

SS3220: Archaeological Laboratory Methods
Syllabus -- Fall 2002

Tuesday/Thursday

11:05-12:20, 12:35-1:50

Archaeological Laboratory
Annex Building

Office: Academic Office Bld #213

Hours: Wednesday 10-11 (in office)

By appointment at Motherlode

<http://www.ss.mtu.edu/faculty/scarlett/archlab/labsci.htm>

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Course Description: This class will provide students an opportunity to explore the range of laboratory methods and strategies used in archaeology. The student will engage with the manner in which field conditions, research interests, conservation concerns, and budget restraints will influence the scale and scope of laboratory procedures. Each student will complete an analytical project and conservation plan during the semester, resulting in an article submitted for publication.

Recommended Texts: TBA

In this course, each student will complete a major lab project. This presents students the opportunity to combine their outside interests with class material. Students may select to complete either an analytical or a conservation project. Groups of students may team up to complete larger projects, but they must present a compelling argument for their plan.

Conservation Project:

Each student will select a single complex object or a small set of similar artifacts for this project. You will, in concert with the project director or lab responsible, develop a conservation plan unique to your artifact(s). The conservation plan will include a detailed discussion of the stabilization needs of the object(s), along with metric recording, photographic and inked images. Following a final meeting, you will execute your outlined

plan. You will then complete a final write-up that details the results of your treatment plan and replicates the metric, photographic, and drawn records. Like the real world, there will be severe penalty for work not completed on schedule. You will work with real artifacts and conduct yourself with the care and diligence of a young professional.

Analytical Project:

Each student will complete a small analytical project. The student will solicit an appropriately sized collection of artifacts from an archaeological assemblage. The collection must have analytical potential: such as a collection of ceramics from a single large feature, a series of soil samples and flotations from a single site, or perhaps a set of architectural hardware from a single structure. Each analysis will proceed according to individual research goals specific to the set of artifacts. One person may examine the total artifact assemblage in relation to stratigraphic sequence in a large feature. Another option will be to perform reconstructions on ceramic vessels, complete the technical drawings and metric recordation, then search both for meaningful patterns. Yet a third person may choose to generate *Terminus Post Quem* data for different features on a site. Be creative, but be conscious of time- DON'T bite off more than you can chew. I will approve your plan with the project archaeologist or lab responsible. As with the conservation project, there will be a severe penalty for work not completed on schedule.

In either project, you may work with material from MTU's Industrial Archaeology research or you may locate archaeological or historical collections from another curator or museum facility. Consult with the professor about this issue.

Evaluation of Performance:

Guided research can not be evaluated in the same manner as test and written papers. Grades in this class will instead be calculated as letters using the following criteria:

A: The student completed all phases of project on time. Project clearly showed aggressive research and resulted in both clear understanding of disciplinary objectives and great attention to detail. Student communicated effectively over the course of their work, but also showed care to pre-professional development. Outstanding attention to discussions and hands-on activities throughout the term.

AB: The student completed the final project on time. Product resulted from solid research and good coverage of the details. The student communicated effectively with the professor/staff and showed care regarding pre-professional development. Outstanding attention to discussions and hands-on activities throughout the term.

B: The student completed the final project before the end of the term. The finished product covered all basics, and required only minor extra editing before it could be submitted for publication. Student communicated well and was responsible. Good attention to discussions and hands-on activities throughout the term.

BC: The student completed the final project before the end of term. The finished product covered all basics, but attention to detail was uneven. Final product required editing and rewriting before it could be submitted for publication. Student occasionally missed appointments with staff or failed to meet agreed upon deadlines. Good attention to discussions and hands-on activities throughout the term.

C: The student completed the final project before the end of term. The finished product covered all basics, but lacked attention to detail. Final product required substantial editing and rewriting before it could be submitted for publication. Student occasionally missed appointments with staff or failed to meet agreed upon deadlines. Acceptable attention to discussions and hands-on activities throughout the term.

CD: The student turned in final project somewhat late. The finished product lacked some basics and attention to detail. Final product required editing and rewriting before it could be submitted for publication. Student missed appointments with staff or failed to meet agreed upon deadlines over the entire semester. Acceptable attention to discussions and hands-on activities throughout the term.

D: The final project was late. The finished product was not ready for publication and could not be salvaged. The student showed little effort and care toward the archaeological material

with which they worked. The student often missed appointments and left their work area unclean or in an irresponsible condition. Poor attention to discussions and hands-on activities throughout the term.

F: Student performance was completely unsatisfactory.

Graduate Students should note that anything below B is a failing grade.

Proposed Schedule

<i>Wk</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Lab Topic</i>	<i>Due by Friday</i>
1	Aug 31, 2	Introduction, Research	Tours and Orientation	
2	Sept 7, 9	Typologies, Soils	Floats and Samples	
3	Sept 14, 16	Organics I: Bone	Bones: Human and Animal	
4	Sept 21, 23	Organics II: Macro/Microbotanical	Pollen, Seeds and Charcoal	Project Proposal
5	Sept 28, 30	Drafting I and II: Ink and digital	Pens, Ink, Mylar	
6	Oct 5, 7	Metals I	Ores, Alloys, Slag	Project Plans Due Friday
7	Oct 12, 14	Glass I	Bottles, Beads, and Windows	
8	Oct 14, 16	Material Science I	Microscopy, Lasers, & Nukes	(CNEHA, Kingston, Ontario)
9	Oct 19, 21	Ceramics I: Coarse wares	Pottery, Earthenwares	
10	Oct 26, 28	Ceramics II: Refined wares	Stonewares, Porcelain	
11	Nov 2, 4	Rocks and Minerals I	Toolstones, Ores	
12	Nov 9, 11	Material Science II	Genetics/Forensics	
13	Nov 16, 18	Photography: Color, B/W, Digital	Cameras and Software	(AAA, San Francisco, CA)
13	Nov 23, 25	Thanksgiving Recess	Digestion	Bye
14	Nov 30, Dec 2	GIS, Computer Catalogs, Databases	Digital Study and Statistics	
15	Dec 7, 9	Catch up, Wrap up, Review	Open Lab/Exam Prep	
16	Dec 14, 16	Examination Period, no classes	Open Lab all week	Project Due