

**SYLLABUS - ANTHRO 942**  
**Ecological Perspectives**

**Instructor:** Jean Hudson  
**Office hours:** Friday 1:00-3:00 (schedule a specific time)  
**Email:** jhudson@uwm.edu

**Class time:** Friday 10:00 AM-12:40 PM  
**Class location:** Sabin 394  
**Website:** Canvas

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This seminar evaluates the ways archaeology intersects with ecology, including current interests in how a better understanding of human ecological dynamics in the past might usefully contribute to sustainable practices and strategies for dealing with climate change in the present. We will 1) review past and present models and theoretical approaches to the role of ecology in human societies, 2) examine continuously evolving methods for reconstructing past environments, and 3) evaluate regionally specific examples of trajectories of continuities and change, with special attention to environmental crises at various scales, as well as major cultural shifts in human ecology. On the applied side, we will focus on case studies that have proven analytically successful, persuasive, and useful.

**LEARNING GOALS**

This class is designed to help you continue building your professional skills in critical reading and synthesis, sharing your ideas verbally in both seminar and professional presentation settings, and professional writing of both brief and longer, more developed summaries and evaluations of both theories and methods. By the end of the semester, you should feel able to explain key concepts in the articulation of archaeology and ecology to others.

**CLASS STRUCTURE OVERVIEW**

We will combine shared readings and individualized readings, online discussion posts, in-person seminar discussions during our weekly class meeting time, and scaffolded individual work on a formal presentation and a major research paper. The research paper will be of the length and quality of a dissertation chapter or a manuscript suitable for submission for publication in a peer-reviewed journal (roughly 20 double-spaced pages or about 5000 words). The paper will focus on one or more of our three major themes (theoretical models, environmental reconstruction methods, interpretations of cause and effect in human-ecology relationships); unless otherwise negotiated, it will involve the collection and original analysis of published data (archaeological and environmental) for a prehistoric time/place/culture of your choosing. The scaffolding of the work will involve drafts of sections and stages of peer-review. There will be a final 15-minute oral powerpoint presentation on some abbreviated aspect of this research in the last full week of class, suitable in content and style for a session at a national conference. There will be an opportunity for peer and instructor feedback on the full draft of the final paper between Dec 10 and Dec 14; the final graded version will be submitted via Canvas no later than midnight December 20. There is no final exam in this class.

**CREDIT HOURS**

This is a 3-credit course. Students should expect to spend approximately 3 hours a week in class, which will be a dominated by seminar-style discussion with some mix of lecture, individual presentations, and peer review. Students should expect to spend an average of an additional 7 to 8 hours a week on reading and preparing for seminar and building their individual final presentation and paper.

## **READINGS**

All required readings are available via our Canvas site either as pdf or links. Full citations are provided with the Class Schedule. Additional individual readings can be searched for, identified, and accessed via the UWM library, including Interlibrary Loan (ILL). The class schedule provides information on which items are due each week. Readings must be done prior to the seminar meeting of the week in which they are scheduled.

## **WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS**

There are four assignments that will be typical of most weeks:

- 1) reading the assigned pdfs as provided on Canvas and reflecting on them
- 2) posting in response to prompts on the online discussion by the deadline (typically by Wed night)
- 3) preparing for an assigned seminar role - Context, Content, or Evaluation (typically by Thursday night)
- 4) attending and participating in the seminar period (Friday morning, 10AM to 12:40PM).

There are two weeks (Week 6 and Week 10 as per the Class Schedule) when we will not plan to meet as a group during the Friday class period. Those two weeks are devoted to scaffolded drafts and peer-review efforts, which can occur online or F2F as you choose and coordinate among yourselves. I will be available during the regular class period on those two weeks for anyone who wishes to schedule a 1-on-1 with me, either online or in-person.

## **FINAL PROJECTS**

As noted under Class Structure, there are two final projects, 1) one a paper and 2) the other a presentation.

