

Advanced Archaeological Seminar: Approaching Archaeological Landscapes

ANTHROPOLOGY 445-10 | Fall 2018

**Tue 6:30 – 9:30 p.m. JBB
305**

Dr. Jordan T. Downey

**Office: Bruce Brown 335G
jtdowney@stfx.ca**

(902) 867-2112

**Office Hours: Mon. 10 –
12 | Tue 1 – 3 | Thu 10 - 12**



Landscapes have always captured the attention of archaeologists. Archaeologists often consider the connections between places at the continental, regional, local, and even site level. But while all archaeologists consider landscapes throughout their research, most do not explicitly talk about the landscape or theorize the land. Subsistence practices, craft production, and trade in exotic goods all tie a community to its local and regional landscapes, but these topics are often discussed without paying attention to the land beyond an individual site. Moreover, the word “landscape” is typically used without definition, but the very concept of a landscape is not as straightforward as it may seem.

Archaeological sites are not isolated beacons in a sea of empty land. All sites are situated within a landscape (or a seascape) that enables and constrains social and economic activities, that can be dangerous or nurturing, that changes regularly, and that binds or divides communities. Moreover, landscapes are not simply natural spaces between archaeological sites. People shape their own landscapes and their understanding of the wider region, and all human landscapes can be understood as an entangled web of the “natural” and the “cultural.”

This course will provide a general introduction to landscape archaeology. Rather than focusing solely on theories of landscape or on methods of landscape analysis, this course will work with both approaches to give students a firm grounding in the archaeology of landscapes. Students will also be introduced to research and analysis methods and tools—such as Geographical Information Systems (GIS)—that will be of great use in their academic futures, in the archaeological consultant industry, and beyond academia.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES – This course has several learning objectives that students should accomplish by the completion of the course:

- Learn to consider the landscape from multiple perspectives.
- Think critically about how archaeologists and the wider anthropology discipline discuss land and land use.
- Understand how archaeologists map and analyze sites and their regions.

- Develop skills related to collecting and conveying spatial information.
- Appreciate the differing cross-cultural perspectives regarding land and both built and natural environments.

COURSE FORMAT – This course will follow a seminar format along with short lectures on key concepts. Up to three key readings will be assigned each week. Seminar discussions will draw from these readings and you are encouraged to complete all readings *prior to class*. Students are expected to participate in class by contributing to discussions.

*I welcome you to work together and help each other out, but please ensure that all written work submitted for grades is completed **individually**.*

STATEMENT ON EQUITABLE LEARNING – “Everyone learns more effectively in a respectful, safe and equitable learning environment, free from discrimination and harassment. I invite you to work with me to create a classroom space – both real and virtual – that fosters and promotes values of human dignity, equity, non-discrimination and respect for diversity”.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS – We will discuss course material options and develop a reading list in the first class. Online readings and library material will be used.

Free to use software such as QGIS and Google Earth Pro may also be used for making maps, exploring landscapes, etc.

Weekly Readings – We will have a lot of reading in this course. I would like to be able to cover three articles per week, typically. We will discuss reading strategies in the first class. Please come to class prepared to discuss the reading material.



COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance & Participation	Weekly	20%
Discussion Questions	Weekly	10%
Mapping Assignment	Thursday, October 11 th (11:00 p.m.)	15%
Your Local Landscape	Thursday, November 1 st (11:00 p.m.)	15%
Research Paper		
- Proposal	Thursday, Sept. 27 th (11:00 p.m.)	5%
- Research Report	Thursday, November 29 th (11:00 p.m.)	35%

Participation & Attendance – Attendance in class and participation in seminar discussions is mandatory.

Discussion Questions – Each student is expected to prepare 3-5 questions based on the readings, and to bring these to every class prepared to ask their questions and to participate in the discussion. Discussion questions must also be submitted online prior to the start of each class.

Mapping Assignment – Create a map! Your map must show an archaeological feature (a site, building, etc.) in relation to a landscape feature that is relevant for understanding how the archaeological feature may have been used. This landscape feature can include geological formations, ecological zones, contemporary sites, etc. The goal is to convey something of interest about the site. Your map should include the key information and elements that any archaeological map should have (we will discuss these in class).

Ideally, you will create your map in a GIS program, but these programs have a steep learning curve and can be difficult to learn. If you are not comfortable using traditional GIS software to make your map you can use Google Earth or even hand draw a map.

Your Local Landscape Assignment – Talk about your local area as though you were an archaeologist from 1000 years in the future who just stumbled upon a very well-preserved ancient landscape. But there's a trick: you must be multivocal in how you interpret this landscape. You should approach the subject using at least two different frameworks (or "voices"), drawing from what we have covered in discussions and readings; e.g. you can follow a scientific settlement pattern approach and a phenomenological approach, using each voice to describe the same landscape.

Get creative with your choice of landscape location. You can use campus, your neighbourhood, downtown, the land you see on a rural drive, or your reading break vacation spot. Just remember: you are 1000 years in the future so there are no people, but all the buildings, roads, paths, trees, fields, etc. are well-preserved.

Maximum two pages. No research or references are required or expected: I want to hear *your* interpretation of this landscape, drawing from what you have learned so far in class about how archaeologists talk about landscapes.

