

First Farmers to First Cities

ANTH 3803
Spring 2021

Dr. Susan Johnston
My basement (and wherever you are...)

Course Description

How did humans go from being hunter-gatherers to farming, herding animals, and living in settled communities? What is domestication and how did it come about? What's up with dogs, when did it occur to someone that we could actually ride those horses, and how did the idea of using non-human animal milk in so many tasty ways come about? How do both plants and animals react to this process, and how did it affect humans? What is the nature of inequality in human groups, when did it become institutionalized, and how can archaeologists measure this important social change? This course considers these questions and more through evidence from archaeology, ethnography, and genetics with the goal of understanding how these important social changes came about and what their implications are for human society and culture now.

Learning Goals:

Specific

By the end of this course, students should:

- ❖ have a general understanding of the ways that archaeologists approach and interpret the evidence for the shift to food production in past cultures;
- ❖ have a specific understanding of the various factors involved in this shift;
- ❖ understand both the possibilities and the limits of archaeology in interpreting the past
- ❖ see the connection between anthropological knowledge and the interpretation of the past.

General

This course will contribute to student competence in:

- ❖ critical thinking, in which the logic and evidence underlying an interpretation is evaluated in terms of the conclusions reached;
- ❖ scientific reasoning, in which interpretations that are founded on evidence are understood as distinct from speculation (legitimate or otherwise);
- ❖ cross-cultural perspectives, which are given an important time depth by including knowledge of past societies;
- ❖ written expression, in which these ideas are communicated in an effective and coherent way.

Reading:

January	13	Introduction
	15	Can we use modern hunter-gatherers as models? Kelly Ch 1, 10

	20	NO CLASS (Inauguration Day—celebrate or commiserate accordingly)
	22	Are hunter-gatherers really different from farmers? Terrell
	27	The origins of agriculture Zeder & Smith; Zeder 2011
	29	Surplus Bowles; Kuijt & Finlayson
February	3	Sedentism Boyd; Phillips et al
	5	Causes: population Cohen; Page et al
	10	Causes: environment Abbo et al; Bar-Yosef
	12	Causes: feasting Hayden 2014
	17	Causes: migration/diffusion and perspective Thomas
		RESPONSE PAPER #1 DUE
	19	Niche construction theory Smith 2007, 2011
	24	What is domestication? Lien et al; Zeder et al
	26	Plant domestication Purugganan; van der Veen
March	3	Commensalism Francis Ch 4; Lord et al; Parsons et al
	5	Dogs Francis Ch 2; Guagnin et al
	10	Animal domestication Zeder 2012; Francis Ch. 8 (and 6 &7 if you want)
	12	Do hunter-gatherers see non-human animals differently? Knight; Pasarić & Warren

RESPONSE PAPER #2 DUE

	17-19	SPRING BREAK
	24	Secondary products Greenfield; Burger et al; Outram et al
	26	The nature of human/ non-human animal relationships Armstrong Oma; Allentuck; Fijn
	31	Horses Bendry; Anthony; Recht
April	7	Pastoralism Honeychurch & Makarewicz; Gooch
	9	European Neolithic: migration, diffusion and ideas Rowley-Conwy 2011; Bogucki
	14	Hunter-gatherers /food producer interaction in Europe Rowly-Conwy 2014; Borić & Price; Alt et al; Keeley
	16	Why inequality? Bowles & Choi; Hayden 2010 (I know, get the gist); Price & Feinman

RESPONSE PAPER #3 DUE

	21	Measuring inequality Basri & Lawrence; Ames & Grier
	23	Human self-domestication? Francis Ch. 14, 15
	28	Final thoughts

Average minimum amount of independent, out-of-class, learning expected per week for this class (as per federal regulation 34 CFR 602.24(f)): 6

Course Requirements:

This syllabus represents the basic framework of this class. However, **I RESERVE THE RIGHT TO CHANGE IT IF IT BECOMES NECESSARY.** This would only happen if we get behind, or want to pursue a topic for more time than I have allowed for that topic. You will get plenty of warning if I do have to change the syllabus.