**1) The paper** will be roughly 20 double-spaced pages or about 5000 words, with an MSWord-friendly font, font size between 10 and 12, margins between .75 and 1 inch, page numbers, and citation formatting in SAA style ([https://documents.saa.org/container/docs/default-source/doc-publications/style-guide/saa-style-guide\\_english\\_updated\\_2021\\_final.pdf](https://documents.saa.org/container/docs/default-source/doc-publications/style-guide/saa-style-guide_english_updated_2021_final.pdf) ). It will include a title, your name as author, the semester and course number, and References Cited at the end (the references cited section is not counted as part of the page length). It may include up to 5 tables and figures (which also do not count towards page length). The content of the paper will focus on one or more of our three major themes (theories, methods, interpretations) and, unless otherwise negotiated, will involve the collection and original analysis of published information (archaeological and environmental) for a prehistoric time/place/culture of your choosing. Note that this will require some individual literature search work to find and read sources appropriate to your focus; you will be sharing these via Discussion Posts and your drafts and their citations. Note also that analysis is a term that can refer to ideas as well as quantified data. Via the scaffolding process you will have collected information and drafted short summary evaluations on Theory and Method in Weeks 6 and 10, respectively, and will have discussed your sources and evaluations concerning Interpretive Case-Studies in Weeks 13 and 14. The final draft has the goal of bringing those sections and feedback together into a coherent single manuscript. There will be an opportunity for peer and instructor feedback on the full draft of the final paper between Dec 10 and Dec 14; the final graded version will be submitted via Canvas no later than midnight December 20. One good model for this type of manuscript is the kind of Background chapter most dissertations include, which review examples of theory and method and interpretative case studies relevant to your research area and the intended focus of your own research. An alternative model is a section of a co-authored journal article, where each author contributes expertise on their particular region/time period while all authors share a larger question that is addressed as a comparison between the case studies. We will discuss these writing models further in class to ensure that the goals are clear. The end goal is a manuscript that is useful to you both for the process of writing it and the piece of writing that results.

**2) The presentation** will be a 15-minute powerpoint, suitable in content and style for a national conference. The content will come from some aspect of your paper, keeping in mind that only a part of a paper of that length can be covered well in 15 minutes. Aim for 8 to 10 slides and a spoken script no longer than 8 pages. It is better to make fewer points well than to leave your audience confused or overwhelmed. Use the visual strengths of powerpoints – very little text per slide, bullets rather than full sentences, few images per slide so they are large enough and legible enough to have quick impact. If your visuals include a table or a figure, take the time to explain

how they are organized and what you intend them to document or illustrate. Use your script to keep yourself on track in terms of the points you want to cover and the timing per slide. A script can be an outline, a set of bulleted points, or short sections of text interspersed with reminders about the next slide and its content. Use the grammatical style of persuasive conversation among peers sharing information and ideas; do not use a written manuscript style when you draft your script; do not use a dry or monotone reading voice when you speak. Animate your voice and your language, make frequent eye contact with your audience, and if there is a good place to slip in a bit of humor, your audience will likely appreciate the attempt. We will discuss these ideas and others further in class, including a standard framework for an 8-slide talk, and the ways that building a short presentation sometimes help you distill key points of your thinking, which can then be used to tighten your written paper.

**GRADING**

Please note that the Canvas grade book will provide rubrics and record points so that you can assess feedback week by week, but that converting these points to the final intended grading percentages is not without its challenges, given the way the Canvas software works. The intended final proportionality is indicated below.

