

# NORTH AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY

## Anthropology 250

### Fall 2023

*Professor:* Vincas Steponaitis (vin@unc.edu)

*Office:* Alumni 109

*Hours:* Mon 1:00-2:00 pm, and by appointment (arrange by email)

*Teaching Assistant:* Emily Scolaro (escolaro@unc.edu)

*Office:* Alumni 303C

*Hours:* By appointment (arrange by email)

*Course Description:* This course will survey the archaeology of North America, with an emphasis on the eastern and southwestern United States. It is intended for anyone interested in learning more about American Indian cultures, North America's ancient past, and how archaeological evidence can be used to reconstruct this past. The lines of evidence to be illustrated and discussed in the lectures and readings will include settlement patterns, architecture, food remains, funerary objects, and everyday tools.

*Curricular Requirements:* This course fulfills major and/or minor requirements for Anthropology, Archaeology, and American Indian Studies. It also satisfies the Engagement with the Human Past focus capacity (FC-PAST) in the Ideas in Action curriculum, as well as the Historical Analysis (HS) and World Before 1750 (WB) requirements in the Making Connections curriculum. There are no prerequisites.

*Course Objectives:* Students who take this course will learn the basic outlines of the pre-colonial history in the eastern and southwestern United States, focusing on American Indian lifeways and how they changed through time. The course is structured in four parts: (1) the first peopling of North America during the last Ice Age, (2) the transition from foraging to farming economies in the East, (3) the development of social complexity and inequality in the East, and (4) the development of sedentary communities and social complexity in the Southwest. Students will gain an understanding of the current state of knowledge in each of these domains; they will also learn the basics archaeological inference.

*Course Structure:* There will be three lectures per week (MWF 11:15-12:05). Videos and guest lectures may be scheduled at various times during the semester. Note that I reserve the right to make adjustments to the readings and course schedule (including due dates) over the course of the semester, as opportunities arise and circumstances warrant, but the basic structure of the course will remain the same. Any changes will be announced as early as possible.

*Required Texts:* George Milner, *The Moundbuilders: Ancient Societies of Eastern North America* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Stephen Plog, *Ancient Peoples of the American Southwest* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition).

*Course Requirements:* In addition to the assigned readings, course requirements will include the following: three take-home essays (25% each) and a final exam (25%). Regular attendance in class is expected; persistent, unexcused absences will also affect your final grade.

*Course Web Site:* The course web site contains not only this syllabus, but also slide shows pertinent to the class and links to other relevant web sites ([rla.unc.edu/courses/anth250/](http://rla.unc.edu/courses/anth250/)). The web site will be continually updated throughout the semester. Note also that all the assigned and optional articles published in *Science*, *Scientific American*, *American Antiquity*, and other journals are available online through the UNC Library catalog.

*Course Schedule (dates subject to minor changes):*

8/21-8/23 Introduction to the Course; Basics of Archaeology

PART 1. FIRST PEOPLING

8/25-8/28 Early Sites

8/30-9/1 Paleoindian Cultures, West

9/6-9/8 Paleoindian Cultures, East; Megafaunal Extinctions

PART 2. FORAGING TO FARMING IN THE EAST

9/11-9/13 Eastern Archaic Cultures; Early Archaic Lifeways

9/15-9/18 Later Archaic Lifeways; Early Farming in the East

9/20-9/27 Long-Distance Exchange; Early Mounds

PART 3. RISE OF COMPLEXITY IN THE EAST

9/29-10/9 Early and Middle Woodland cultures

10/11-11/6 Late Woodland and Mississippian cultures

PART 4. RISE OF COMPLEXITY IN THE SOUTHWEST

11/8-11/13 Southwest Overview; Archaic and Basketmaker Cultures, 200-700 CE.

11/15-11/27 Ancestral Pueblo cultures, 700-1500 CE.

11/29-12/1 Mogollon and Hohokam cultures.

12/4 Norse settlements.

12/15 Final examination (12 pm)

*Assignments are due in class on the following dates:*

9/18 Take-home essay 1 due (5 pages)

10/16 Take-home essay 2 due (5 pages)

11/13 Take-home essay 3 due (5 pages)

(rev. 9/6/23)

*Honor Code:* Students are expected to adhere to UNC's honor code. In particular, you must refrain from "lying, cheating, or stealing" in the academic context. If you are unsure about which actions violate that honor code, please see me or consult the web ([honor.unc.edu](http://honor.unc.edu)).