All of the reading listed in this syllabus is required. It should be completed by the day on which it appears in the syllabus. You are also responsible for anything which happens in class. It will make this class both more

interesting and more useful for you if you will **PLEASE DO THE READING**. This is primarily a discussion class, so if you haven't done the reading then you will have nothing to discuss. Also, since you have to cite the readings in the response papers, don't wait until the last minute to read them. It will be less painful if you read them as go! **IF I GET THE SENSE THAT A LARGE NUMBER OF YOU ARE NOT DOING THE READING AND ARE INSTEAD RELYING ON CLASS DISCUSSIONS, I WILL START CALLING ON PEOPLE RANDOMLY FOR YOUR OPINIONS.** So be prepared.

You must do the all papers in order to pass the course. There are three short papers (3-4 pages) that are responses to the reading due during the semester as well as a final paper that is due during the final exam period. Each response paper will cover the section of the course that preceded it and will be worth 40 points each. The final paper (6-10 pages) is worth 60 points. The details of the papers are at the end of the syllabus and the various due dates are listed in several places. Late papers may be accepted under some circumstances, but I will deduct a grade level for each day it is late (i.e. A to A- to B+). If it is late the reason should be something more serious than "I just ran out of time" or "I had a lot of other things to do that week." You know about the papers well in advance—schedule your time accordingly!

If you are ill and therefore have to turn in a paper late, **I WILL REQUIRE YOU TO TURN IN DOCUMENTATION TO SHOW THAT YOU SAW A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.** If you are sick enough to miss class, you are sick enough to go to student health or the equivalent. Also, **I WILL CALL AND VERIFY THAT YOUR DOCUMENTATION IS LEGITIMATE.** I don't need to know any details of why you saw a health care provider, but I have received fake health notes before, so I will make sure that anything you provide is real.

I will also be reserving 20 points for class participation. You don't have to talk every time, you don't have to be brilliant, and I'm not going to keep strict account of everything you say. This is meant to be an incentive rather than a punishment. So if the semester ends and I have no idea who you are or you have consistently chosen not to come to class, then I reserve the right to take a some points off your grade. Don't sweat this, just stay engaged in the course!

Remote class information

For the spring of 2021, this class will be held remotely but synchronously. That means (in the new language we now have) that, while we will be online and who knows where, physically speaking, we will meet online at the time scheduled for the class—Wednesday and Friday, 9:35-10:50 EDT (the time zone in Washington, DC). If this time is a problem for you because of time zone issues or if you have technological problems on any given day, the class will also be recorded (see below). However, I expect you to make an effort to come to class at the scheduled time. Being there at the same time will allow us to have meaningful discussions, for you to ask questions, and generally for us to interact together. I know it's clunky, but we can make it work and it's much more fun that way.

Accessing online sessions

I am going to hold this class through Zoom, but within Blackboard. That means that, while we will use the Zoom platform, it will be accessed through Blackboard. I have created a dedicated link on Blackboard to get you directly to the online class sessions. It is in the menu bar on the left and is called "Online classes" (clever title, I know). Click on that link and it will take you to the main Zoom page where the classes will be listed. Then find the class for that day (yes, you will have to know what the date it...) and click on Join. You should be able to enter at any time.

To do this, you will need to download Zoom the first time you access the class, if you haven't already. GWU has its own Zoom license, so you should be able to access it using your GWU login information.

If for some reason I lose connectivity during class and disappear, please wait for me to come back. My wifi is generally reliable so I don't anticipate this being a big problem, but if I can't access my wifi I can always use my phone, so I will either be back or I will email you to let you know what's going on.

When you are online, make sure your microphone is muted, unless you are asking a question. That way we don't pick up everyone's background noises (entertaining but not conducive to anthropological learning). I am going to use the "raise your hand" function for questions—just click on the raised hand icon to make a comment or ask a question and unmute your microphone when I call on you. Don't forget to mute it again when you're finished. Also, if you are comfortable with it, I'd prefer it if you turn on your camera if you are talking. I'd rather talk to a real human face than a generic gray silhouette or whatever your avatar of the day is. You can also enter questions in the Chat.