Type of Work	Contribution to Course Grade
Weekly interactive participation (posts, contributions to seminar)	40%
Interim work for final paper (submissions, peer-reviews)	10%
Powerpoint presentation	10%
Written research paper (full draft and final revised version)	40%

**Grading Rubric – Weekly Interactive participation**

Points Per Week	Aspect Assessed
0 to 2	Discussion Posts get full credit (2) for following directions in terms of content and timing and length AND engaging thoughtfully with the prompt. They get partial credit (1) for partial success in terms of content, timing, length, and engagement. They get no credit (0) if nothing is submitted.
0 to 5	Seminar Participation gets +1 point each for attending during the scheduled time, for solid evidence of comprehension of readings, for solid evidence of preparedness for assigned role, for relevant and respectful sharing of own ideas, and for posing open-ended questions that foster dialogue.

**Grading Rubric – Interim work for final paper**

Points Per Interim Work	Aspect Assessed
0 to 2	Submission of quality section drafts by interim deadlines (Week 6, 10, 13/14, by Dec 14)
0 to 2	Participation in peer-reviews and peer edits (written feedback Weeks 6, 10, and pre-Dec 14; oral feedback Weeks 13/14)

**Grading Rubric – Powerpoint presentation**

Points	Aspect Assessed
30	the powerpoint (8 to 10 slides, visually effective in terms of images and text, layout and use of color)
30	the delivery (engages the audience, uses a spoken style, fits the time limit, begins and ends professionally)
30	the content (goals and materials included are well-chosen to match the time frame and the oral style of delivery, spoken content parallels the visual slides effectively, overall flow of ideas is well-organized and easy for the audience to follow, the content matches the combined themes of ecology and archaeology)
10	questions are invited and addressed, any technical glitches are either avoided or handled gracefully
100%	

### Grading Rubric – Written paper

Points	Aspect Assessed
10	title, author, semester and course number, proper font size and style, margins, page numbers
10	proper use and formatting of in-text citations and References Cited section at the end
10	intro paragraphs clearly establish topic, context, significance, goals
10	early pages clearly establish structure of article, this structure is followed, logical organization is clear
10	good use of thesis statements to begin paragraphs, good use of summary paragraphs as needed explicit discussion of underlying theoretical or methodological issues
10	theoretical perspectives are identified, definitions are provided and cited, merits are evaluated
10	methods of analysis are explained, merits and complications and possible solutions are evaluated
10	choice of, explanation of, and citation to illustrative examples and evaluation of their relevance/merits
10	concluding paragraphs that succinctly recap essential ideas (starting questions & overview of answers, key debates, future research that could help resolve issues)
10	grammar and spelling throughout
100%	

### Course Grading Scale

A = 93-100%	B+ = 87-89%	C+ = 77-79%	D+ = 67-69%	F = < 60%
A- = 90-92%	B = 83-86%	C = 73-76%	D = 63-66%	
	B- = 80-82%	C- = 70-72%	D- = 60-62%	

### INCOMPLETE POLICY

Incompletes are considered an option of last resort and are only appropriate under specific circumstances where substantial work has been completed and an unexpected circumstance, such as a health issue, delays full completion. Details for completion of remaining work, including items and their due dates, must be agreed upon in written form prior to the last day of exams.

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES.** Please consult this link: <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/SyllabusLinks.pdf>

### OTHER MATTERS

If you have **any questions** about the class, or concerns about the assignments, please don't hesitate to consult with me promptly. I typically reply to emails within 24 hours. We can schedule an appointment for a virtual or in-person meeting as needed.

Do watch the Announcements on our Canvas site – I am most likely to use that to communicate class-related updates. If it does not already do so, you can set your Canvas to automatically forward any class announcements to your email.

**SUMMARY CLASS SCHEDULE** (the full weekly reading schedule and full citations are provided the 1<sup>st</sup> day of class)

Weeks 1-5	Introduction and Theoretical Models – readings and discussion
Week 6 (Oct 8)	no class meeting, online drafts and peer edits
Week 7-9	Methods of Environmental Reconstruction – readings and discussion
Week 10 (Nov 5)	no class meeting, online drafts and peer edits
Week 11-13	Interpretive Case-Studies – readings and discussion
Week 14 (Dec 10)	Presentations
Dec 20	Final Written Report due