*Attendance Policy:* As stated in the University's Class Attendance Policy, no right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these university approved absences: (1) authorized university activities; (2) disability, religious observance, or pregnancy; and (3) significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency. See the Class Attendance Policy for details ([catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/attendance-grading-examination/#text](http://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/attendance-grading-examination/#text)). I am willing to work with students to accommodate absences that do not fall within these categories (e.g., a job interview or a family wedding). To make such arrangements, please contact me as early as possible in advance.

*Accessibility Resources:* Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) receives requests for accommodations, and through the Student and Applicant Accommodations Policy determines eligibility and identifies reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or chronic medical conditions to mitigate or remove the barriers experienced in accessing University courses, programs and activities. ARS also offers its Testing Center resources to students and instructors to facilitate the implementation of testing accommodations. See the ARS website ([ars.unc.edu](http://ars.unc.edu)) for contact information or connect by email ([ars@unc.edu](mailto:ars@unc.edu)).

*Counseling and Psychological Services:* UNC-Chapel Hill is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body. The Heels Care Network website is a place to access the many mental health resources at Carolina. CAPS is the primary mental health provider for students, offering timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services. Go to their website ([caps.unc.edu](http://caps.unc.edu)) or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health building for an initial evaluation to learn more. Students can also call CAPS 24/7 at 919-966-3658 for immediate assistance.

*Title IX Resources:* Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made to the Office of Equal Opportunity & Compliance online ([eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident](http://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident)) or by contacting the University's Title IX Coordinator (Elizabeth Hall, [titleixcoordinator@unc.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@unc.edu)) or the Report and Response Coordinators in the EOC Office ([reportandresponse@unc.edu](mailto:reportandresponse@unc.edu)). Confidential resources include Counseling and Psychological Services and the Gender Violence Services Coordinators ([gvsc@unc.edu](mailto:gvsc@unc.edu)). Additional resources are available online ([safe.unc.edu](http://safe.unc.edu)).

## LECTURE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Note: readings marked “OPTIONAL” are not required, but are provided as supplemental resources.

### **8/21-8/23 Introduction to the Course; Basics of Archaeology**

Milner, pp. 11-22.

Fagan (2005). *Ancient North America*, pp. 70-96.

Pringle (2011). The First Americans. *Scientific American* 305(5): 36-45.

Pringle (2014). Welcome to Beringia. *Science* 343: 961-963.

OPTIONAL:

Nemecek (2000). Who Were the First Americans? *Scientific American* 283(3).

### **PART 1. FIRST PEOPLING**

#### **8/25-8/28 Early Sites**

Greenberg and Ruhlen (1992). Linguistic Origins of Native Americans. *Scientific American* 267(5): 94-99.

Diamond (2011). Deep Relationships Between Languages. *Nature* 476: 291-291.

Reich et al. (2012). Reconstructing Native American Population History. *Nature* 488: 370-374.

Pitulko et al. (2004). The Yana RHS Site. *Science* 303:52-56.

Irving and Harrington (1973). Upper Pleistocene Radiocarbon Dated Artifacts from the Northern Yukon. *Science* 179:335-340.

Nelson et al. (1986). New Dates on Northern Yukon Artifacts: Holocene Not Upper Pleistocene. *Science* 232:749-751.

Waters et al. (2011). The Buttermilk Creek Complex and the Origins of Clovis at the Debra L. Friedkin Site, Texas. *Science* 331: 1599-1603.

Davis et al. (2019). Late Upper Paleolithic occupation at Cooper’s Ferry, Idaho. *Science* 365: 891-897.

Bennett et al. (2021). Evidence of Humans in North America During the Last Glacial Maximum. *Science* 373:1528-1531.

OPTIONAL:

Adovasio et al. (1978). Meadowcroft Rockshelter 1977: An Overview. *American Antiquity* 43:632-651.

Goodyear (2005). Evidence of Pre-Clovis Sites in the Eastern United States. In *Paleoamerican Origins: Beyond Clovis*, edited by R. Bonnicksen et al., pp. 103-112.

