

Geoarchaeology

Archaeology 388

Section: d100

Term: 2007 Fall

Instructor: Dr Knut Fladmark

Discussion Topics: This course is an introduction to geoarchaeology and the concept of archaeological sites as sedimentary bodies affected by past human activities.

It will be argued that, just as past cultural adaptations need to be understood in relation to paleoenvironments, the current sedimentary contents and geomorphic contexts of archaeological sites must be interpreted in relation to the natural land-forming and weathering processes which have produced and shaped them during the Quaternary period.

Slide-illustrated lectures will discuss common geomorphic contexts and sedimentary contents associated with North American archaeological sites, emphasizing their origins, histories and relevance to paleoenvironmental reconstruction. That will include a review of glacial, alluvial, lacustrine, littoral and aeolian land-forming systems operative during the late Quaternary, as they have affected the sediments found in, under and around archaeological sites. Later topics will include site stratigraphy, weathering and pedogenic processes, soil classifications, post-depositional turbation phenomena, anthropogenic sediments and some basic analytical procedures.

Grading: 4 x 30 minute quizzes worth 10% each

Essay 30%

Final Exam 30%

Required Texts: Waters, Michael R. 1992. Principles of Geoarchaeology. A North American Perspective. The University of Arizona Press, Tucson and London, 398 pp., soft-bound. ISBN 0-8165-0989-1

Sharp, Robert P. 1991. Living Ice. Understanding Glaciers and Glaciation. C

Recommended Texts: none

Materials/Supplies: none

Prerequisite/Corequisite: ARCH 201-3 and either ARCH 272-3 or 273-3

Notes: Deferred grades will be given only on the basis of authenticated medical disability.

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