

# INDIANA UNIVERSITY MIDWESTERN ARCHAEOLOGY FIELD SCHOOL

Discovering Cahokia's Religion Year Three  
Excavation at Emerald Mounds, St Clair County Illinois

Dr Susan M Alt

6 Credit Hours

June 2<sup>nd</sup> to July 14<sup>th</sup>



This Year's Midwestern Archaeology Field School will be held in Lebanon, IL focusing on the Pre-Columbian Emerald Mound center in the uplands surrounding Cahokia. We are teaming up with University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's Field School, led by Professor Timothy Pauketat, in order to investigate how and why these ancient people constructed their world, and to discover the secrets of religious practices in early Mississippian society.

**WHY?** At or about AD 1050, an American Indian city was built at Cahokia, opposite St. Louis, MO. During its "Big Bang," the city's central earthen pyramids and plazas were constructed, new towns were established, and missions were sent off to distant lands. The new trajectory of this ancient society (Mississippians) is directly linked with the rapid expansion of a unique Cahokian Religion. Emerald Mound was a key component of this history.

**OUR GOAL:** To understand the creation and dispersal of the ancient Mississippian religion, as well as the role of immigrants from Indiana in that process.

**BACKGROUND:** In the past 2 years of excavation, based upon magnetometry and GPR survey, and well guided research questions, we have already located and tested a new mound, found a human sacrifice burial, temples, an ancient roadway, dense stands of public and ritual buildings, dozens of houses and post pits. The site is owned by several farmers and farm maintenance such as terracing fields has been destroying this critical site at an alarming rate. We will be excavating to learn what we can before more of the site is lost because this mound center (with 12 mounds) seems to hold the key to understanding the creation of the new Mississippian religion that transformed Cahokia from a Late Woodland town into a North America's first City.

**You will learn:** survey, site, feature and profile mapping, and feature excavation by digging 1000 year old houses and pits

**You will learn:** Magnetometry, GPS, and mapping with a Trimble Total Station

**You will** meet and enjoy lectures from top Midwest archaeologists and visit their field sites

**You will** learn how responsible archeology is conducted by working with multiple institutions and communities

**Weekends are yours,** visit St Louis, and enjoy local entertainment—visit Museums, Parks, Shopping, or Six Flags

**You can Expect:** field trips to Cahokia, and other excavation sites, historic tours, a lithic workshop, visits and lectures by prominent Midwestern archeologists and specialists.

Upon completion of this program you will meet requirements for employment in jobs such as an archaeological technician.

**APPLICATIONS:** Will be available in 054, or email [susalt@indiana.edu](mailto:susalt@indiana.edu)

After fieldwork ends there will be opportunities for students to follow-up and engage in continued study. You can earn course credit for lab analysis, student projects and honors projects. Student participation in professional presentations and public education will be encouraged. **Housing Provided: Fee is expected to be about \$ 400**

**FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Susan Alt [susalt@indiana.edu](mailto:susalt@indiana.edu)

**See previous digs on facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/393101914060463/>

Indiana University Bloomington  
**REVEALING CAHOKIA'S RELIGION**  
**Field School in Archaeology**

Dr. Susan M. Alt P 405 6 CREDITS

**DIRECTIONS.** This form can be completed and submitted in person to *Dr Susan Alt in SB 054 (lab)* by April 1, 2014 or Applicants may also send completed electronic versions to [susalt@indiana.edu](mailto:susalt@indiana.edu).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

Spring Semester Phone and E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Status (circle): freshman sophomore junior senior grad. Other \_\_\_\_\_

Major/Overall Grade Point Average \_\_\_\_\_

If below 3.0, please explain why \_\_\_\_\_

Relevant Archaeology Courses Taken / Background \_\_\_\_\_

Why take field school? \_\_\_\_\_

Extent of your past outdoor work experience \_\_\_\_\_

List abilities/qualities you can offer the Project \_\_\_\_\_

**VERY IMPORTANT: YOU MUST BE COVERED BY HEALTH INSURANCE PRIOR TO LEAVING FOR THE FIELD.**

What health insurance will cover you in the summer? \_\_\_\_\_

Identify any special considerations regarding your health, allergic conditions, and ability to engage in strenuous outdoor activity (this will not prevent your acceptance but alerts us how to help you)

Your signature here acknowledges your understanding that you will be an active participant in a special field course connected to a research project with goals above and beyond an ordinary on-campus college course. Fieldwork can be strenuous, days are often long (> 8 hours), and you may be required to work under uncomfortable weather conditions. Costs to take this class will be summer tuition, plus a \$400.00 housing fee\*. Transportation to and from field sites is the responsibility of the student (although carpooling is normal), as are the costs of your meals although costs are defrayed by group cooking.

Signature:

\* There is no textbook required but readings will be placed on oncourse. Please note that Students will be responsible for their own food and for purchasing personal excavation supplies (your dig kit costs between 50 and 75 dollars) to be used in the field. No special clothing or equipment beyond your dig kit need be purchased. Additional information will be distributed following acceptance into the field school during pre -field meetings. It is about a 3 1/2 hour drive to the field house from Bloomington, and you will be free to drive home on weekends.

FOR Further INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Susan Alt [susalt@indiana.edu](mailto:susalt@indiana.edu) See previous digs on facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/393101914060463/?fref=ts>