Recordings

ALL SESSIONS WILL BE RECORDED. That means that, if you are in a different time zone where it isn't feasible to attend class when it is scheduled, or if you lose connectivity for some reason, you can access the recorded versions. To do this, click on the Online classes menu link, which will put you in Zoom. At the top there is a tab for Cloud recordings, so click on that. From there you can click on the one for the date you want to listen to. It has both audio and video, so you can listen to the recording. If you have specific questions after that, feel free to email me or schedule a time to see me.

Recordings can't be downloaded, only listened to. **YOU MAY NOT DOWNLOAD THE RECORDINGS OR CIRCULATE THEM IN ANY WAY.** I consider doing so the same as plagiarism and I will pursue all of the options open to me in terms of penalties if I find out anyone did that. It will also piss me off personally, and there are worse things than university sanctioned penalties. So just don't.

Other online issues

For students with DSS accommodations that might impact your taking this course online, DSS has resources to help. Please contact them (see below) and see what they can do for you. Also, if there is something I can do that will help, please let me know so we can work out how to make that happen.

For students who may have issue in terms of technology or online access, please contact ITL. They are very helpful and patient. Their webpage is <https://online.gwu.edu/student-support> and that has their various contact information.

Housekeeping

My office hours are going to be held via WebEx on Wednesday and Friday from 2-3:30. You can access this by clicking on <https://gwu.webex.com/meet/sjohnsto> If you get there and I'm not there, just hang on, I'll be there shortly. It will also send me an email to let me know that you are waiting.

I will be in class around 15 minutes before it starts and I'm also happy to hang around after class if anyone has issues they want to discuss (related to class or otherwise). You can also email me, either to ask questions or to set up an alternative time to meet.

If you are having trouble with the course material or did not do well on the first exam, **I urge you to come and talk to me.** After a certain point in the semester, it will be too late to correct any errors in approach or help you

understand the reading or the discussions. DON'T PUT IT OFF AND ASSUME THAT SOMEHOW YOU WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE IT ALL UP. I DON'T DO EXTRA CREDIT, SO DON'T EVEN ASK.

University policies

Academic Integrity

All students must practice academic integrity. This means doing your own work. When you use **the words or ideas of others in any written work in any way, you must:** 1) indicate the source of any ideas that are not your own using appropriate referencing forms; and 2) identify any direct quotations with quotations marks. **THE RULE IS THAT, IF IT IS NOT YOUR OWN IDEA OR COMMON KNOWLEDGE, YOU MUST PROVIDE A CITATION.** That includes both quoted material and general summaries or other references to the ideas of others. If you have any questions at all about what this means, ask me. Plagiarism, and all breaches of academic integrity (for example, the sale of lecture-notes from this class, or use of content from the internet as though it was your own), will be severely dealt with in accordance with the University's policies and procedures. If I have any suspicion that you might have plagiarized, I will run it through Safe Assign. For more information on The George Washington University's policies on academic integrity, please consult: <https://studentconduct.gwu.edu/academic-integrity>

Academic Integrity is an integral part of the educational process, and GW takes these matters very seriously. Violations of academic integrity occur when students fail to cite research sources properly, engage in unauthorized collaboration, falsify data, and in other ways outlined in the Code of Academic Integrity. Students accused of academic integrity violations should contact the Office of Academic Integrity to learn more about their rights and options in the process. Outcomes can range from failure of assignment to expulsion from the University, including a transcript notation. The Office of Academic Integrity maintains a permanent record of the violation.

More information is available from the Office of Academic Integrity at studentconduct.gwu.edu/academic-integrity. The University's "Guide of Academic Integrity in Online Learning Environments" is available at studentconduct.gwu.edu/guide-academic-integrity-online-learning-environments. Contact information: rights@gwu.edu or 202-994-6757.

