does not call the daily roll, an attendance sign-in sheet will be circulated. Students are also marked as absent for the following reasons: they do not sign the attendance sheet; they sign the sheet then leave class; they leave class for an inordinate period of time without valid excuse. Any student who leaves class without permission and does not return after taking a quiz or exam will be recounted as absent, and the quiz/exam will receive an automatic failing grade (0 = F).

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Any students who have missed 30% of class meetings or more, i.e., nine (9) or more individual classes, regardless of whether they have excused absences or not, will be subject to automatic withdrawal from the course by the professor with a grade of WA which computes into the GPA as a grade of "F". Why? Because the professor's lectures contain more materials than are found in the textbook and course readers, and discussion and question-and-answer constitute important parts of the curriculum. If students have missed 30% of lectures, it is clear they are not getting all the materials, and they are not participating in classroom discussions in any significant manner. Therefore, if it is because of a medical reason that any student has missed nine (9) or more classes, he/she should discuss the matter with the professor and consider seeking a medical withdrawal from the course in the Registrar's Office.

**Makeup Policy:** This course does not regularly provide make-up exams. However, if students present a valid medical excuse documented in writing and processed through the Office of Associate Dean of Students, they will be permitted to complete a comparable written assignment to make up the lost work. This assignment will not be easy nor convenient, and it will be graded with considered attention. Except by special arrangement with the instructor, students have only one (1) week to complete and submit any makeup assignment for a quiz before the grade reverts to zero (unless there is continuing documented illness). It is the responsibility of the student to assume the initiative in pursuing any make-up assignment within that time deadline.

**Athletes and Special Needs:** Participation in athletic events or practices is NOT(!) a valid excuse to miss quizzes, term-paper due dates, or midterm and final examinations; make-up work will not be granted. When athletes check their schedules of away-games against the course assignment schedule, they must also check the travel schedule for each game. Athletes are responsible for the academic consequences of missing quizzes, exams, and due dates. Any athletes who expect to miss quizzes, or exams should see the professor, and they should very seriously reconsider taking this class.

**Due Dates and Topics:** The dates of all assignments, including: readings, exams, exhibit and reports are noted below and on the "Reading Assignments"-Page.

### Course Textbook and Readings

*Required textbooks:*

Brewer, Douglas J. and Emily Teeter. *Egypt and the Egyptians*. 2nd edition. Cambridge University Press, 2007.

McDowell, A. G. *Village Life in Ancient Egypt: Laundry Lists and Love Songs*. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press 2001.

Meskel, Lynn. *Private Life in New Kingdom Egypt*. Princeton University Press, 2004.

Simpson, William K. et al., eds. *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*. 3rd Revised & enlarged edition. Yale University Press, 2003.

### *Readings:*

A variety of primary sources, monographic extracts and journal articles are also required reading for this course. Most of these readings are available for downloading and printing from the course Web pages or are located on Reserve in the Addlestone Library. Others are located in the journal collections and electronic databases of the library (e.g. Jstore, etc.)

## **Grading Policy**

Final course-grades will be constituted according to the following formula: museum exhibit 25%, final report 20%, interim exams (2) 30%, class participation and attendance 25%.

According to College policy, the grading scale is as follows: A = 93-100; A- = 91-92; B+ = 88-90; B = 83-87; B- = 81-82; C+ = 78-80; C = 73-77; C- = 71-72; D+ = 68-70; D = 61-67; D- = 60; F = 0-59; WA = administrative withdrawal due to excessive absences (= F); XF = failure due to academic dishonesty.

## **Final Project Requirements**

**Due dates: Virtual exhibition, April 10** (*See Web pages for details*)

**Final project reports, April 12.**

***Virtual Museum Exhibition: Life and Society in Ancient Egypt.*** Students are formed into groups centered specific themes of social history and daily life. Coordinating approaches and activities with the groups, each student chooses or identifies one or more discrete social issues, then researches and identifies objects from museum collections published around the world.; collects the images of those objects from publications, catalogs, or off the World Wide Web and mounts them for display. They write the museum labels for each piece, identifying its date, provenience and function and significance (like a real museum label). They also compose a short explanatory essay that accompany the labels and which ties their group of objects together. Each student is required to contribute 7 major items and 3 minor objects for a total of ten (10).

