

ANTH 100: Archaeology - Fall 2019

Dr. April M. Beisaw: Blodgett Hall 318 - apbeisaw@vassar.edu
Course days/times: Tuesdays & Thursdays - Blodgett Hall 101 - 1:30-2:45 pm
Office hours: Tuesdays 3-4:30pm BH 318 or by appointment



Course Description

Popular media depicts archaeology as a search for lost treasures of an explicit or implied monetary value. In reality, an artifact's value lies not in its gold or gemstone content but in the information that object provides about the past. This academic archaeology is a scientific pursuit with artifacts, things made or modified by people, as the primary data source. Instead of searching for ancient astronauts and the lost city of Atlantis, academic archaeologists are searching for evidence about how past communities were organized and how they dealt with cultural or environmental change. The answers to such questions allow us to learn from the past as we face our own changes. This is the true value of archaeology. This course will examine both popular and academic archaeology, critiquing them against the scientific method.

Objectives

By the end of this course students will have mastered the basics of

- 1) Explaining how and why archaeological sites are formed
- 2) Explaining how and why archaeological site are and are not excavated
- 3) Describing the types of questions archaeologists ask and how they are answered through data analysis
- 4) Describing how archaeological research differs from artifact collecting
- 5) Applying archaeological information to contemporary social problems
- 6) Explaining how archaeologists can be social justice advocates

Textbooks

Renfrew, Colin and Paul Bahn

2018 *Archaeology Essentials*. 4th edition. Thames & Hudson, New York. - 3rd edition is acceptable

Pauketat, Timothy R.

2000 *Cahokia: Ancient America's Great City on the Mississippi*. Penguin.

Additional Readings Posted on Moodle

Beisaw, April M.

2016 Ghost Hunting as Archaeology: Archaeology as Ghost Hunting. In: *Lost City, Found Pyramid: Understanding Alternative Archaeology and Pseudoscientific Practices*. edited by Jeb J. Card and David S. Anderson. University of Alabama Press. pp. 185-198.

2017 Ruined by the Thirst for Urban Prosperity: Contemporary Archaeology of City Water Systems. In: *Contemporary Archaeology and the City: Creativity, Ruination, and Political Action*, edited by Laura McAtackney and Krysta Ryzewski. Oxford Press. pp. 132-148.

Cannon, Kenneth P. and Molly Boeka Cannon

2004 Zooarchaeology and Wildlife Management in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. In: *Zooarchaeology and Conservation Biology*, edited by R. Lee Lyman and Kenneth Cannon, University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City. pp. 45-60.

Gorman, Alice

2016 Culture on the Moon: Bodies in Time and Space. *Archaeologies* 12(1):110-128.

Gradwohl, David M.

2000 Parakeet to Paradise: Archaeology of a Pet Cemetery. *Archaeology* 53(3): 22-24.

Harris, Oliver J.T. and Craig N. Cipolla

2017 Multi-species Archaeology: People, Plants, and Animals. In: *Archaeological Theory in the New Millennium: Introducing Current Perspectives*. Routledge. pp. 152-170.

Kiarszys, Grzegorz

2019 The Destroyer of Worlds Hidden in the Forest: Cold War Nuclear Warhead Sites in Poland. *Antiquity* 93(367):236-255.

Parker, Evan A.

2016 The Proliferation of Pseudoarchaeology through "Reality" Television Programming. In: *Lost City, Found Pyramid: Understanding Alternative Archaeology and Pseudoscientific Practices*. edited by Jeb J. Card and David S. Anderson. University of Alabama Press. pp. 149-166.

Perri, Angela, Chris Widga, Dennis Lawler, Terrance Martin, Thomas Loebel, Kenneth Farnsworth, Luci Kohn, & Brent Buenger

2019 New Evidence of the Earliest Domestic Dogs in the Americas. *American Antiquity* 84(1): 68-87.

Pruitt, Tera C.

2016 Creating Pyramids: Participation, Performance, and Pseudoarchaeology in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In: *Lost City, Found Pyramid: Understanding Alternative Archaeology and Pseudoscientific Practices*. edited by Jeb J. Card and David S. Anderson. University of Alabama Press. pp. 102-117.