*The policy on academic integrity in this course is that if you commit a breach of academic integrity in any assignment or exam, you will receive a zero for that assignment or exam. This infraction will be reported to the University's Academic Integrity Council. You will be **clearly** notified by the instructor in person OR by email before the Council is informed.*

University policy on observance of religious holidays

In accordance with University policy, students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance. For details and policy, see: provost.gwu.edu/policies-procedures-and-guidelines

Support for students outside the classroom

Virtual academic support

A full range of academic support is offered virtually in fall 2020. See coronavirus.gwu.edu/top-faqs for updates.

Tutoring and course review sessions are offered through Academic Commons in an online format. See academiccommons.gwu.edu/tutoring

Writing and research consultations are available online. See academiccommons.gwu.edu/writing-research-help.

Coaching, offered through the Office of Student Success, is available in a virtual format. See studentsuccess.gwu.edu/academic-program-support

Academic Commons offers several short videos addressing different virtual learning strategies for the unique circumstances of the fall 2020 semester. See academiccommons.gwu.edu/study-skills. They also offer a variety of live virtual workshops to equip students with the tools they need to succeed in a virtual environment. See tinyurl.com/gw-virtual-learning

Writing Center

GW's Writing Center cultivates confident writers in the University community by facilitating collaborative, critical, and inclusive conversations at all stages of the writing process. Working alongside peer mentors, writers develop strategies to write independently in academic and public settings. Appointments can be booked online. See gwu.mywconline.

Academic Commons

Academic Commons provides tutoring and other academic support resources to students in many courses. Students can schedule virtual one-on-one appointments or attend virtual drop-in sessions. Students may schedule an appointment, review the tutoring schedule, or access other academic support resources at academiccommons.gwu.edu. For assistance contact academiccommons@gwu.edu.

Disability Support Services (DSS) 202-994-8250

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact [Disability Support Services](#) to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

Counseling and Psychological Services 202-994-5300

GW's Colonial Health Center offers counseling and psychological services, supporting mental health and personal development by collaborating directly with students to overcome challenges and difficulties that may interfere with academic, emotional, and personal success. healthcenter.gwu.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services

Safety and security

- In an emergency: call GWPD 202-994-6111 or 911
- For situation-specific actions: review the Emergency Response Handbook at safety.gwu.edu/emergency-response-handbook
- In an active violence situation: Get Out, Hide Out or Take Out. See go.gwu.edu/shooterprep
- Stay informed: safety.gwu.edu/stay-informed

Bias-Related Acts

Bias-related acts are characterized by some expression of hate or bias against a particular group, or towards and individual because of their membership (or perceived membership) in that group. Bias incidents may range from acts considered to be offensive to actions that cause harm.

There are several ways to report such an incident, which are listed here: <https://diversity.gwu.edu/how-report-bias-related-act>

Diversity and inclusion

I personally support the idea of diversity and inclusion, and I also will not tolerate insulting or problematic language in our discussions. For the former, if you feel there is some perspective missing in class or in our reading, please feel free to come and talk to me about it. I am always open to suggestions that will enhance our collective learning. For the latter, keep in mind that not being face-to-face with a person or group doesn't make that person or group any less a human being. Think about that when you make comments about others in the class or the peoples that we are discussing, whether in the past or in the present. I am always interested in trying to broaden my perspectives and to understand, and I hope that you will join me in this endeavor.

Paper Assignments

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General essay guidelines

You will be required to write a total of **four** papers for this class. They should be double-spaced and have margins of about an inch. Please remember—I was a student too and I am not stupid. I know all about large type faces and large margins so give me some credit for intelligence.

Even though you will mostly be discussing material read in class, you should still use proper citation for sources. I don't care what form you use, but 1) it should be consistent and 2) you should have a list of sources at the end. **Anything which is not common knowledge or your own idea should be cited.** Otherwise, it's plagiarism, something I take very seriously. I am a researcher, and like all researchers, I respect the right of people to own their own work. You should do the same. If I suspect that you might have used outside sources inappropriately, I will run your paper through Safe Assign, so be warned and don't be stupid.