***Written Paper:*** Students write up their final reports formally under their own names. The report is an historiographical essay that documents in formal historical fashion the student's theoretical approach to collecting and displaying the objects of their contributions. It contains a thesis statement that enunciates the issue(s) the student expected to prove and arguing what the objects reveal about Egyptian daily life and society. While the report answers the questions, "how I did what I did and why," it also must show a conscious adaptation of the *Taxonomy of Historical Questioning* in its approach. The essay will list, define and describe the objects contributed to the exhibit, providing standard footnotes for all sources and argumentation and a formal bibliography.

***Late Policy.*** Late reports will be penalized 5 points for each day late (including Saturdays), up to three days, after which they will be graded no higher than a 59% (F). They must be submitted in person to the instructor; failing that, they may be submitted in person to the History Department (Maybank 204), where the departmental administrators will certify and date-stamp their arrival. The professor is not responsible for any papers simply dropped off at his office or shoved under his door. Regrettably, such papers cannot be deemed to have been submitted on time. Note that day 2 and day 3 after the submission date is Thanksgiving holiday, and nobody will be in the History Department to accept your paper.

***Form and Format.*** See "Final Project"-link on course Web pages for full information on formatting requirements, guidelines for form, including writing aids, helpful suggestions, sample paper, paper correction key, historiographical explanations, etc.:

Also, some professional peer-reviewed academic journals do exist on the Web. They are usually Web-versions of paper journals, and they are collected together into archives for easy searching and consultation, such as: Jstore® (<http://www.jstor.org/>), Project Muse™ (<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/>), and

**Objects are considered primary sources for the purposes of this exercise. Web-sources that provide images of appropriate objects are permitted. However, secondary sources on the Web are not permitted without prior arrangement with the instructor. Each unauthorized secondary web source appearing in the paper will result in a 5-point grade reduction.**

Infotrac™ (<http://web7.infotrac.galegroup.com/>). The College of Charleston Library subscribes to many of these archives, and they are found in the College's library catalogue under the heading, "Electronic Journals by Title" ([http://www.cofc.edu/library/ej\\_title.html](http://www.cofc.edu/library/ej_title.html)). ***Students do not need the instructor's approval to consult and quote from these electronic journals archived in the College Library catalogue.***

While students can consult and footnote Web pages of professional Egyptological organizations, universities and museums for objects and quote them ***without prior permission***, under no circumstances may they quote and footnote from the unprofessional sites (usually identifiable by the domain-markers ".com" or ".net" in their Web addresses). **Students should never quote from any world encyclopedias, whether from the Web or in paper medium.** If in doubt about the appropriateness of any research source--either on the Web or in print--please feel free to consult the instructor.

### **Policy on Plagiarism, Cheating, and Disruptive Behavior**

**Plagiarism.** As you prepare your papers for this course, be careful not to plagiarize any of your sources. Plagiarism is copying or paraphrasing the words and ideas of others and passing them off as your own or misleading the reader into thinking that the words and ideas of other writers are your own. Any plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, whether blatant or merely inappropriate paraphrasing, will not be tolerated.

**WARNING: Never ever(!) copy and paste from the Internet !!**

If you have any questions as you prepare your assignments, please ask the advice of the instructor. If in doubt about anything, quote it--even indirect quotations! The Honor Code of the College of Charleston strictly prohibits plagiarism, cheating, and attempted cheating. Students found by the instructor to commit these offenses will automatically fail the course with an "F", or else they will be reported to the College Honor Board and receive an "XF"-grade ("Failure due to Dishonesty"), which will appear as such on the college transcript. Additional penalties can include suspension or expulsion, depending on the severity of the plagiarism, as determined by the instructor, the Dean and/or the Honor Board. For definitions of these offenses and explanations of sanctions, see: "The Honor Code," in *College of Charleston Student Handbook*, §9.6-7, pp. 11-12

You are responsible for informing yourself of all definitions and regulations on this subject. Ignorance is not an acceptable excuse before the College Honor Board. Protect yourself; when in doubt, footnote it!

**Classroom Behavior.** Students are reminded that eating, drinking, and smoking are prohibited in the classrooms of the College of Charleston. The classroom is an inappropriate venue for eating meals, reading newspapers, personal grooming (such as combing hair, applying makeup, etc.), or even sleeping. The instructor reserves the right to expel any student from the classroom for unruly or disruptive behavior, and to contact Campus Police in extreme circumstances.

**Electronic Devices in Class.** Students may not operate ANY type of personal electronic device in class, especially: *Blackberrys, Androids and Android-like* devices of any kind, iPods, MP3 players, iPhones, cell phones, smart telephones, cameras of any kind, and any similar devices. Students may not use voice or video recorders of any kind, nor may they record any lectures without the prior authorization of the instructor.

**Computers in Class.** Students are not normally permitted to employ laptop, hand-held computers, digital notebooks, netbooks, iPads, nor any other electronic computing device in class **without prior permission of the instructor**. Any student authorized, but who abuses this privilege by engaging in activity unrelated to the class (checking e-mail, messaging, surfing the Web, recording, gaming, etc.), will forfeit permission to use the device in class for the rest of the term and will receive a 3-point reduction in the final course grade.

**Cell Phones in Class and Exams.** Students may not make or receive cellular telephone calls, podcasts, text messages of any kind, nor accept any electronic pages during the class period. Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, iPods, iPads, and all other devices at the start of class.

**Each time a cell phone or pager goes off or is activated in class during lectures and discussions, it will result in a 3-point reduction in the final course-grade for the student. However, if a student is found to be texting or receiving a text, it will result in a 5-point reduction in the final course-grade.**

**Any cell phone, pager or electronic device going off or activated during an exam, in addition to the 3-point course-grade reduction, will also result in a 15-point grade reduction for that exam. Any student found even handling a cell phone or electronic device, texting or receiving a text, during an exam will be considered cheating and will be remanded to the Honor Board for institutional sanction, as well as receive an automatic failing grade for the entire course.**

**Copyrights, Class Access, etc.** All lectures are the copyright of the instructor. He is their owner, and he reserves all rights to their content. Students do not purchase the lectures, but similar to computer software, they license access to them and their content for study purposes. Students may take and keep written notes from them, as detailed as they wish, and make all necessary use of them for their studies and to meet the academic requirements of this and other courses. Only registered students (or students in the process of registering) and those formally auditing are permitted to sit in this class. Any unregistered persons and guests must have the prior permission of the instructor to sit in on any class.

### **Lectures and Assignments Schedule**

The complete schedule of lectures and assigned readings for this course are found on the course Web pages under the link, "Reading Assignments," URL:

**<http://www.cofc.edu/~piccione 270/hist270assign.html>**

The readings consist of the texts and Internet source described above, as well as a large selection of other documents available for downloading (marked "W" in the Reading Assignments-schedule).

Class will adhere to the assignments and course schedules found there. *The instructor reserves the right to alter the schedule of lectures, discussions, video presentations, and reading assignments, quizzes and exams at any time.* Students are responsible for the full course material through the readings listed on the Web pages. Students should keep up with the schedule of weekly reading assignments, regardless of any deviation in the schedule of classroom lectures. Students must obtain or acquire access to all the

textbooks and readings, since the exams and quizzes include significant amounts of reading material not covered in class lectures. Thank you. Have a nice course!

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

An extensive bibliography for this course, categorized by subject area, is found among the course Web pages, URL: **<http://www.cofc.edu/~piccione/270/hist270/biblio.html>**