

 <b>FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY</b>		<b>Department Geosciences</b> <b>College Science</b> <i>(To obtain a course number, contact erudolph@fau.edu)</i>		UGPC Approval _____ UFS Approval _____ SCNS Submittal _____ Confirmed _____ Banner Posted _____ Catalog _____
<b>Prefix</b> EVR <b>Number</b> 6417	<i>(L = Lab Course; C = Combined Lecture/Lab; add if appropriate)</i> <b>Lab Code</b>	<b>Type of Course</b> Select one	<b>Course Title</b> Paleoenvironments and People	
<b>Credits</b> <i>(Review Provost Memorandum)</i> 3	<b>Grading</b> <i>(Select One Option)</i> Regular <input checked="" type="radio"/> Sat/UnSat <input type="radio"/>	<b>Course Description</b> <i>(Syllabus must be attached; see Guidelines)</i> This course examines paleoclimate events and past human-environment interaction primarily during the Holocene. Through exploring how people have modified their environment and responded to notable climate stress events such as the Younger Dryas, Terminal Classic Drought, and Little Ice Age, students will gain experience and skills to consider how future climate scenarios may affect modern societies.		
<b>Prerequisites</b> None		<b>Corequisites</b> None		<b>Registration Controls</b> <i>(Major, College, Level)</i>
<b>Prerequisites, Corequisites and Registration Controls are enforced for all sections of course</b>				
<b>Minimum qualifications needed to teach course:</b> Member of the FAU graduate faculty and has a terminal degree in the subject area (or a closely related field.)		<b>List textbook information in syllabus or here</b>		
<b>Faculty Contact/Email/Phone</b> Erik Johanson / ejohanson@fau.edu / 561-297-4153		<b>List/Attach comments from departments affected by new course</b> NA		

<b>Approved by</b> Department Chair _____ College Curriculum Chair _____ College Dean _____ UGPC Chair _____ UGC Chair _____ Graduate College Dean _____ UFS President _____ Provost _____	<b>Date</b> 3/15/2019  8/14/19 9-12-19
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Email this form and syllabus to [UGPC@fau.edu](mailto:UGPC@fau.edu) one week before the UGPC meeting.

GRADUATE COLLEGE

AUG 22 2019

Received

# Paleoenvironments and People (EVR 6417)

## Paleoenvironments and People Seminar

Thursday 2:00 – 4:50 PM  
Room: SE 413  
GEO 6938, Section 002, CRN 16001

### Instructor Contact Information

Erik N. Johanson, PhD  
ejohanson@fau.edu

Office: Science Building 473  
Office Hours: Thursday 12:00 – 2PM

### Course Objective

This course broadly examines paleoclimate events and past human-environment interaction primarily during the Holocene. Students will explore how people have modified their environment and responded to climate stress events and megadroughts such as the Younger Dryas, Terminal Classic Drought, and the Little Ice Age. A major goal of the course is to identify how such climate events manifest in different regions across the globe and how past societies navigated these periods of environmental stress. There is a critical link in understanding how past societies responded and how future climate scenarios may affect modern societies. This is primarily a seminar-style course where students will lead weekly reading discussions and develop a semester research project.

Semester schedule, syllabus, readings, and assignments are posted on Canvas ([canvas.fau.edu](https://canvas.fau.edu)).

There is no text for this class. Readings to be uploaded throughout the semester. Check Canvas often!

Use email and not Canvas messaging to communicate for this course.



### Format

The course will be taught as a seminar. Classes will typically consist of student-led discussion of the assigned readings. The semester will conclude with in-class student presentations of their term project.

### Readings

This is a reading-focused seminar course. The professor will assign at least two readings per class. Additionally, the discussion leader(s) must select additional readings one week in advance of their assigned class. Expect 4–6 readings per week posted at least a week in advance on Canvas.

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## Prerequisites & Degree Requirements

This course assumes no prior background. Graduate students from any related discipline are encouraged to register. Advanced undergraduate students may register with permission from the Professor. This course is thematically connected with Paleoenvironmental Reconstruction (EVR 6115).

