



Exploring the Past: Archaeology in the Upper Mississippi River Valley

NEH Summer Institute July 14-August 1, 2014
University of Wisconsin–La Crosse
Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center

Academics

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Scope of the Institute

Archaeology, the study of past human cultures from the remains they left behind, is an essential topic for K-12 teachers. It links the humanities and the sciences and offers an engaging, multidisciplinary framework for providing content education in archaeology, history, anthropology, and other related fields, enhancing content knowledge in multiple subject areas simultaneously. Studying evolving cultural adaptations reveals the interconnectedness of human systems and how change in one aspect, such as food acquisition, has ramifications in other aspects, including economic, political, social, and religious systems. The Institute's focus on applying archaeological methods to real-world data lets participants experience the process of discovery from initial data collection to ongoing interpretation and analysis.

The project addresses several National Council for the Social Studies, Curriculum Standards for Social Studies, Thematic Strands, including (1) Culture; (2) Time, Continuity, and Change; (3) People, Places, and Environments; (6) Power, Authority, and Governance; (7) Production, Distribution, and Consumption; and (8) Science, Technology, and Society. The project also addresses numerous National Center for History in the Schools National Standards for History, including Standards for Historical Thinking K-4 and 5-12, Standards in History for Grades K-4, United States History Standards for Grades 5-12, and World History Standards for Grades 5-12. Additionally, the Institute addresses numerous standards in reading and writing from the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.

The Institute's goals are to provide participants with

(1) an experiential understanding of the archaeological record and the process of archaeology, and how we use them to interpret past cultures;

(2) an understanding of the succession of cultures that have adapted to the Upper Mississippi River Valley; and

(3) pedagogical support through interaction with content scholars, field trips, inquiry-based/case study activities, and individual classroom implementation projects.

The Process of Archaeology

Understanding human cultures by finding and interpreting items they left behind is a stimulating idea for all ages. Archaeology provides both an ideal framework and practical tools for learning about human cultures and linking to other disciplines, including anthropology and history. The Institute will demystify archaeology by showing what kinds of information archaeologists have available, how they acquire and process it, and how they use it to interpret human behavior and past events.

Archaeological understanding of past cultures is limited by the types of material remains that are preserved and by our ability to recognize, study, and interpret them. Some aspects of culture, such as basic tool types and major foods, are easier to derive from archaeological evidence than others, such as belief systems. How archaeologists conduct their research, from initial research questions to field and laboratory work, analysis, and interpretation, will be explored through discussion enhanced by excavation, laboratory, and workshop experiences. Important archaeological and anthropological concepts such as culture, context, subsistence and settlement strategies, and types of social organization will be discussed and also utilized in inquiry-based/case study activities that will examine changing cultural adaptations through time. Participants will explore how we know about the past, and how our understanding can change as we obtain new information and develop new techniques for recovering and analyzing remains.

Archaeology is especially well suited to experiential, hands-on learning. Reading that ancient hunters used spearthrowers and stone-tipped spears is different from actually throwing a spear or flaking raw stone into a usable tool. Such hands-on experiences form an important part of archaeological research and lead to a richer, more accurate understanding of the past. Similarly, taking part in an excavation and sitting down with trays of stone flakes or broken pottery helps people understand what kinds of data archaeologists actually work with, and how they use it to create understanding. The Institute's varied activities will ensure that participants enjoy a rich, authentic experience in how archaeology works and what we can learn from it.

Cultural Adaptations to the Upper Mississippi Valley

The archaeological record of the Upper Mississippi Valley reveals a remarkable history of cultural adaptation and growth. The Institute will explore what archaeology has told us so far about this succession of regional cultures.

How and when humans arrived in the New World is a subject of intensive research and heated debate regarding colonization times, routes, and models, as well as possible ties to the extinction of Ice Age megafauna. In the Upper Mississippi Valley, human occupation began some 13,500 years ago when the glaciers retreated and the area became habitable. The region's first peoples, known to archaeologists as Paleoindians, were skilled hunters who killed mammoths, mastodon, and other large game and had a highly mobile way of life.

