This course explores the prehistory of Europe from the arrival of the first humans until the end of the Viking Age. We will seek to understand the foundations of European culture before the advent of written sources. We will study Neanderthal and modern human interactions, the ritual systems of Paleolithic cave painters, the Atlantic societies that built megalithic monuments, the beginnings of agriculture, the Mycenaean culture that became Europe’s first civilization, and the Northern European “vikings” and “barbarians” who terrorized Rome and inherited post-classical Europe. The purpose of the course is to critically examine a number of themes and topics, such as subsistence adaptations, island settlement, trade, metallurgy and other technologies, rise of complex societies, early states, writing, religion and mortuary practices, women in ancient society, etc, emphasizing the similarities and differences within areas of Europe and with other regions of the globe.

This course satisfies SBC's “Engage Global Issues” requirement.