

Prehistory I: the Formation of Humanity

Code: 106843
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Archaeology	FB	1

Contact

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Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

Prerequisites

None

Objectives and Contextualisation

The subject is part of the basic prehistory subject of the Archaeology degree. The subject focuses on the processes of hominization: geographical areas, chronology and sequencing of hominin species and the expansion of Homo sapiens. The geographical and chronological perspective is very broad, covering the Mesolithic and the beginnings of the agricultural-herding way of life. The main objective of the subject is for students to know the fundamental processes of the first stages of history, but also to be able to understand how this knowledge has been generated, as well as to be able to evaluate the different interpretative models. On the other hand, the aim is to emphasize the relevance of these social and economic processes.

Learning Outcomes

1. CM01 (Competence) Understand problems in the study of prehistory and protohistory associated to the need to avoid androcentric perspectives and sex or gender inequalities.
2. KM01 (Knowledge) Identify the most characteristic material remains of prehistoric and protohistoric societies.

3. KM02 (Knowledge) Recognise the main historical processes experienced by human societies in prehistory and protohistory and the factors that influenced them.
4. KM03 (Knowledge) Contextualise historical processes from the prehistoric and protohistoric archaeological record in an introductory manner.
5. KM04 (Knowledge) Identify elements of androcentrism in explanations of the origins of humankind and early societies.
6. SM01 (Skill) Synthetically explain the periods of prehistory and protohistory, both empirically and interpretively.
7. SM02 (Skill) Identify the main archaeological materials in the prehistoric and protohistoric time-frame.
8. SM03 (Skill) Effectively express oneself by applying the typical procedures used to present arguments in formal discourse when producing written work or making oral presentations on introductory aspects of prehistory and protohistory.

Content

BLOCK 1. The study of Prehistory: archaeology, dating techniques, and environmental context.

BLOCK 2. The process of hominization. Human evolution and its protagonists. Technology, subsistence, and social organization of the first hominins.

BLOCK 3. Paleolithic: Technology, social organization, and subsistence of the hunter-gatherer societies of the Middle and Upper Pleistocene. Modern humanity. The debate about the origin and expansion of modern humans. Prehistoric migrations.

BLOCK 4. Epipaleolithic and Mesolithic: The last hunter-gatherer societies and the causes of their transformations.

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Teaching lessons, seminars, practical work, and field trips	40	1.6	
Type: Supervised			
Attendance and activities in the classroom	20	0.8	
Type: Autonomous			
Written essays	75	3	

Directed activities

- Theoretical classes led by the teachers with Moodle support.
- Group work sessions and debates led by the teaching staff. Evaluation and collective discussion of textual or audio-visual material, individual and / or collective class presentations.
- Outdoor activities in museums and archaeological sites

Supervised activities

- Concerted sessions to resolve doubts about the development of the subject. Individual or small group advising sessions on specific content of the subject.
- Advice in small groups for the preparation of presentations and assignments.
- Individual or advising sessions online and through Moodle.

Autonomous activity

- Personal study. Reading of texts. Search of bibliographic information
- Writing of papers. Preparation of presentations, oral comments and debates

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

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Assessment

Continuous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Attendance and activities in the classroom	10%	5	0.2	KM01, SM02
Test	60%	5	0.2	CM01, KM02, KM03, KM04, SM01
Written essays	30%	5	0.2	SM03

The continuous assessment system will be organised into 3 modules, each of which will be assigned a specific weight in the final grade:

1. Directed activities (theoretical classes) account for 60% of the grade. The evaluation of theoretical knowledge will be done through 2 written tests (25% of the grade each).
2. Attendance, completion of face-to-face activities and supervised activities (tutorials) will be weighted with 10%.
3. Autonomous activities (jobs) will account for the remaining 30%. The evaluation will be made from the presentation of two written works (15% of the grade each).

Evaluation Schedule

At the beginning of the course, students will be informed of the deadlines for completion/delivery of the exercises.

Requirements to pass the subject

- Presenting/carrying out the assessment exercises within the established deadlines.
- Achieving an average assessment exercise score of 5 or more on a scale of 10.
- In the event that they do not submit or present themselves to one or more of the assessment modules within the established deadlines, the student will receive the grade of not presented.

Review of Ratings:

At the time of completion/delivery of each assessable activity, the teaching staff will inform (Moodle, SIA) of the procedure and date of review of the grades.

Resit Procedure:

Students who have carried out/presented the supervised and autonomous activities within the established deadlines and have a minimum grade of 3.5 may take the exam. Activities that teachers consider not to be recoverable may be excluded from the resit process, for example: oral presentations, group work or tasks related to daily teaching activity.

Conditions for the 'Not assessed' rating:

Students will receive the grade of "Not assessed" as long as they have not submitted more than 30% of the evaluation activities.

Resit Schedule

Resit dates are set by the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. These dates are published on the faculty's website in July of the previous academic year. It is the responsibility of the students to know the date on which they must make up their subject. The last test of the continuing assessment will be scheduled at least one week before the resit date.

Plagiarism or fraudulent conduct

In the event that the student makes any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade of an evaluation act, this evaluation act will be graded with 0, regardless of the disciplinary process that may be instructed. In the event that there are several irregularities in the assessment of the same subject, the final grade for this subject will be 0.

Use of artificial intelligence: restricted

This subject allows the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies exclusively in bibliographic search or information search tasks, text correction and at the discretion of the teaching staff. The student must (i) identify the parts that have been generated with AI; (ii) specify the tools used; and (iii) include a critical reflection on how these have influenced the process and the final result of the activity.

The non-transparency of the use of AI in this assessable activity will be considered academic dishonesty and entails that the activity is evaluated with a 0 and cannot be recovered, or greater sanctions in cases of severity.

Those evaluation acts in which there have been irregularities (copying, misuse of AI, etc.) are not recoverable

This subject does not include the single assessment.

Bibliography

LITERATURE

EIROA, Jorge Juan. 2010. *Prehistoria del mundo*. Sello Editorial, Madrid.

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HIGHAM, Tom. 2023. *El mundo antes de nosotros*. GeoPlaneta Ciencia.

LEWIN, Roger; FOLEY, Robert. 2013. *Principles of Human Evolution*. Wiley-Blackwell.

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ROSAS, Antonio. 2015. *Los primeros homínidos. Paleontología humana*. CSIC-Catarata, Madrid.

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SANCHEZ ROMERO, Marga. 2022. *Prehistoria de mujeres*. Booklet, Barcelona.

SANCHIDRIÁN, José Luis. 2012. *Manual de arte prehistórico*. Ariel Prehistoria, Barcelona.

TORRE, Ignacio de la. 2008. *La Arqueología de los Orígenes humanos en África*. Akal, Madrid

DIGITAL RESOURCES:

[The Smithsonian's Human Origins Program | The Smithsonian Institution's Human Origins Program \(si.edu\) main | eFossils Resources](#)

Software

None.

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	1	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed