

ANTH 322: Field School in Archaeology Spring 2018

Instructor: Dr. Andrew A. White (aawhite@mailbox.sc.edu)

Class Location: SCIAA / Off campus

Class Time: 8:00-4:00 F

Course Overview

This archaeological field school will give you hands-on experience in basic excavation methods and techniques, including:

- grid systems and mapping;
- controlled hand excavation;
- documentation of cultural features;
- description of sediments;
- record keeping and photography;
- strategy, logistics, and teamwork.

We will be working at a site along the Broad River that was used by prehistoric peoples over the course of at least 5000 years. Previous work at the site revealed the presence of a series of prehistoric occupations buried within a natural sand levee. Our work at the site this semester will be focused on: (1) using careful hand excavation to collect detailed information about identified Late Archaic age (ca. 3500-1000 BC) deposits at the site; and (2) investigating deeply buried deposits that may date to the Early Archaic period (ca. 9000-7000 BC).

We will depart from campus each Friday at 8:00 and return by 4:00 (transportation provided). Students will bring their own lunch. There are no formal bathroom facilities on site. Each student will be required to have a small set of personal field gear (e.g., small toolbox, gloves, mason's trowel, 5m metric tape measure, notebook, etc.). Other tools and field equipment will be provided.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- use grid systems and lay out excavation units;
- make two-dimensional maps at various scales;
- draw a sediment profile and perform basic sediment descriptions;
- recognize various kinds of prehistoric artifacts;
- hand excavate standard archaeological units;
- complete archaeological paperwork and take notes recording your work;
- photograph archaeological deposits;
- explain – in general terms – the prehistory of South Carolina
- communicate to the general public how archaeological fieldwork is performed;
- work effectively in groups.

Course Readings and Media

All required readings will be provided as handouts or online.

Course Requirements

Your grade in this course will be based primarily on your performance in the field activities, including participation and attitude, mastery of basic field skills, and completeness and accuracy of your paperwork (notes and forms). This course also includes an online writing component. Grades will be determined according to the following:

Participation and attitude	40 percent
Archaeological skills	20 percent
Notes and forms	20 percent
Online writing (4 x 5% each)	20 percent
Total	100 percent

Grading Scale

A	90+
B/B+	80-85/86-89
C/C+	70-75/76-79
D/D+	60-65/66-69
F	<60

Online Writing

It is critically important that archaeologists effectively communicate with the public about the goals, strategies, and methods of archaeological work. One of the goals of this field school is to give you opportunities to learn how to do that through online writing.

I have set up an email account and website for the course:

Email address: BroadRiver@yahoo.com

Website address: www.BroadRiverArchaeologicalFieldSchool.weebly.com

Over the course of the semester, each student will write **four** short (400-800 word) blog posts describing **what** we’re doing, **how** we’re doing it, and **why** we’re doing it that way. Please see student posts from 2017 on the website for examples.

I encourage you to take photographs to accompany your posts.

We will discuss content, formats, and procedures more during the class. Here are some general rules:

- **Never** reveal the location of the site in your writing. We are working in a private, secluded area that will be vulnerable to unauthorized digging (i.e., looting) if the site location is known.
- **Personalize it, but keep on topic.** It’s great to give your perspective and use your own voice, but make sure you’re still providing the content that you need to provide.

- **Don't hit "publish" before I approve it.** I need an opportunity to look over and (possibly) edit what you've written before it goes live. Send me an email when you've got a draft up, and I'll have a look.

Deadlines: Drafts of your posts are due online on the website by Thursday at 8:00 am following the day you are writing about. As an example, if you're required to write about what we did on Friday, January the 19th, your post will be due by 8:00 am on Thursday, January 25th.

Writing Schedule

Date	Writers
January 19	
January 26	
February 2	
February 9	
February 16	
February 23	
March 2	
March 9	
March 16	[Spring Break: no class]
March 23	
March 30	
April 6	
April 13	Lab day
April 20	
April 27	

Safety

Field archaeology is physical work that sometimes involves sharp and/or heavy tools or other items (shovels, buckets of sediment, etc.). We will be outside for the entire day. You should dress to be comfortable, prepared to be flexible as the temperature changes during the day, and prepared to get dirty.

- You must complete and return a liability waiver and a medical information form before you will be permitted to go in the field.
- You must have health insurance in effect for the full term of the field school.

South Carolina is home to several species of venomous snakes. While it is highly unlikely that we will encounter one, you should familiarize yourself with their characteristics.

We will be working in a wooded area inhabited by ticks and mosquitoes. Be prepared to protect yourself with your clothing and appropriate repellent.

Attendance

Our work will take place over a total of 14 days. We will have at least one scheduled day in the lab, with the possibility of others due to weather. Please report to class by 8:00 even on days when it is raining. We will do activities on campus if it is not possible to go in the field.

Attendance is mandatory and counts heavily toward your grade: you cannot learn field skills if you are not present to do them. Each student is permitted one unexcused absence. Each additional absence without a legitimate, documented excuse (i.e., from a doctor, a court, etc.) will result in a **penalty of a full letter grade**.

Please be at the assigned departure point (the SCIAA parking lot at 1321 Pendleton), ready to go, by 8:00. We will not be waiting on people to leave for the site in the morning.

Social Issues

This field school will involve about 8-10 people learning and working together. Your actions contribute to the success of this effort. Please treat each other respectfully. Language or actions that make others uncomfortable is unnecessary, counter-productive, inappropriate, and will not be tolerated. Have fun, but use common sense.

Smoking

We will designate a smoking area away from where we will be working. Smoking outside of that area is prohibited.

Trash

We are guests on the property where we are working. We will treat it respectfully and remove all of our trash at the end of each work day. Please keep our work area clean.

Equipment

USC and SCIAA supplies all large items of archaeological equipment that we'll be using. You will be responsible for a small set of personal field equipment, your food and drink for the day, and dressing in a manner that will allow to work safely and comfortably. Please come prepared with the follow items each day that we meet.

- 5m measuring tape
- 2m folding ruler
- Small transparent ruler
- Mason's trowel
- Mason's line level
- Notebook (**supplied**)
- Sharpie (**supplied** . . . the first one, anyway)
- Mechanical pencil
- Pocket knife (optional but often useful)
- Backpack or toolbox for these items

Other personal effects

Please bring the following:

- Bandana (optional, but has many uses)
- Baby wipes and/or hand sanitizer for cleaning your hands (there is no running water)
- Toilet paper
- Drinking cup (there will be a communal water cooler, but you must supply your own cup)

- Sunblock (not critical at the beginning, but eventually)
- Bug spray

Food and drink

You are responsible for supplying your own food and drink (other than water). We will have a large cooler for keeping lunches cool, but it will not be supplied with ice. If you'd like to pack your lunch in your own (small) cooler, please feel free.

Graduate Student Responsibilities

Graduate students enrolled in the field school will have greater responsibilities than undergraduate students, including:

- supervisory responsibilities in the field;
- additional requirements for assisting with organization, equipment maintenance, paperwork, and initial laboratory processing of the artifacts and materials recovered.

The nature of supervisory responsibilities in the field will depend on the student's capabilities and prior field experience. Depending on circumstances, supervisory responsibilities may be focused on small portions of the excavation or be general. Regardless of the nature of the supervisory responsibilities, graduate students are expected to keep professional-quality notes about all aspects of the work being conducted.

In addition to time in the field, graduate students will contribute up to four hours per week assisting with the maintenance of field equipment (e.g., checking and restocking of expendable supplies such as forms and bags; repairing damaged screens, etc.), paperwork (checking forms for accuracy and completeness), and initial laboratory processing of artifacts and materials (organizing and checking bags and samples, doing initial data entry from log books, etc.). Hours of graduate student work will be arranged with the instructor.