After the disappearance of the megafauna, Archaic cultures characterized the region from about 7000 to 500 B.C. These hunter-gatherers pursued smaller game and showed more specific adaptations to different regions, following an annual cycle that positioned them to acquire foods at the best locations and times of year. Cool-season living sites were in protected locations, including rockshelters, while warm-season camps were generally along rivers. Toward the end of this era, Late Archaic Red Ocher and Old Copper cultures showed greater social complexity, including elaborate burial practices, long-distance trade in materials such as copper, shell, and stone, and early steps in plant domestication.

About 2,500 years ago, three developments marked the beginning of Woodland cultures throughout much of eastern North America: the addition of horticulture to a hunter-gatherer economy; pottery manufacture; and the construction of earthen burial mounds. Early Woodland cultures (500 B.C.–A.D. 100) reflect the early stages of this transformation. Middle Woodland cultures (A.D. 100–600) continued the trend toward complexity and included cultures linked to Hopewell, a pan-regional development marked by elaborate mound burials and long-distance trade. Early and Middle Woodland peoples still relied primarily on hunting and gathering and a flexible seasonal round, congregating in larger settlements during the warm season and dispersing into smaller groups for the winter.

Late Woodland cultures (A.D. 600–1050) reflect a gradual increase in population density, integration of corn horticulture into a diversified subsistence economy, and the introduction of the bow and arrow, with concomitant changes in hunting strategies. Mounds were created in various shapes, including animal-effigy forms that might have represented clans or mythic figures. Between A.D. 1000 and 1150, regional cultures were also affected by emissaries, traders, and/or emigrant Mississippian populations from Cahokia, a complex, stratified chiefdom-level society centered in the St. Louis area of the Mississippi Valley. Effigy-mound construction stopped about 950 years ago, and Effigy Mound peoples seem to have largely abandoned the region's interior hill country, perhaps because a growing population density disrupted seasonal mobility and confined the groups to individual valleys year round, making them vulnerable to collapses in two crucial resources, firewood and white-tailed deer.

Beginning about A.D. 1300, Mississippian-influenced Oneota peoples practiced more intensive agriculture and lived in sprawling settlements along the major rivers near La Crosse. Oneota peoples grew corn, beans, and squash and practiced ridged-field agriculture on a large scale, but they also hunted and collected a wide range of wild resources. Oneota groups abandoned La Crosse nearly 400 years ago and moved west, probably in response to disease, population displacement, and other contact-related changes that preceded the actual arrival of Europeans in the area.

European contact brought profound changes, including disease and depopulation; movement and removal of Native peoples; a changing economy, including the fur trade; the introduction of new technologies and raw materials (e.g., firearms, iron, brass, steel); and the introduction of the horse. Beginning with Jean Claude Nicolet's visit in 1634, French and English explorers, traders, and military personnel came to the Upper Mississippi Valley, and by the mid-1800s, widespread Euroamerican settlement was causing profound impacts, from formalization of land ownership to

massive environmental changes. La Crosse became a focus for lumbering and river transport, and European farmers of various ethnicities settled the surrounding countryside.

Euroamerican farming adaptations in the region have continued to evolve to the present day. Changes in farming methods and the rise of large-scale agribusiness have led many long-term family farmers to either sell out or rely on auxiliary incomes for support; however, Amish farmers who have purchased land here after selling higher-priced farmland in other regions are now creating a new generation of family farms based on traditional farming methods. Other developments, besides large-scale factory farms, include new crop choices (e.g., wine grapes replacing tobacco), farming geared to niche markets (organic foods), development of garden plots by immigrant Hmong families who sell through farmers' markets and other local channels, and land sales to retirees, commuters, hunters, and hobby-farm owners.

The common thread linking these disparate cultures, from Paleoindian to the modern day, is their adaptation to the Upper Mississippi River Valley, and in particular to the rugged ridge-and-valley topography of the "Driftless Area," an area that was not reshaped by glaciation or covered with glacial drift during the last Ice Age, unlike surrounding regions. The Driftless Area is noted for its numerous archaeological sites, its location between the eastern woodlands and the western prairies, and the deep, wide trench of the Mississippi River, which forms a north-south communication route. Despite abundant natural resources, the region's rugged topography and harsh winters have posed significant challenges to human habitation.