### Grade Breakdown

A: 93-100

A-: 90-92

B+: 87-89

B: 83-86

B-: 80-82

C+: 77-79

C: 73-76

C-: 70-72

D: 60-69

*No extra credit is accepted in this course.*

### Course Evaluation

Seminar Leadership	40%
Term Paper Presentation	25%
Term Paper	25%
Participation & Abstracts	10%

### Seminar Leading (40%)

Seminar leadership will be structured as a student(s) leading discussion for that week's article and topics. Each student will be responsible for leading at least one seminar during the semester. All students are expected to read closely all readings for every class meeting, but the student(s) charged with leading a given week's seminar are expected to do whatever additional work necessary to present that week's ideas in their proper context with appropriate comments and questions.

Seminars should, in general, follow this format: quickly introduce the main author(s) with a short biography, then review the content and concepts of the reading through discussion, followed by a critique of the research or subject. The discussion leader(s) should work on developing questions to stimulate conversation and they are expected to steer the discussion appropriately.

Seminar leader(s) will each select additional readings (peer-reviewed article) that complement the assigned readings and related to the week's topic. If leading seminar with a partner, I expect each discussion leaders to equally cover the leadership of the week's readings, but you should be especially prepared to take the lead on your selected article. The discussion leader(s) must submit their selected article to the professor 7 days in advance of their seminar leading class for approval. *See my discussion advice section at the end of the syllabus!*

### Project (Paper 25% and Presentation 25%)

Your course project will be an oral PowerPoint-style presentation and 15-page term paper. Students will select a paleoclimate event(s) and a particular region, ideally related to the student's research. Alternatively, students may select a single paleoclimate event and trace its global effects. Approval from the professor is required.

Presentations should be approximately 10 minutes with penalties assessed for those going well over or under the time. You are responsible for getting the presentation to me *before* class and for bringing

a backup with you. I highly recommend that you rehearse your presentation to ensure it fits within your given time and isn't too short or too long.

Papers should include a compressive literature review of notable related research in your assigned topic. Be sure to focus on peer-reviewed articles. Papers should be approximately 15 pages without counting the required cover page and references. Times New Roman size 11-font, double spaced with 1 inch margins. Proper in-text citations and a bibliography are expected. You may use the citation style of your choice, but a guide will also be posted. Additionally, a grading rubric will be provided on Canvas. The paper is due electronically during the Final Exam period time (no in-class meeting that day).

## **Participation & Abstracts (10%)**

This grade is based on (1) *attendance*, (2) *engagement*, and (3) *weekly abstracts*. Outstanding attendance and engagement are expected. Given that this class meets only once per week, significant learning is only possible if you attend regularly and engage actively with the professor and class. Consistent attendance and active engagement also indicate that you care about the course, which is a factor that matters for evaluating borderline grades at the end of the semester. Engagement further implies that you read all the required readings and supported the other students leading class discussion. Be prepared to say something each week!

**Weekly abstracts** are one paragraph reviews of each of the week's readings. These abstracts relate the student's understanding of the main points of the readings, and any associated questions or criticisms that the student may have. Completing your abstracts will improve your in-class performance. It is strongly recommended that you bring a printout of your abstracts with you to class with additional comments and ideas to further stimulate your contribution to the seminar discussion.

A good general outline for the abstracts is as follows:

1. What is the thesis of the individual reading?
2. How does the author(s) argue the thesis and what notable methods or theories are used?
3. What are your positive reactions to the individual reading (if any)?
4. What are your negative reactions to the individual reading (if any)?

## **My Goal as a Teacher**

My goal is to make this course as enjoyable and beneficial to you as possible. You will leave this course with useful knowledge that I hope will provide you with a new outlook on the world around you. I am here to assist and support you through the learning process. When you are away from campus, do not hesitate to e-mail any questions you may have, but allow for my response within 24 hours (sometimes longer). If you have any questions about anything discussed in class, please ask me during or after class, or come see me in my office.

## **Disability Policy Statement**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and follow all SAS procedures. SAS has offices across three of FAU's campuses – Boca Raton, Davie and Jupiter – however disability services are available for students on all campuses. For more information, please visit the SAS website at [www.fau.edu/sas/](http://www.fau.edu/sas/).

