

Anthropology 433: Geoarchaeology
Fall Semester 2010, T/TH 3:30 – 4:45

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Course Description:

Geoarchaeology, the application of geosciences approaches to archaeological research, is an increasingly important field of study in both contract and academic archaeology. This course offers students a solid background in the field and laboratory analysis of soils, sediments, and landforms as they apply to archaeology. Specific topics include site formation processes, bioturbation, field- and laboratory- based methods for identifying buried soils, and geoarchaeological approaches to paleoenvironmental reconstruction. Each student completes a research project involving both field and laboratory work.

Course Readings: Three main texts are required for this course, all of which are available at Textbook Rental. There will be other readings assigned during the course of the semester, available over Blackboard or on reserve in the library. The three main texts are:

Practical and Theoretical Geoarchaeology. Paul Goldberg and Richard I. Macphail. 2006. Blackwell Publishing, Malden, MA.

Soils in Archaeological Research. 2004. Holliday, Vance T. Oxford University Press.

A Handbook of Soil Description for Archeologists. 2002. Gregory Vogel. Arkansas Archeological Survey Technical Publication 11.

Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Requirements: You are expected to attend class, contribute to class discussions, and participate in class-time laboratory exercises and field trips to soil exposures on campus. You will take three in-class exams and a final exam, write two essays, turn in write-ups from laboratory exercises and field trips, conduct a research project and give a presentation on your topic, for a total of 100 points, assigned as follows:

Laboratory and field-trip write-ups (5 points each):	20 points
Seminar presentation bibliography and outline	5 points
Seminar presentation	10 points
Research paper and presentation:	20 points
Three in-class exams (10 points each):	30 points
Final exam	15 points

Grading Scale: 100-90 = A; 89-80 = B; 79-70 = C; 69-60 = D; below 60 = F.

Laboratory and Field-Trip Write-Ups: We will make three field trips to soil exposures and landforms on the SIUE campus, and conduct particle size analysis in the laboratory during class time. You will take detailed notes and turn in a short (2-3 page) write-up summarizing each of these, worth 5 points each. One point will be deducted for each day these are turned in late.

Research Project and Presentation: Each student will conduct a research project relating to geoarchaeology on the SIUE campus. The research will involve fieldwork and/or laboratory work. Students will first write a short proposal of their intended topic, and begin conducting research by the middle of the semester. The reports will be about 10 pages long. Students will also give a presentation on their project for the class, and help lead a class discussion following the presentation. Presentations will be about 15 minutes long, accompanied by a PowerPoint slide show. A detailed assignment sheet will be handed out early in the semester. One point will be deducted from the reports for each day they are late.

Seminar presentation: You will give a presentation on a specific topic within geoarchaeology. For this you will give a Power Point presentation lasting 10 minutes, and *lead a class discussion* on the topic. To

prepare for your presentation you will read the class material relating to your time period, and consult at least five other published sources. You will turn in an annotated bibliography of the published sources and a 2-page outline of your presentation, on the day of your presentation. A sign-up sheet for times and topics will be handed out the first week. Students who choose the same time period will coordinate to make sure their presentations aren't redundant.

Exams: You will take two in-class exams during the semester, worth 10 points each, and a final exam during finals week worth 15 points. These will primarily consist of short-answer and essay questions. They will be based on readings, lectures, class discussions, field trips and laboratory instruction, student presentations, and any other material that may come up in the course of the class. The final will be cumulative. Missed exams may be taken with a doctor's note, but you must notify me of your illness *on the day of the missed exam* for this.

Extra Credit: There will be one Saturday field trip to the Lower Illinois River Valley to look at a variety of soils and landforms. Students who attend this field trip and write up a short (2-3) page summary can receive up to 5 points extra credit. In addition, there will be lectures outside of class or other events which you can attend and turn in a short write-up for extra credit. Each student can earn up to 10 points extra credit for the class.

Class Attendance and Participation: Keep up with the readings and be ready and excited to talk about them. Attendance will be tracked via sign-up sheets. You may miss one class unexcused without penalty, but each unexcused absence after then will result in one point deducted from your overall class grade. Six unexcused absences will result in an automatic "F" for the course, regardless of overall class grade. Showing up for class ten or more minutes late, or leaving ten or more minutes early, constitutes an absence. If work, another class, or other obligation will require you to arrive late or leave early on a regular basis, you should not take this class. Absences may be excused with a doctor's notice.

Cheating and Plagiarism: Any form of academic misconduct will result in an "F" for the course, and possible recommendation of further sanction, up to expulsion. If you have any questions as to what constitutes plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct, please consult the Student Academic Code or ask me. Note that falsifying attendance records is academic misconduct.

Students With Disabilities: Students needing special academic accommodations and who have documented disabilities should make an appointment to discuss these accommodations. If you are taking an examination through DSS, please be sure to give me your completed DSS test release form at least one week before the exam.

Other Course Policies:

Classroom Behavior: If you must show up to class late, please seat yourself quietly and try not to disturb the lecture, discussion, or activity. Help keep the room clean by taking out trash and recycling. Class lectures are all "informal" and you are encouraged to stop me and ask questions at any time (**Please Do!**). Keep your questions and comments polite, and do not engage in private conversation with other students during lectures or discussions.

Electronic Devices in the Classroom: Cell phones, Blackberries, MP3 players, laptops, and other electronic devices are **NOT** allowed to be used in the classroom at any time, unless they are being used for the sole purpose of taking notes or recording class lectures. This does not include playing games, texting, or searching for information on-line. During exams, the only objects allowed on desks are the exam itself and a pen or pencil.

Teaching Philosophy: I do not expect that everyone taking the class is in training to be a professional archaeologist, but bear in mind that this is an upper-level course and we will cover much of the material in great detail. I teach from a broad perspective and stress how the topics relate to other disciplines and to human life in general. It is my philosophy that education is best accomplished in an open, honest, and trusting environment. There will be no "trick questions" on the exams or assignments, and I will make every effort to ensure that you understand exactly what is expected of you. You must make every effort to come to class on time, finish assignments as they are due, and come to me with any questions or concerns you have.

Schedule

Note that Blackboard readings are not listed on this schedule (be sure to show up to find out what they are!), and this schedule is subject to change (this includes the readings, assignments, and exam dates), based on student interest, how quickly we get through material, current events that may be incorporated into class discussion, and other circumstances that may arise. Be sure to attend class to find out if it does!

Week	Topic and Readings	Due this week
Week 10 Oct. 26, 28	Landforms II: Rivers, Lakes and Floodplains <i>Goldberg and Macphail Chap. 5</i> <i>Holliday Chap. 9</i>	
Week 11 Nov. 2, 4	Landforms III: Uplands and Aeolian Settings <i>Goldberg and Macphail Chap. 6</i> <i>Holliday Chap. 9</i>	
Week 12 Nov. 9, 11	Geoarchaeology and Paleoenvironmental Reconstruction <i>Goldberg and Macphail Chap. 9</i> <i>Holliday Chap. 8</i>	Thursday: Exam 3
Week 13 Nov. 16, 18	Human Impacts on Soil, Stratigraphy, and Landforms <i>Holliday Chap. 11</i> <i>Goldberg and Macphail Chap. 10, 11</i>	
Week 14	-- THANKSGIVING BREAK --	
Week 15 Nov. 30, Dec. 2	Regional Examples of Geoarchaeological Studies - Student Presentations and Discussion -	
Week 16 Dec. 7, 9	- Student Presentations and Discussion -	Thursday: Research Paper Due
(Finals Week)	Final Exam Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2:00 – 3:40 pm	Final Exam