Comparing different cultural adaptations to the same locale is a fascinating and important approach to archaeological research. In any environment, human groups make choices regarding how to meet basic survival needs such as food, water, protection from the elements and other dangers, and essential raw materials. These adaptive choices are linked to every other facet of culture: technology, settlement size and location, social organization, and ideology and art. Archaeologists study adaptive strategies by looking at site types and sizes, tool types, processing areas, and plant and animal remains. The Institute's inquiry-based/case study activities will encourage participants to assess the local environment and technologies available at different times, postulate the choices particular groups might have made to meet their basic needs throughout an annual cycle, and test those interpretations by examining the archaeological evidence.

To strengthen understanding of cultural adaptation, the Institute will incorporate selected information on modern land use and adaptations. Archaeologists routinely use such information to complete the picture of human occupation over time and to evaluate landscape changes and their effects. Examining current adaptations also helps students apply basic anthropological and archaeological concepts to cultures they can see and experience, a process that prepares them for stepping outside of their modern perspective and studying cultures of long ago.

Meetings and Assignments

Schedule and Readings

The study plan for the Institute provides in-depth content on the process of archaeology and the succession of cultural adaptations in the Upper Mississippi Valley. Potential classroom

applications of course content will be discussed throughout the Institute. Week 1 will introduce the regional environment, basic archaeology concepts and terms, artifact interpretation, excavation at an archaeological site, and resources for classroom applications and projects. Week 2 will feature hunter-gatherer adaptations, the peopling of the New World, additional aspects of the process of archaeology, and work on participant projects. Week 3 will include horticultural and agricultural adaptations, the effects of European contact, using adaptive strategies to link archaeology to the modern day, classroom adaptations of course content, and presentation of participant projects. The proposed agenda, (also available on the Web site at <http://www.uwlax.edu/mvac/nehinfo.htm>), presents the schedule in greater detail and describes the project field trips.

The agenda also lists primary, supplemental, and related readings. Readings will include background information on the process of archaeology, the environment of the Upper Mississippi Valley, and an overview of the prehistory of the area. Some of the texts will be provided by the Institute and others will be available as PDF files on the web-based teaching format (Desire2Learn, or D2L) that will be used throughout the project. Participants will receive the following texts as a part of the project:

Twelve Millennia - Theler & Boszhardt
Digging and Discovery (Teacher Guide) - Malone
Digging and Discovery (Student Version) – Holliday & Malone
Intrigue of the Past (Teacher Guide) – Smith, Moe, Letts, Paterson

Prior to our first La Crosse meeting, the project staff will make some reading materials available on D2L for those who want to read them in advance.

Projects

Participants will complete individual projects that will help them analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the Institute's content and apply it in their classrooms. The projects will be facilitated by project staff and tailored to a wide range of individual teaching needs. Participants are encouraged to use a constructivist teaching model with inquiry-based activities that reflect the best practices in history instruction. Example projects include creation of Web sites, lesson plans, learning centers, videos, PowerPoint and Prezi presentations, photo-journals, or scrapbooks. Participants may want to bring or have access to their texts and/or curriculum to aid them as they work on their Institute project. Throughout the Institute, participants are expected to complete readings, participate in activities and field trips, and conduct research related to their projects. They will work with staff to identify connections to their curriculum, prepare appropriate lessons, compile supplemental materials, and identify local contacts for support after the Institute concludes. Participants will present their completed projects at the end of the Institute. Projects will also be posted to MVAC's Web site as appropriate, making them available to participants and interested teachers around the nation beyond the project period (e.g., 74 projects from the 2012, 2011, 2010 and 2007 NEH Institutes are posted at <http://www.uwlax.edu/mvac/Educators/LessonPlans.htm#NEH>).

Technology

As noted, portions of the Institute will be offered through the Web-based Desire2Learn (D2L) course framework that provides a place to post and download class information, conduct discussions, and contact classmates and instructors. The D2L Web-based teaching format will be used after applicants are accepted, during the Institute, and for several months afterward to facilitate group and staff interaction and support. Access is through a standard Web browser. Participants will receive instructions for logging on to and using features of D2L. University of Wisconsin–La Crosse Information Technology Services (ITS) personnel can provide assistance with configuration problems, password difficulties, and so forth. They can be reached by e-mail at helpdesk@uwlax.edu, by phone at 608-785-8774 or Chat at <http://www2.uwlax.edu/its/Chat/>. For more information about ITS visit their web site at <http://www2.uwlax.edu/ITS/>. UW-L ITS or the course instructors will be available to assist you with computer difficulties. It is your responsibility to contact them if you need assistance.