Dillehay et al. (2015). New Archaeological Evidence for an Early Human Presence at Monte Verde, Chile. *PLOS One*, Published November 18, 2015. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0141923.

Lawler (2011). Pre-Clovis Mastodon Hunters Make a Point. *i* 334: 302.

Shillito et al. (2020). Pre-Clovis occupation of the Americas identified by human fecal biomarkers in coprolites from Paisley Caves, Oregon. *Science Advances* 6:eaba6404.

#### **8/30-9/1 Paleoindian Cultures in the West**

Plog, pp. 37-45.

Haury (1953). Artifacts with Mammoth Remains, Naco, Arizona. *American Antiquity* 19(1):

1-24. [Read pp. 1-14, skim the rest.]

Wheat (1967). A Paleo-Indian Bison Kill. *Scientific American* 216(1): 44-52.

Meltzer (2009). First Peoples in a New World: Colonizing Ice Age America. [Read pp. 281-303.]

OPTIONAL:

Wilmsen (1974). Lindenmeier: A Pleistocene Hunting Society. [Read pp. 17-41, 105-120; skim 86-105.]

Warnica (1966). New Discoveries at the Clovis Site. *American Antiquity* 31(3): 345-357.

### **9/6-9/8 Paleoindian Cultures in the East; Megafaunal Extinctions**

Milner, pp. 23-33.

Anderson et al. (2015). Pleistocene Human Settlement in the Southeastern United States: Current Evidence and Future Directions. *PaleoAmerica* 1(1): 7-51. [Read pp. 7-9, skim the rest.]

Graham et al. (1981). Kimmswick: A Clovis-Mastodon Association in Eastern Missouri. *Science* 213: 1115-1116.

Halligan et al. (2016). Pre-Clovis Occupation 14,550 Years Ago at the Page-Ladson Site, Florida, and the Peopling of the Americas. *Science Advances* 2: e1600375 (13 May 2016).

Gramly (1981). Eleven Thousand Years in Maine. *Archaeology* 34(6):32-39.

Clausen et al. (1979). Little Salt Spring, Florida. *Science* 203: 609-614.

Grayson and Meltzer (2003). A Requiem for North American Overkill. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 30: 585-593.

Cooper et al. (2015). Abrupt warming events Drove Late Pleistocene Holarctic Megafaunal Turnover. *Science* 349(6248): 602-606.

OPTIONAL:

Collins (2002). The Gault Site, Texas, and Clovis Research. *Athena Review* 3(2).

Anderson (1996). Models of Paleoindian and Early Archaic Settlement in the Lower Southeast. In *The Paleoindian and Early Archaic Southeast*, edited by Anderson and Sassaman, pp. 29-57.

Webb et al. (1984). A *Bison Antiquus* Kill Site, Wacissa River, Jefferson County, Florida. *American Antiquity* 49: 384-392.

Mosimann and Martin (1975). Simulating Overkill by Paleoindians. *American Scientist* 63(3): 304-313.

Grayson (1987). Death by Natural Causes. *Natural History* 5/87, pp. 8-13.

Esty (2005). Investigating a Mega-Mystery. *American Scientist* 93(5):408-409.

Toner (2010). The Clovis Comet Controversy. *American Archaeology* 14(3): 13-18.

## **PART 2. FORAGING TO FARMING IN THE EAST**

### **9/11-9/13 Eastern Archaic Cultures; Early Archaic Lifeways**

Milner, pp. 34-56.

Fagan (2005). *Ancient North America*, chapter 16, pp. 371-380.

Daniel (2001). Stone Raw Material Availability and Early Archaic Settlement in the Southeastern United States. *American Antiquity* 66(2): 237-265. [Read pp. 237-250, skim the rest.]

**9/15-9/18 Middle and Late Archaic Lifeways; Early Farming in the East**

Fagan (2005). *Ancient North America*, chapter 16, pp. 388-394.

Fagan (2005). *Ancient North America*, chapter 17, pp. 399-401, 410-420.

Smith (1989). Origins of Agriculture in Eastern North America. *Science* 246:1566-1571.

OPTIONAL:

Yarnell and Black (1985). Temporal Trends Indicated by a Survey of Plant Food Remains ....  
*Southeastern Archaeology* 4(2):93-106.