## **Academic Integrity (Honor Code Policy Statement)**

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the

University mission to provide a high-quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the University community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for informing themselves about the Honor Code standards before performing any academic work. The link to more detailed information about academic honesty can be found at: [http://www.fau.edu/ctl/4.001\\_Code\\_of\\_Academic\\_Integrity.pdf](http://www.fau.edu/ctl/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf)

Scholastic dishonesty includes, among other things: plagiarism (which includes copying and pasting written material from the internet), copying other's work during a test, and using notes during a test. The instructor reserves the right to use the Turn-it-in service to check all written work for plagiarism. Any test or written assignment for which you are caught cheating will be marked as a zero grade, and the incident will be reported in accordance with Honor Code regulations.

### **Classroom Etiquette**

University policy on the use of electronic devices states: "In order to enhance and maintain a productive atmosphere for education, personal communication devices, such as cellular telephones and pagers, are to be disabled in class sessions." The only exception will be determined and announced by the instructor for special purposes, as indicated.

### **Civility Statement**

Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteousness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity, and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other's well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected.

### **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center**

Life as a university student can be challenging physically, mentally and emotionally. Students who find stress negatively affecting their ability to achieve academic or personal goals may wish to consider utilizing FAU's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center. CAPS provides FAU students a range of services – individual counseling, support meetings, and psychiatric services, to name a few – offered to help improve and maintain emotional well-being. For more information, go to <http://www.fau.edu/counseling/>

### **Policy on Makeup Work and Incompletes**

Late work or missed class while expected to lead discussion will not be excused except under extreme circumstances. If an upcoming absence appears unavoidable, students are required to contact the instructor one week in advance. Please note that students may not be penalized for absences due to participation in University-approved activities, including athletic or scholastics teams, musical and theatrical performances, and debate activities. Reasonable accommodation will also be made for students participating in a religious observance. Also, note that grades of Incomplete ("I") are reserved for students who are passing a course but have not completed all the required work because of exceptional circumstances.

## Attendance Policy Statement

Students are expected to attend all of their scheduled University classes and to satisfy all academic objectives as outlined by the instructor. The effect of absences upon grades is determined by the instructor, and the University reserves the right to deal at any time with individual cases of non-attendance. Students are responsible for arranging to make up work missed because of legitimate class absence, such as illness, family emergencies, military obligation, court-imposed legal obligations or participation in University approved activities. Examples of University-approved reasons for absences include participating on an athletic or scholastic team, musical and theatrical performances and debate activities. It is the student's responsibility to give the instructor notice prior to any anticipated absences and within a reasonable amount of time after an unanticipated absence, ordinarily by the next scheduled class meeting. Instructors must allow each student who is absent for a University-approved reason the opportunity to make up work missed without any reduction in the student's final course grade as a direct result of such absence.

Student's Responsibility	Instructor's Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be prepared for all classes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be prepared for all class</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be respectful of others</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be respectful of the students</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Actively contribute to the learning activities in class</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create and facilitate meaningful learning activities</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Abide by the Honor Code</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evaluate all fairly and equally</li></ul>

## Discussion Leadership & Participation Advice

It is challenging to lead discussion and actively participate in conversations in a seminar course. It is something that many of us struggle with, especially when starting graduate school. I'd like to offer you some advice on leading discussion and participating since it is a portion of your course grade:

- 1) Writing out "talking points" or interesting observations about each article ahead of time can make it easier to speak up and share your thoughts. Discussions often flow quickly, so being able to reference some of your ideas that you prepared earlier can help while also giving you confidence in talking about something you've had the chance to calmly think through.
- 2) While serving as a discussion leader, please ensure that you have several classroom questions prepared and easily accessible for each article. You can have some very specific questions about a method, etc., but try to also have larger questions that can prompt more conversation. Connecting topics back to previous articles can be interesting at times. There are many strategies, but having prepared questions is critical to doing well.
- 3) It is also nice to introduce an article with some general thoughts about it before asking one of your prepared questions. This should avoid being too long and covering all of the interesting talking points, but it can help refresh the memories of other students on some of the topics of the article.
- 4) The discussion leaders should divide the articles ahead of time, so each takes the lead on any given article. However, both discussion leaders should be prepared with some questions and comments for all articles. There should be a flow between the co-leaders, and you should expect assistance from each other when needed. Differing perspectives are welcome.

THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REVISE, ALTER AND/OR AMEND THIS SYLLABUS, AS NECESSARY. STUDENTS WILL BE NOTIFIED IN CLASS, CANVAS, AND/OR BY EMAIL OF ANY SUCH REVISIONS, ALTERATIONS AND/OR AMENDMENTS.

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Content/Topic</b>	<b>Discussion Leader</b>
1	10-Jan	Class Introduction / Syllabus	1. Johanson
2	17-Jan	Basics of Paleoenvironments/ Paleoclimatology / Critique of "Collapse"	1. Johanson
3	24-Jan	Terminal Classic Drought I: Defining the TCD and Critical Records	1. _____ 2. _____
4	31-Jan	Terminal Classic Drought II: Records & Societal Reorganization	1. _____ 2. _____
5	07-Feb	Medieval Climate Anomaly / Little Ice Age I	1. _____ 2. _____
6	14-Feb	Medieval Climate Anomaly / Little Ice Age II	1. _____ 2. _____
7	21-Feb	Medieval Megadroughts / Semester Project Update	1. _____ 2. _____
8	28-Feb	The Younger Dryas	1. _____ 2. _____
9	07-Mar	<i>Spring Break!</i>	
10	14-Mar	The Meghalayan (4200 cal yr BP Event)	1. _____ 2. _____
11	21-Mar	Hazards and Climate	1. _____ 2. _____
12	28-Mar	Paleoenvironmental Lessons for Modern Issues	1. _____ 2. _____
13	04-Apr	<i>AAG Conference – No Class</i>	
14	11-Apr	Presentations I	
15	18-Apr	Presentations II	
<b>F</b>	<b>25-Apr</b>	<b>Final Exam Period – Papers Due Online</b>	<b>3:45pm</b>

## Nancy Condemi

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**From:** Michael Harris  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 12, 2019 9:14 AM  
**To:** Nancy Condemi  
**Cc:** Christopher Beetle  
**Subject:** FW: Paleoenvironments and People Course Memo

fyi

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**From:** Michael Harris  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 11, 2019 4:00 PM  
**To:** Zhixiao Xie <[xie@fau.edu](mailto:xie@fau.edu)>  
**Subject:** RE: Paleoenvironments and People Course Memo

Hello Zhixiao,

This looks like an excellent course that is a complement to our course offerings and that some of our graduate archaeology students would benefit from. Anthropology has no objection to the course.

I'm sure this email is sufficient for the course approval process, but let me know if you want a formal memo.

Best,  
Michael Harris  
Chair, Anthropology

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**From:** Zhixiao Xie  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 11, 2019 3:49 PM  
**To:** Michael Harris <[mharris@fau.edu](mailto:mharris@fau.edu)>  
**Subject:** Paleoenvironments and People Course Memo

Good Afternoon Mike,

Could you please review the attached syllabus for a new course proposed by Erik Johanson? As you may see from Chris' email, we are required to request a memo from you, if possible, stating that the course does not duplicate or interfere with your program. Please let me know if you have any concerns.

Thanks so much,  
Zhixiao

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Dr. Zhixiao Xie  
Professor and Chair  
Geosciences Department  
Florida Atlantic University  
Tel: 561-297-2852

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**From:** Christopher Beetle  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 11, 2019 3:35 PM  
**To:** Zhixiao Xie <[xie@fau.edu](mailto:xie@fau.edu)>; Tobin Hindle <[thindle@fau.edu](mailto:thindle@fau.edu)>  
**Cc:** Michael Harris <[mharris@fau.edu](mailto:mharris@fau.edu)>; Nancy Condemi <[ncondemi@fau.edu](mailto:ncondemi@fau.edu)>  
**Subject:** Paleoenvironments and People Course Memo



Hi Zhixiao and/or Tobin:

The new Paleoenvironments and People course has passed the UGCP with the requested amendment of a memo from the Department of Anthropology in the College of Arts & Letters stating that the course does not duplicate effort from their program. I've attached the proposal in its current form.

Could you ask Mike Harris, whom I have copied on this email, for a memo stating that this course does not duplicate or interfere with their programs? The memo will be appended to the proposal when it goes to Steering.

Also, please make sure that the boilerplate policy text in the syllabus copies the current language from the Provost's memo, including all links to the relevant web sites.

Thanks,

Chris