Singleton, Courtney

2017 Encountering Home: Contemporary Archaeology of Homelessness. In: *Contemporary Archaeology and the City: Creativity, Ruination, and Political Action*, edited by Laura McAtackney and Krysta Ryzewski. Oxford Press. pp. 229-243.

Skousen, B. J.

2018 Rethinking Archaeologies of Pilgrimage. *Journal of Social Archaeology* 18(3):261-283.

Thompson, Andrew R.

2015 New Dental and Isotope Evidence of Biological Distance and Place of Origin for Mass Burial Groups at Cahokia's Mound 72. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 158(2):341-357.

Changes and Moodle

This syllabus is general outline of the course content. The professor reserves the right to deviate from this outline. All changes will be posted on Moodle. Therefore the content on Moodle is what the students are expected to follow for successful completion of this course.

Grading

Final course grades will be assigned using a 1000 point scale. To receive an A in the course, 950 or more points must be earned. Below 950 points the following scale will apply.

A- = 900 to 949 points
B- = 800 to 833 points

B+ = 867 to 899 points
C+ = 767 to 799 points

B = 834 to 866 points
C = 734 to 766 points, etc.

Class Participation = 20% (up to 200 points)

Class participation points can only be earned by being present and active in class each and every week. Active participation in class means that you regularly ASK and answer questions, challenge or defend positions, and generally help move the entire class towards new levels of understanding without dominating class discussion. Your overall course participation will receive a single grade based on the following criteria: more than five absences (0 pts), present but passive (100 pts), present and occasionally active (150 pts), or present and regularly active (200 pts).

Blog Posts = 20% (2 @ 100 points each)

This course will use Wordpress to document our discoveries as we explore what archaeology is really about. Every student must complete one entry before the midterm and one after the midterm, following the assigned posting schedule. Posts **will** take the form of audio (exactly 4 minutes), video (exactly 4 minutes), or written text (exactly 400-500 words). All posts **will** include a title, two images with captions, a reference list, and 2 links directing interested readers to additional (new) content. Posts **must** be original work that cites all relevant sources using links to original content (textbooks, image sources, etc). Citations and reference lists **must** follow the Written Assignment Formatting details provided on this syllabus. Posts **must** show how you can use the course content (from the assigned posting week) to understand or explain some aspect of the past or present **not covered** in the assigned readings or lecture material. Posts **should not** simply reiterate course content. The guidelines for written assignments outlined in the syllabus must also be followed.

Students are encouraged to work with the course assistant to perfect their posts before they are submitted to Wordpress. It is the student's responsibility to post their own contributions to the Wordpress blog.

Field OR Lab Experience = 10% (1 @ 100 points each)

Each student is expected to participate in a 3.5 hour field survey or 2 hours of lab work during the designated field and lab experience week (times to be posted). Lab hours must be scheduled through the course assistant.

Cahokia Paper = 10% (1 @ 100 points each)

After reading the Cahokia textbook, each student will submit an 800-1000 word essay on how learning about the Native American past challenges their understanding of a present day social issue. The essay must use three direct quotes from the text and those quote must be of no more than 10 words each. Be sure to explain the quote and use it to advance an argument. The guidelines for written assignments outlined in the syllabus must also be followed.

Exams = 40% (2 @ 200 points each)

A midterm and final exam will assess comprehension of course readings, lectures, and activities. Each exam is worth up to 200 pts. Half of the exam questions will come from the course readings and half will come from the in-class lectures and activities, including the practicals. The Renfrew textbook has study tools available to you through the publisher's website. The end of each chapter contains study questions. Use these tools to prepare for exam questions from these readings.

Extra Credit

Opportunities for extra credit will be announced as they arise. Each student can apply up to 100 extra credit points to their course total. Be sure to take these opportunities as they come up. There is no guarantee that there will be opportunities at the end of the semester.

Written Assignment Formatting

Word Counts

For assignments completed in this course, word counts include title and body text. Word counts do not include the reference list or figure captions.

Titles

The title of a written work reflects the thesis of that work. The title must be specific to the argument your paper will make, revealing both the topic covered and method, theory, and or case study being used to explore that topic.

If your paper does not have a title then you probably aren't sure what your thesis is.

If your paper title is vague then you probably aren't sure what your thesis is.