As described above, some activities prior to the Institute will be conducted through D2L. You'll need to be able to access the Web and send and receive e-mail messages and attachments. You should have (or can download) a copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader. A faster Internet connection will work more easily, but a slower connection should still work. Either PC or Mac format will be fine. You'll also need a word-processing program that can read and create RTF (Rich Text Format) files (most programs such as Word or WordPerfect can do this). You'll also want some type of program for viewing and printing graphic images (your Web browser will work for this, if necessary).

Institute Format

The project will employ a team-teaching approach and a variety of instructional methods, including inquiry-based/case study activities, workshop and laboratory activities, demonstrations, field trips, lectures, discussions, individual research, and Web-based teaching format.

- *Classroom activities* – Most classroom activities will take place in Room 312 of Wimberly Hall on the UW-L campus. Wimberly Hall is usually a cold building, but it's known for its erratic temperatures. We recommend that you dress warmly and in layers.

For some components you will be working on a computer, using a computer lab with PCs and MS Office Suite software. You may bring laptops, and there will be some places to plug them in. There will be wireless Internet access in the classroom. You'll have access to computer labs on the UW-L campus throughout the project.

- *Field trips* – Some days will include field trips to local archaeological and other sites (see the Institute agenda). We'll provide buses for transportation. For field trip days, plan to bring your own lunch, a water bottle, sunscreen, insect repellent, a wide-brimmed hat, a raincoat, and for the excavation day, work gloves and comfortable shoes (flat soles or old tennis shoes work well). No sandals or open-toed shoes for the excavation! We highly recommend bringing a camera so you can record your experience. We also recommend making sure your tetanus shot is current. During the field trips you should expect sunny, hot, and humid

conditions. We might encounter some poison ivy. Please bring any allergy (bee stings, poison ivy, etc.) medication with you and notify Bonnie if you have any health issues we should know about.

- *Online activities* – Throughout the Institute participants will use D2L to post and download class information, conduct discussions, and contact classmates and instructors. Prior to the La Crosse meetings, online notices will be e-mailed and posted to the D2L announcement page. Some readings will be posted to D2L as PDF files. It's your responsibility to check your e-mail and D2L for messages and to contact the instructors as soon as possible if you have a problem or if you change your e-mail address.

Meeting with Project Directors

Project directors will be available for scheduled individual appointments throughout the project, and at other times as needed. Participants are encouraged to meet with the project directors to address any problems or assist with individual research or classroom implementation plans.

Academic Resources

The Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center lab and Murphy Library at the University of Wisconsin–La Crosse have excellent resources on the archaeology of the region, including online access to extensive full-text databases of many journals. The library will be open most evenings during the Institute, and the online resources are available at all times. This link takes you to the many resources at Murphy Library: <http://www.uwlax.edu/murphylibrary/>

Computer labs are available on campus during the days and evenings, providing access to PCs, a printer, and the Internet. During the Institute participants will have a special log-in to gain access to the computers and campus network. The campus classrooms, dining facilities, and dorms have Internet access.

Core Faculty and Guest Presenters

Core Faculty

James Theler, Institute Faculty: Professor Emeritus of Archaeology, UW-L; Senior Research Associate, MVAC

E-mail: theler.jame@uwlax.edu

With over 30 years of experience, Jim is known for his dynamic teaching style and worldwide knowledge of human cultures and cultural adaptations. His research specialties include the reconstruction and analysis of past environments, human subsistence and settlement strategies, analysis of animal remains, and Woodland cultures of the Upper Midwest. He is currently studying the archaeology of the Bad Axe Valley, including the Cade Archaeological District. Jim will take the lead with the Institute's core content and classroom presentations.