You are expected to work independently, and while I would certainly encourage you to discuss the various readings among yourselves, I will be alert for essays that sound too similar to each other. Please do your own work.

Grammar and organization count! While I don't expect you to be writing prize-winning prose, your grade will go down if there are large numbers of typos, grammatical errors, lapses in logic, etc. An A paper will not look like something you spit out after midnight the night before it was due and clearly haven't read over since. If English is your second language, I would strongly encourage you to use the available writing support resources (see above). I have all kinds of sympathy for people who are writing papers in a second language, but ultimately it is your responsibility to see that you write in a way that I can understand.

I am willing to read drafts or talk about content before you turn a paper in. Just make sure you give me enough time to read it, comment on it, and get it back to you in time for you to make any necessary changes. I usually say about ten days before it's due.

Response papers

There are three of these, due **February 17, March 12, and April 16** and worth 40 points each. Each paper should be **3-4 pages** long and should be a response to the readings **from the previous set of classes**. The idea is to reflect on and analyze the readings in terms of how they reflect the ideas in the course, the themes they share, the ways they are different, potential flaws in the analyses, things they did spectacularly well, why they were interesting (or not), what they should (or could) have talked about, and other similar ideas. Feel free to include ideas that we talked about in class as well as your own thoughts that you might not have expressed during discussion.

As the core of your discussion, **YOU MUST CITE AT LEAST FIVE OF THE READINGS**. That doesn't mean you have to talk about each of these individually—I don't think you could, given the length. However, in identifying ideas, themes, and approaches that they share or that make them different, you should consider at least five readings specifically. This means that you should be sure to read the articles as we go—trying to read them all just before the paper is due will be painful at best. It's fine if you want to include readings from the day the paper is due, you'll just have to read ahead a little.

I want to leave you considerable freedom for these papers, but the one thing they cannot be is a book report. **I DO NOT EXPECT TO SEE ANY SUBSTANTIAL SUMMARY OF THE READINGS.** You will need to note things from them and you will have to put those in some kind of context. Part of the idea here is to demonstrate that you did read them and gave them some thought. But you should not be filling space by extensively summarizing readings. Instead, I am interested in your thoughts about them and summarizing them does not do this. You can assume in your discussion that I have also done the reading.

I am also interested in something a little more profound than “these are some seriously interesting analyses.” You should be thinking about the readings in terms of the themes of this course. These include ideas like how we can use ethnographic information, what food production really means, why people changed their subsistence practices in such a significant way, how this apparently novel idea spread, how that spread impacted hunter-gatherers, and similar kinds of questions. There are many ways to write these papers; the main goal is to think about the readings you choose as a group and how they reflect archaeological approaches and interpretations.

Papers should be uploaded to Blackboard **by 11:59pm on the assigned dates.** Late papers may be accepted under some circumstances, but I will deduct two points for each day it is late (i.e. A to A- to B+). If it is late the reason should be something more serious than “I just ran out of time” or “I had a lot of other things to do that week.” You know about these papers well in advance—schedule your time accordingly! Also, I know we have different time zones and such in play here, but you can do math, plan accordingly. If you are having difficulties accessing Blackboard, you can also email papers directly to me. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE SURE YOUR PAPER IS UPLOADED CORRECTLY.** I have enabled unlimited uploads, so you should check what you uploaded and swap it out if you need to.

Final Paper

This paper serves as your final exam, and is worth 60 points. It will be due during the final exam period (I don't know the dates yet so I will let you know the due date when the final exam dates are posted). It should be **7-10 pages long.** For this paper you should think about the overall emergence of food production, how we recognize it, how it might have happened, and what its effects might have been. Basically, I'm asking you to summarize what you've learned in the course, particularly in terms of what you found interesting and relevant. I want to leave you a lot of leeway for this paper, but here are some things you might think about:

- What do we mean when we say “hunter-gatherer” and “food producer”, is this distinction valid, and is it legitimate to use modern hunter-gatherers as models for the past?
- What is the best way to understand the shift from everyone hunting and gathering to the majority of groups growing plants and raising animals—was this a series of events, a process, a change in how to get food, a change in the ways people thought about the environment, or what?
- Are there significant differences between places where food producing emerged purely internally and those where it was introduced from outside and, if so, what are those differences and why are they significant?
- Is it fair to think about human relationships with plants as somehow different from those with non-human animals, or is this a false dichotomy based on current western ideas about non-human life forms?
- How has this process affected animals (both human and non-human), both socially and physically, and is this a good thing, a bad thing, or a neutral thing? Or is this even the right way to think about it?
- How is this shift related to the emergence of wealth inequality, and was this inevitable?