If your title would work for a murder mystery novel then it is a bad title for an academic paper.

Figures

All tables, charts, and images included within written work must have a numbered caption that explains the figure and what it represents. This caption is an abbreviated form of the description that appears within the text. Every figure must be cited within the text and cited in the order in which they appear. An example is below.

On the first day of the course I brought the students to the house and asked them to write down what they thought of it. Most students had never noticed the distinctive octagon-shaped building (Figure 1) that they walked past to arrive at our classroom.



Figure 1. The Octagon house on the campus of Heidelberg University, Tiffin, Ohio. Photograph by April M. Beisaw.

Bibliography vs References or Works Cited

A reference list is **not** the same as a bibliography. A bibliography is a list of recommended readings. A reference list is a list of what you have **read** and **used** to make your argument. A reference list is the same as “works cited” because all references must be cited to show where and how they informed your research. **References are your evidence.**

Referencing and Citing Sources

In this course, we will use the Society for American Archaeology's format for references and citations. The full style guide is available through this [link](#). Every source you cite must be in your reference list and every source in your reference list must be cited in your text.

The basic reference formats are below. Additional authors are listed First Name Last Name after the first author's Last Name, First Name entry. Reference lists are sorted alphabetically by that first author's last name. Two sources with the same authorship are sorted chronologically with the oldest first. There are two spaces before and after the date.

Last Name, First Name

Date Article Title. *Journal Name* Volume(No):page-page.

Last Name, First Name

Date Title. Publisher, Publisher City.

The city in which a book was published is always included. If the city is not well known, then a two letter abbreviation for the state or country is added after a comma to clarify the location of publication. Such as:

White, Tim D. and Pieter A. Folkens

2005 *The Human Bone Manual*. Elsevier, Burlington, VT.

Some books include chapters written by different authors. When citing and referencing such works you must use the specific chapter title and author, not the book title and editor. Each chapter you use gets its own line in the reference list.

Last Name, First Name

Date Chapter Title. In *Book Title*, edited by First Name Last Name, pp. page-page. Publisher, Publisher City.

Citations point a reader to your reference list so that they can find the same exact information in the source you used. Ask yourself “could I have made this statement without having read a specific work?”. If the answer is no, add a citation to that statement. Use author and date when the concept being pointed to occurs throughout the source. Specific page numbers are included in citations when the information being pointed to occurs only on a certain page of the source. The title of the source is never included in the citation. Examples of citations are below.

- Facial recognition is a forensic technique of last resort and is rarely used (Ubelaker 2008).
- “Social identities are deeply rooted in historical visions which are strongly defined along intersecting axes of race/ethnicity, class, and gender” (Reckner 2002:97).
- According to Beisaw (2016:12), citing sources is not fun, but it is necessary. This perspective helps to contextualize the suffering of her students.

Quoting and Paraphrasing Sources

When you use the exact words of someone else, you must put those words within quotes and cite the source. Direct quotes should be reserved for instances when the way the original author said something is the point of the quote.

- During ethnographic fieldwork with ghost hunters, Michelle Hanks recorded the thoughts of one ghost tourist: “you get to know a lot of history doing this. ...Certainly more than I learned at school” (Hanks 2015:130).

When using a direct quote that will take up more than 3 lines of your paper, you must set that quote off as a block quote using a space before and after the quote and a tab for each line. This makes it obvious when the bulk of your paper is relying heavily on the words of others. Block quotes are discouraged.

The majority of your citations should **not** be direct quotes. Instead you should paraphrase the words of others and restate them in a way that is applicable to the argument you are making. Those citations do not get direct quotes because it is the idea that matters, not the exact words used to convey that idea.

- Archaeology, once the stuff of exciting stories (Holtorf 2010), took on the unfathomable labels of “boring” and “tedious.”
- One archaeologist advocated storytelling as a way to enhance archaeological practice by presenting possible explanations along with much-needed imagination (Lewis 2000:7). Another archaeologist suggested that the fear of seeming unscientific has kept archaeologists from developing better ways of speaking to and writing for the public (Majewski 2000:18).

Whether or not a paraphrased citation gets a page number depends on whether the idea being cited occurred throughout the source (was the subject of the paper) or appeared in only one place in the source (may have been a tangential idea just touched on).

Generating Reference Lists With Refworks

All Vassar students have a free Refworks account that is accessible through the library home page. Use it to create bibliographies and reference lists for your assignments.

Go to library.vassar.edu -> Research -> Citation Tools—> Refworks. Create an account if you don’t already have one.

Go back to library.vassar.edu -> Databases to do your searching

For peer-reviewed sources in sciences, social sciences, humanities try Scopus

For peer-reviewed anthropology & archaeology sources try Anthropology Plus, AnthroSource, & Annual Review of Anthropology

When you find sources to use for your paper choose Export -> Refworks

Go back to Refworks and select the sources you want to include

Under Output Styles select American Antiquity - modify the template to capitalize titles and journals

Create Bibliography

You now have a **draft** of your reference list that you need to check for accuracy

Check capitalization & punctuation for consistency - be sure page numbers are included for articles

Policies

Academic Integrity

As a Vassar student, you have agreed to the academic integrity policy in “[Vassar College Regulations](#).” This includes:

1. Each student’s work shall be the product of the student’s own effort.
2. Each student shall give due and appropriate acknowledgement of the work of others when that work is incorporated into the writing of papers.
3. Unless otherwise directed, every student working in a laboratory is expected to make all necessary measurements, drawings, etc., independently, from his or her own observations of the material provided.
4. Collaboration in preparation of written work may take place only to the extent approved by the instructor.

Penalties for violating Vassar’s academic integrity policy can be found in the same regulations document.

Accessibility Accommodations

If you have a condition that requires special accommodations (speech or hearing problems, attention disorder, etc.) it is your responsibility to have that disability documented by the Office for Accessibility and Educational Opportunity and provide me with a copy of your AEO accommodation letter before accommodations are needed.

Appointments

Students are welcome to drop in unannounced during office hours. This time is available on a first-come first-served basis. If you need to speak with me outside of those scheduled times, use the [Google Calendar](#) link on Moodle to schedule an appointment. Requests must be made at least 24 hours ahead of time. Make sure you have your Google Calendar set to Eastern Standard Time Zone.

Assignment Submission

Unless otherwise indicated, all work is to be submitted electronically through Moodle or the course Wordpress blog. Files cannot be submitted through email or handed in on paper or electronic media. Work not submitted according to the assignment’s instructions or by the assignment deadline will be subject to the Late Work Policy.

Attendance

Class content and assigned readings are related but they are not the same. Therefore all students are expected to attend every class as well as complete every assignment. Some class meetings may take place in alternate locations and during alternate times. Attention to the course schedule is essential. Tardiness may result in a missed exercise. Accommodations for health-related issues require a health advisory from Health Services. Accommodations for personal issues require communication from the class Dean.

Changes and Moodle

This syllabus is general outline of the course content. The professor reserves the right to deviate from this outline. All changes will be posted on Moodle. Therefore the content on Moodle is what students are expected to follow for successful completion of this course.

Class Participation

This is an interactive course that requires full participation in order to meet the course objectives. Students who find it difficult to speak in class are expected to discuss course material with the instructor during office hours or by email. When course exercises take place outside of the classroom students are expected to maintain classroom behaviors: pay attention, stay with the group, and stay engaged. Unacceptable behaviors include listening to music, reading material not related to this course, and napping while being transported to a field site.

Collaboration

Unless otherwise indicated, each student’s work should be easily distinguishable from that of any other student in multiple ways. Don’t share files. Do share ideas. Don’t produce one result and turn it in with different names. Do work independently alongside one another. Don’t rely on anyone else to get you through. Do be sure you can and do complete your own work. See Academic Integrity policy above.

Late Work

Unless otherwise indicated, all late work will be penalized according to the following schedule: 10% for first 12 hours, 20% for second 12 hours, 50% for the third 12 hours. Beyond 36 hours past an assigned deadline, late work is only accepted when accompanied by a communication from Health Services or the Dean's office.

Letters of Recommendation

Requests for letters of reference or recommendation must be made two weeks before the submission deadline for that letter. Before I consider a request, you must provide the following: 1) who the letter should be addressed to, 2) the submission deadline, 3) why you are applying for the position/funding, and 4) what you hope to get out of the experience/funding.