Katherine Stevenson, Institute Faculty: Operations Manager, MVAC; Adjunct Faculty and Graduate Faculty, UW-L

Phone: 608-785-8451

E-mail: kstevens@uwlax.edu

Kathy has been involved in archaeology at UW-L and MVAC for 30 years. Her research interests include regional Woodland and Oneota cultures, subsistence and settlement, effective presentation of archaeological information, working with archival records, and regional caves and rock art. Additional experience in editing and publishing has emphasized communication of scholarly information to the general public, including children. Kathy will work with Jim on content presentation and take the lead with activities, case studies, and archaeology-related aspects of participant projects.

Bonnie Jancik, Institute Director: Director of Public Outreach, MVAC; Adjunct Faculty and Graduate Faculty, UW-L

Phone: 608-785-6473

E-mail: bjancik@uwlax.edu

Bonnie has been involved in formal elementary education and informal K-12 education for over 30 years. She is widely known for her work in archaeology education and delivering integrated content and inquiry-based professional development for practicing teachers. She has taught and team-taught undergraduate and graduate classes for K-12 teachers and has directed large-scale, content-based professional development workshops that use archaeology as a vehicle to teach a wide variety of curriculum subjects. Bonnie will take the lead on administration and education-related aspects of the Institute, including participant projects.

Guest Presenters

Loren Cade is a lifelong resident of the Bad Axe Valley and an avocational archaeologist with a long-term relationship with MVAC and a strong interest in ancient technology. He is expert in making wooden arrows and hunting with traditional bows and is experienced at presenting archaeology-related information to the public. His farmland includes significant portions of the Cade Archaeological District, which he was instrumental in getting listed on the National Register of Historic Places. He will host and help facilitate the fieldwork portion of the project, co-lead the technology field day, discuss the ethics of artifact collecting, and provide information on evolving adaptations for local farmers.

Robert Keiper has been a flintknapper for over forty years. He has taught people of all ages the art of making stone tools. Robert has been involved with MVAC for many years, participating in archaeological activities and presenting at public events. In 2009 Keiper received MVAC's Regional Archaeology Award to acknowledge his long-term commitment to sharing his knowledge of ancient technologies. He will provide flintknapping workshops at the Institute's technology day.

CEUs/Credits

CEUs

Ten Continuing Education Units (CEU) are available for those participating fully in the work of the Institute. Those interested in receiving CEUs must sign the daily Sign-in Sheet and provide a check (made out to UW-L) for \$15.00. The certificate will be mailed (by the University of Wisconsin–La Crosse Continuing Education) in approximately two weeks following completion of the Institute.

Graduate Credits

Three graduate credits are available for participants in the Institute, although participants are responsible for their own registration and all payments. Participants seeking credit will design and complete an appropriate project as part of the course. These will be developed in conjunction with project staff and will depend on the interests and needs of the participants but might include curriculum development, a research paper, or other projects.

The University will allow registration as a “special non-degree seeking student” <http://www2.uwlax.edu/Admissions/Special-non-degree-student/> and participants will then be enrolled in ARC 598 – Seminar in Archaeology. The tuition fee schedule is available online at: <http://www.uwlax.edu/cashiers/tuitionfeeschedule.htm>. Questions regarding fees can be directed to the UW-L Cashiers Office at: 608-785-8727 or cashiers@uwlax.edu. Complete the on-line registration and e-mail Bonnie your UW-L ID# and tell her if you want graduate or undergraduate credit by June 13. She will then manually register you for the course.

UW-L Visiting Scholars

Participants will have the status of “visiting scholars” at UW-L, entitling them to access to the library, ability to log-on to campus computers, and other campus-based services.

Stipend

Participants will receive a stipend of \$2,700 for attending all meetings (Monday–Friday, July 14–August 1, 2014) and engaging fully in the work of the project. Stipends are intended to help cover travel expenses to and from the project location, books and other research expenses, and living expenses for the duration of the period spent in residence. Stipends are taxable. Participants should note that supplements will not be given in cases where the stipend is insufficient to cover all expenses. Participants will receive a check for 1/2 of the stipend (\$1,350) when they arrive and will receive the remaining 1/2 of the stipend (\$1,350) on the final day of the Institute. Payments (cash or check, NO credit cards) for Reuter Hall living accommodations will be due at the end of the Institute. Participants who, for any reason, do not complete the full tenure of the Institute must refund a pro-rata portion of the stipend.