

ANTH 2250-780

INTRODUCTION TO COGNITIVE ARCHAEOLOGY

Meet your instructor

Lecturer: Alaric Sollenberger, MSc, PhD Candidate

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Office Hours: Appointments via TEAMS or Zoom; coordinate via email.

Alaric Sollenberger is a PhD candidate currently conducting research for his degree in Human Cognition and Evolution at the University of the Balearic Islands. He earned his master's degree in Cognitive Neuroscience at University College London. He specializes in neuroarchaeology, which focuses on integrating neuroimaging techniques with experimental archaeological approaches in order to investigate the evolution of human perception.



Course Description

Cognitive Archaeology is a synthesis of multiple disciplines, including anthropology, archaeology, psychology, and the cognitive and neurosciences. Cognitive Archaeology presents a set of methods for studying artefacts and materials by analyzing the brain and the mind of the ancient humans that produced them.

Required Reading

Week 1 (8/24–8/30)

Coolidge, F. L., & Wynn, T. (2016). An introduction to cognitive archaeology. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 25(6), 386–392. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721416657085>

Week 2 (8/31–9/6)

Wynn, T., & Coolidge, F. L. (2010). Beyond symbolism and language. In T. Wynn & F. L. Coolidge (Eds), *Working Memory: Beyond Language and Symbolism* (pp. S5–S16). University of Chicago Press. <https://doi.org/10.1086/650526>

Labor Day: university closed (9/7)

Week 3 (9/7–9/13)

Wynn, T., & Coolidge, F. L. (2021). Situating the archaeology in cognitive archaeology. In T. Henley & M. Rossano (Eds), *Psychology and Cognitive Archaeology: An Interdisciplinary Approach to the Study of the Human Mind* (pp. 11–26). Routledge. [10.4324/9781003056140-2](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003056140-2)

Week 4 (9/14–9/20)

Coolidge, F. L. (2019). The ultimate origins of learning and memory systems. *Human Evolution*, 34, 21–38. <https://pontecorbolipress.com/journals/index.php/he/article/view/100>

Week 5 (9/21–9/27)

Coolidge, F. L., & Wynn, T. (2023). The evolution of working memory and language. In J. W. Schweiter & Z. Wen (Eds), *The Cambridge Handbook of Working Memory and Language* (pp. 73–95). Cambridge University Press.

Week 6 (9/28–10/4)

Coolidge, F. L., Overmann, K. A., & Wynn, T. (2024). On the problem of the interpretation of symbols and symbolism in archaeology. In T. Wynn, K. A. Overmann, & F. L. Coolidge (Eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Archaeology* (pp. 299–315). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780192895950.013.1>

Week 7 (10/5–10/11)

Coolidge, F. L., Wynn, T., & Overmann, K. A. (2024). The expert Neandertal mind and brain, revisited. In T. Wynn, K. A. Overmann, & F. L. Coolidge (Eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Archaeology* (pp. 131–149). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780192895950.013.2>

Week 8 (10/12–10/18)

Wynn, T., & Coolidge, F. L. (2010). How Levallois reduction is similar to, and not similar to, playing chess. In A. Nowell & I. Davidson (Eds), *Stone Tools and the Evolution of Human Cognition* (pp. 83–104). University of Colorado Press.

Week 9 (10/19–10/25)

Coolidge, F. L., & Wynn, T. (2019). The role of expert technical cognition in human evolution. In T. B. Henley, M. J. Rossano, & E. P. Kardas (Eds), *Handbook of Cognitive Archaeology: Psychology in Prehistory* (pp. 11–26). Routledge.

Week 10 (10/26–11/1)

Coolidge, F. L. (2023). An archaeological perspective on creative cognition. In F. Vallee-Tourangeau & L. Ball (Eds), *International Handbook of Creative Cognition* (pp. 399–414). Routledge.

Week 11 (11/2–11/8)

Wynn, T. (2024). Redescriving the Oldowan. In T. Wynn, K. A. Overmann, & F. L. Coolidge (Eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Archaeology* (pp. 79–94). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780192895950.013.3>

Week 12 (11/9–11/15)

Osiurak, F., Bryche, C. Bluet, A., & Reynaud, E. (2024). From technical reasoning to cumulative technological culture. In T. Wynn, K. A. Overmann, & F. L. Coolidge (Eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Archaeology* (pp. 173–196). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780192895950.013.9>

Week 13 (11/16–11/22)

de Beaune, S. A. (2024). Where are the children? Archaeological evidence of children in the hunter-gatherer societies of the Upper European Palaeolithic. In T. Wynn, K. A., Overmann, & F. L.