I am happy to write letters for students who go beyond the basic requirements of attending class and completing assignments. Before requesting a letter from any professor, consider how well the professor knows you as an individual. The best letters of recommendation tell stories about how students work independently or as part of a team, how they deal with adversity, what their goals and aspirations are, and what related strengths or weaknesses they have. If I don't know these things about you I cannot write a good letter.

Office Hours

Students are welcome to drop in unannounced during office hours. This time is available on a first-come first-served basis.

Textbooks

I do my best to keep the of textbooks under \$100/course. Students are expected to obtain a copy of each required textbook but are encouraged to explore cheaper options such as purchasing used or electronic copies or renting books. Anyone who elects to use an electronic version of a text should be able to bring an e-reader to class so that they have access to the textbook material for class discussion and exercises.

Title IX Responsibilities

Please be aware all Vassar faculty members are "responsible employees," which means that if you tell me about a situation involving sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship abuse, or stalking, I must share that information with the Title IX Coordinator. Although I have to make that notification, the Title IX office will only provide outreach by email. You will control how your case will be handled — you don't have to read or respond to the email, and it is completely up to you whether to pursue a formal complaint. Vassar's goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to resources you may need.

Schedule

Week 1 - Course overview and popular archaeology		
Tuesday	Watch the videos posted on the course Moodle BEFORE class	
Thursday	Read Introduction and Chapter 1 of Renfrew (28 pgs)	
Week 2 - How archaeological sites are created and discovered		
Tuesday	Read Chapter 2 of Renfrew (24 pages)	
Thursday	Read Chapter 3 of Renfrew (40 pages)	
Sunday	Group 1 blogs posted by 11pm	
Week 3 - How archaeological sites are studied		Field or Lab Experience
Tuesday	No Class - Experience Opportunities	
Thursday	Read Chapter 4 of Renfrew (36 pages)	
Saturday/Sunday	Experience Opportunities	
Week 4 - Reconstructing the past		
Tuesday	Read Chapter 5 of Renfrew (32 pages)	
Thursday	Read Chapter 6 of Renfrew (34 pages)	
Sunday	Group 2 blogs posted by 11pm	
Week 5 - Studying past people with respect		Tommy Orange Extra Credit
Tuesday	Read Chapter 7 of Renfrew (24 pages)	
Thursday	Read Chapters 8 & 9 of Renfrew (36 pages)	
Sunday	Group 3 blogs posted by 11pm	
Week 6 - Putting it all together		
Tuesday	Read Chapter 10 of Renfrew (22 pages)	
Thursday	Read Chapters 11 & 12 of Renfrew (36 pages)	
Sunday	Group 4 blogs posted by 11pm	
Week 7 - Archaeology vs Pseudo-archaeology		
Tuesday	Read Parker (2016) and Beisaw (2016) and Pruitt (2016)	
Thursday	Exam	
		Fall Break
Week 8 - Archaeological perspectives on animals		
Tuesday	Read Harris & Cipolla (2007) and Gradwohl (2000)	
Thursday	Read Cannon & Cannon (2004) and Perri et al. (2019)	
Sunday	Group 1 blogs posted by 11pm	
Week 9 - Archaeological perspectives on humans		
Tuesday	Read Singleton (2017) and Beisaw (2017)	
Thursday	Read Kiarszys (2019) and Gorman (2016)	
Sunday	Group 2 blogs posted by 11pm	
Week 10 - Archaeological perspectives on the Native American past		
Tuesday	No Class (At Conference) - Read first 60 pages of Cahokia	
Thursday	No Class (At Conference) - Read second 60 pages of Cahokia	
Week 11 - Archaeological perspectives on deep time and "progress"		Cahokia Paper Due
Tuesday	Read last 50 pages of Cahokia	
Thursday	Read Skousen (2018) and Thompson (2015)	
Sunday	Group 3 blogs posted by 11pm	
Week 12 - Native America and Thanksgiving		
Tuesday	TBA	
Week 13 - Student's Choice - Options to be posted		
Tuesday	TBA	
Thursday	TBA	
Sunday	Group 4 blogs posted by 11pm	
Week 14 - Review and course evaluations		
Tuesday	Bring questions	
Finals Week - Final Exam		date, time, location to be posted on Moodle