**9/20-9/27 Long-Distance Exchange; Early Mounds**

Jefferies (1996). The Emergence of Long Distance Exchange Networks in the Southeastern U.S.  
In *Archaeology of the Mid-Holocene Southeast*, edited by Sassaman & Anderson, pp.  
222-234.

Pringle (1997). Oldest Mound Complex Found at Louisiana Site. *Science* 277(5333): 1761-1762.

Kidder (2010). Hunter-Gatherer Ritual and Complexity: New Evidence from Poverty Point,  
Louisiana. In *Ancient Complexities*, edited by S. Alt, pp 32-51.

OPTIONAL:

Saunders et al. (1997). A Mound Complex in Louisiana at 5400-5000 Years Before the Present.  
*Science* 277(5333): 1796-1799.

Russo (1996). Southeastern Archaic Mounds. In *Archaeology of the Mid-Holocene Southeast*,  
edited by Sassaman & Anderson, pp. 259-287.

**PART 3. RISE OF COMPLEXITY IN THE EAST**

**9/29-10/9 Early and Middle Woodland cultures**

Milner, pp. 57-92.

DeBoer (2004). Little Bighorn on the Scioto: The Rocky Mountain Connection to Ohio  
Hopewell. *American Antiquity* 69(1): 85-107.

Milanich et al. (1984). McKeithen Weeden Island: The Culture of Northern Florida, A.D.  
200-900. [Skim pp. 9-24, read pp. 91-119.]

Steponaitis et al. (2015). Coles Creek Antecedents. In *Medieval Mississippians: The Cahokian  
World*, edited by Susan M. Alt and Timothy R. Pauketat, PP. 12-18. SAR Press, Santa Fe.

**10/11-11/6 Late Woodland and Mississippian cultures**

Milner, pp. 93-1-7, 108-153, 154-167.

Thompson et al. (2022). The Early Materialization of Democratic Institutions among the  
Ancestral Muskogean of the American Southeast. *American Antiquity* 87(4):704-723.

Lawler (2011). America's Lost City. *Science* 334: 1618-1623.

Steponaitis and Knight (2004). Moundville Art in Social and Historical Context. In *Hero, Hawk,  
and Open Hand*, pp. 167-181.

Lankford (2004). World on a String. In *Hero, Hawk, and Open Hand*, edited by R.F. Townsend  
and R.V. Sharp, pp. 207-217.

Ward and Davis (1999). *Time Before History: The Archaeology of North Carolina*, pp. 229-247.

OPTIONAL:

Davis, Livingood, Ward, and Steponaitis (1998). *Excavating Occaneechi Town: Archaeology of  
an Eighteenth-Century Indian Village in North Carolina*. Web edition. [available at  
<http://rla.unc.edu/dig>]

## **PART 4: RISE OF COMPLEXITY IN THE SOUTHWEST**

### **11/8-11/13 Southwest Overview; Archaic and Basketmaker Cultures, 200-700 CE**

Plog, pp. 13-36, 46-55, 56-70.

OPTIONAL:

Wills and Windes (1989). Evidence for Population Aggregation and Dispersal during the B III Period in Chaco Canyon. *American Antiquity* 54(2): 347-369.

### **11/15-11/27 Ancestral Pueblo Cultures, 700-1500 CE**

Plog, pp. 71-72, 93-117, 118-134, 143-153, 154-171.

Crown and Hurst (2009). Evidence of Cacao Use in the Prehispanic American Southwest.

*Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 106(7): 2110-2113.

Benson et al. (2003). Ancient Maize from Chacoan Great Houses: Where Was it Grown?

*Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 100(22): 13111-13115.

Plog and Heitman (2010). Hierarchy and Social Inequality in the American Southwest, A.D.

800–1200. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 107(46): 19619–19626.

### **11/29-12/1 Mogollon and Hohokam cultures**

Plog, pp. 87-93.

Plog, pp. 73-87, 134-143.

Plog, pp. 172-179.

## **EPILOGUE**

### **12/4 Norse Settlements**

Ingstad (1971). Norse Sites at L'Anse aux Meadows. In *Quest for America*, edited by Geoffrey Ashe, pp. 175-198.

OPTIONAL:

McGhee (1984). Contact Between Native North Americans and the Medieval Norse: A Review of the Evidence. *American Antiquity* 49:4-26.