Coolidge (Eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Archaeology* (pp. 623–646). Oxford University Press. <https://doi-org.uccs.idm.oclc.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780192895950.013.22>

Week 14: Fall Break: University Closed (11/23–11/29)

Week 15 (11/30–12/6)

Coolidge, F. L. (2024). Stone balls: What, where, and why?

Policies

Reading Material

There is a reading of either an article or book chapter each week that the quiz is based on. Closely read and take notes of points that intrigue you. All reading material is provided in the course modules.

Evaluations

Each week there will be a quiz worth 10 points, consisting of multiple choice questions. There will also be a question you must ask of the instructors each week, worth 15 points.

Grading Rubric

Assignments will consist of 10 multiple choice questions based on that week's reading. In addition to quizzes, each week you will submit a discussion question to the instructors. This question should arise from your reading that was unclear or requires further explanation, or made you think about a related issue. You will be graded on the perspicaciousness (shred, sagacious, astute).

Weekly Quizzes: 10 points x 14 weeks = 140 points

Weekly Question: 15 points x 14 weeks = 210 points

350 points total

Use of AI Tools

The use of AI tools, including ChatGPT, is not permitted in this course.

Academic Calendar

Please refer to the [Academic Calendar](#) for important logistical information such as the last day you may add a class during the semester, the census date, the final day you may drop a class and still receive a refund, fee deadlines, holidays, etc.

Course Evaluation

The UCCS Anthropology Department is committed to providing the best possible learning experience to every student. A key mechanism to provide ongoing excellence in teaching and learning is to gather your thoughts on each course and the effectiveness of our faculty. Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing an online evaluation, typically during the last two weeks of the semester. These faculty evaluations are called Faculty Course Questionnaires (FCQs). The are forwarded to the course professors after final grades are submitted and contain no identifying information in regard to individual students (i.e., they are anonymous). Additional instructions will be provided via a notification sent to student UCCS email accounts later in the semester. Please know that student feedback is extremely valuable to your professor, the Anthropology Department, and UCCS as a whole. In particular, constructive comments guide the enhancement of future versions of this course.

Excel Centers

If you feel your performance in this class would benefit from additional tutelage, UCCS offers a network of five [online and on-campus](#) centers, each offering a unique program of academic support to help all UCCS students succeed in every aspect of their academic careers.

Disability Statement

A student with a disability who will need accommodations for this course must contact and register with the Disability Services Office, and provide them with documentation of the disability, so that appropriate accommodations for the student's situation can be determined. To avoid any delay in the receipt of accommodations, the student should contact the Disability Services Offices as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and that disability accommodations cannot be provided until an accommodation letter has been given to the faculty member. The student may contact Disability Services at Main Hall, room 105, 719-255-3354 or dservice@uccs.edu for more information about receiving accommodations.

Your Professor's Expectations of You

During completion of this course, you must abide by the [UCCS Student Conduct Code](#). This code specifies what is considered proper and improper student conduct, including matters such as cheating and inappropriate behavior. Students who do not abide by the code can receive sanctions ranging up to expulsion from the university.

Remember that this is a 3 credit-hour course at the sophomore (2000) level. Please plan on spending a lot of time working on this class. This time will include reviewing the material and completing assignments. It suggested that you plan to spend at least 10 hours per week on average.

Of course, the amount of time spent does not guarantee you any particular grade. Your letter grade will reflect the amount of material that you learned, as reflected in your assignment scores and the overall quality of your contributions to the course.

We will be respectful of you as students. We will not demean you, insult you, or embarrass you. We expect that you will be respectful and civil in your communications with your professor.

Solving Technical Difficulties

When you're having technical difficulties (pages not loading, connectivity problems, not able to view images, things not working as they should, etc.), please contact the 24/7 Canvas Telephone Support at 844.802.9230 or online at the [Canvas Support Community](#) page. Please note this service is separate from the [UCCS IT Helpdesk](#).

Help Understanding Course Material

When you have questions regarding course policies, grading criteria, quiz administration, etc., please ask your professor via email.

Useful University Phone Numbers: (719) 255-

Academic Advising **3260**; Anthropology Department **3620**; Disability Services **3354**; LGBTQ Resource Center **3447**; Library **3296**; Public Safety **3111**; University Testing Center **3354**; Veteran and Military Student Affairs Office **3253**; Veterans Health and Trauma Clinic **8003**; Wellness Center Mental Health Services **4444**; Writing Center **4336**.