

ANTH 392

Archaeology of the North American Arctic

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Patrick Jolicoeur

Course Description and Objectives:

This course introduces the archaeology of one of the last regions on Earth inhabited by humans: the North American Arctic. Despite its stereotypical depiction as a frozen wasteland, the diverse Arctic environment has had intensive human inhabitation for over 5000 years and the archaeological sites in the region have some of the best preservation in the world. Indigenous Arctic peoples have lived across the region and along its coasts from the continental boundary at the Bering Strait, across the fragmented landscape of the Arctic Archipelago of Nunavut to the deep fjords of Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland), and as far south as the Quebec Lower North Shore and Newfoundland. This course introduces the Arctic's complex culture history, the diversity of lifeways among northern peoples, and the major debates within Arctic archaeology today. Detailed case studies will explore the large scale and rapid human migrations that happened in the region throughout its history, the ways people have adapted in this environment across time, and some of the earliest known interactions between Indigenous North American groups and Europeans.

Skills Development:

This course develops your thematic knowledge of the North American Arctic's history and will introduce some of the core debates of Arctic archaeology which use a wide range of data, such as radiocarbon dates, genetics, material culture, and Indigenous oral histories. Additionally, the assignments in this course develop your skills in research design, written communication (in both academic and non-academic genres), generating actionable constructive feedback to help your colleagues improve, and your ability to apply feedback you receive.