These are just some questions—there are lots more and you don't have to answer all of them. The idea is to show me what you've learned from the course and to demonstrate that you have somehow been thinking about its implications in terms of anthropology, archaeology, and the societies we live in now. The response papers you will have written up to this point should help you write this paper. That said, **YOU DO HAVE TO INCLUDE SOME CONSIDERATION OF THIS ONE:**

- **What are the most important questions that need further consideration and research?**

The idea is to think about the places where we need more research, and so where we should go from here. I'm just asking you to speculate—are there geographic places where we need more information, or particular kinds of studies that should be done, or particular kinds of sites that need more research, or ethnographic studies that would be useful, or what? What do you think would be the most interesting avenues to explore next?

As part of your paper, you should cite articles that you read for the class. I don't care which ones and how many, but if you use ideas from the course then inevitably some of them will derive from class reading. Keep in mind the rule: you need a citation unless what you've written is either 1) common knowledge or 2) your own idea. If you read something that prompted you to have your own idea, that should be cited too, e.g. "I read this amazing article (citation) and that made me think the following thing for which I may well receive the Nobel Prize." In terms of citation format, I don't care what you use as long as it's consistent and provides sufficient information for me to look up what you're referenced.

ALSO, YOU SHOULD CITE AT LEAST TWO THINGS THAT WE DIDN'T READ FOR THE CLASS. I don't care what they are about specifically, but they should be 1) archaeological research, 2) from a peer reviewed journal or book, and 3) relevant to this course's content. They can be from another part of the world than the ones we talked about, or consider other aspects of the topics we covered, or approaches that challenge interpretations we discussed. You can use this to follow up on something that you read about for the course (citations in the articles are good ways to do this) or you could use other chapters from books that you didn't read (for example, the Kelly chapters are from a larger book on hunter-gatherers, but if you do this you need to show me that you read this chapter and that somehow the information contributed something different to the discussion—no fair just citing another of the Kelly chapters in a general discussion of hunter-gatherers!). You can also use ethnographic research if it's relevant to what you are discussing, i.e. studies of living people.

The material you cite should be from something legitimately academic—a peer-reviewed journal, a book that collects papers from a conference, or a researcher's book. An academic journal is something like *American Antiquity* or *Antiquity* and not a magazine like *Archaeology* or *National Geographic*, while book chapters tend to be in either conference volumes or collections of research papers on a single theme. If you need guidance or are unsure if what you want to read is appropriate, please come and see me.

What I'm looking for is a synthesis of issues that we have talked about during the semester. This is frankly what I would have asked about if I'd written a take-home exam, only it would have been broken up into specific questions that you would have to have answered. Instead, I'm letting you pick what you think are the most interesting issues to write about, and also asking you to look in the relevant literature as a way to do a little extra research.

I'm also open to other ways to approach this topic in case anyone is of a creative bent. I would, for example, consider a fictional piece as long as it met all the requirements of the assignment in terms of content. I am not a visually creative person so I don't know what other possibilities there might be, but I can imagine you could do something else for this assignment too, like a podcast episode or some kind of short film. If you want to explore this kind of thing, come and talk to me and we'll see what we can work out.

As with the response papers, if you are having difficulties accessing Blackboard on the due date, you can email papers directly to me. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE SURE YOUR PAPER IS UPLOADED CORRECTLY.** I have enabled unlimited uploads, so you should check what you uploaded and swap it out if you need to. Technical difficulties can happen at any time, so don't wait until the last minute!