Research Paper – Your research paper will be a 10-12 page (double-spaced) problem-oriented paper that draws from at least 15 academic sources. A problem-oriented research paper evaluates different perspectives on a topic to develop a strong argument that seeks to



answer a specific problem (i.e. a research question). A research paper should be supported by strong academic sources. This is not just a chance to showcase your writing style, but also an opportunity to show that you are familiar with doing background research on archaeological topics and using this research to support a research hypothesis.

You can write your paper on any topic relevant to the course, but it must be approved by your instructor.

This assignment has two parts:

1. **Proposal** – Submit a proposal (maximum one page) for your research topic. Your proposal should include a brief statement of interest (e.g. a thesis, hypothesis, or even just a kernel of an idea), a short outline, and a bibliography with at least 5 relevant sources.
2. **Research Paper** – A strong research paper will be 10-12 pages (double-spaced) and will draw from at least 15 academic sources. Your instructor will work with you to help develop your paper topic and line of argument.

COURSE POLICIES:

Moodle – This course will use Moodle to post assignments, submit your work, return grades, make announcements, etc. Please make sure that you access the Moodle course site early in the course and use it frequently. Log in at moodle.stfx.ca.

Late Assignments – Please speak to me *BEFORE* a deadline if you feel the need for an extension for assignments. I am flexible if you have good reasons for needing an extension. Last-minute extensions will not be granted except under conditions of medical, family, or other extraordinary circumstances. Late assignments will be penalized at 2% per day (including weekends).

Assignment Grading – Assignments will be graded promptly and returned with comments through Moodle. Exam grades will be posted on Moodle. Please note that your grades are private and will not be seen by anyone else.

Accommodations – I encourage students that require special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications to contact Learning Services (http://sites.stfx.ca/accessible_learning/services) within the first two weeks of class. If you are comfortable discussing the matter, you may also speak to me during my office hours.

Computer Problems – All StFX students have access to Microsoft Cloud services and should take advantage of this to ensure a backup of academic files. If you choose not to use this service, you are responsible for making your own backups to prevent losing data and not being able to submit required coursework. Do not email me two hours before the assignment is due to say that your hard drive crashed—back up your work *regularly*.

Communication – All students have a StFX e-mail account, which must be checked regularly as notices and information pertaining to the course will be sent electronically. You can send electronic correspondence to my university e-mail address (jtdowney@stfx.ca).

Computers & Social Media in the Classroom – Computers, tablets, & smartphones are all great and can help promote your learning in the classroom by allowing you to take



notes, look things up, etc. Social media can be great for networking and communicating important ideas. I promote the use of websites and social media for teaching anthropology and you are allowed to use these materials in class.

That said, if you are just using your phone or computer to browse Reddit, watch Youtube, play Fornite, or whatever, why bother coming to class? You are not learning anything and you are potentially distracting others from learning. Please be mindful of your peers.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Academic Integrity Policy may be found at:

<http://www2.mystfx.ca/registrars-office/academic-integrity>.

Please read this page **carefully and completely**. Academic dishonesty is a very serious offense and can result in serious consequences for your academic career. These are all examples of **offenses against academic integrity**:

- Copying three paragraphs from Wikipedia and putting them in your paper, changing a few words, and not citing your material (**plagiarism**).
- Paying someone online to write your research paper for you (**cheating**).
- Asking for an extension by lying about a friend's or relative's death (**falsification**).
- Sabotaging a classmate's work because you do not like them (**tampering**).

Note that these are just a few examples of offenses. Please pay special attention to Section 3.8.2 b (v) which reads "**Possession** of unauthorized aids or assistance including copying during tests and examinations" This means that you do not need to be caught **USING** a device like a cell phone or smart watch (for example) during a test or exam to be in violation of the policy. **Simply having the unauthorized device on your person during the test or exam is a violation of the policy**. These devices must be left in your bag at the front of the exam room, or left at home.

Your instructor reserves the right to examine submitted course assignments against available resources (e.g. by Googling suspect phrases) to check for academic offenses.



WEEKLY SCHEDULE

This topic schedule is a placeholder—in the first class we will discuss ideas, interests, and will finalize the topic list. We will also develop a reading list after the first class. Assignments must be submitted by Thursday 11:00 p.m. in the week they are due. **Due dates are set and will not change.**

Week	Date	Topic	Due Dates
1	Sept. 4	Introduction & course overview. What is a landscape, anyway?	
2	Sept. 11	Landscapes, seascapes, cityscapes, viewscapes, soundscapes, smellscapes: theoretical perspectives on the “scape.”	
3	Sept. 18	Modern mapping and spatial analysis: an introduction to GIS in archaeology	
4	Sept. 25	Site surveys and settlement patterns: traditional approaches to understanding archaeological landscapes	<i>Research Paper Proposal</i>
5	Oct. 2	Archaeology from the sky, sea, and land: an introduction to remote sensing applications in archaeology	
6	Oct. 9	Reconstructing Past Landscapes: Approaches to Environmental Archaeology	<i>Mapping Assignment</i>
7	Oct. 16	Natural landscapes vs. cultural landscapes	
8	Oct. 23	Spaces and places	
9	Oct. 30	Phenomenology of landscapes	<i>Your Local Landscape</i>
10	Nov. 6	Mobility and landscapes of movement	
11	Nov. 13	Ethnogeography: understanding landscape from an emic perspective	
12	Nov. 20	Case study: the political landscape	
13	Nov. 27	Case study: places meant to be seen and places meant to be hidden	<i>Research Paper</i>