



BUEN SUCESO, ECUADOR

Course ID: ARCH 315L

June 22-July 26, 2019

FIELD SCHOOL DIRECTORS:

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INTRODUCTION

Dating between 4,400 and 1,450 BC, the Early Formative Period, Valdivia occupation of coastal Ecuador was one of the earliest ceramic traditions of the New World, marked the beginning of sedentary village life in this region, and saw the onset of widespread cultivation of maize and other crops. This project will excavate and analyze materials from the Late Valdivia site of Buen Suceso, located along the Río Culebra in the Manglaralto River drainage. We will be emphasizing meticulous excavation techniques and detail-oriented laboratory analysis within an overall theme of community-based archaeology in cooperation with the comuna of Dos Mangas, where we will be staying.

The occupation of Buen Suceso occurred during the Late portion (Phases IV-VII, 2400-1800 BC) of the Valdivia chronology, with radiocarbon dates pointing to a founding and site occupation of a few hundred years around approximately 2000 BC. By the time of the site's founding, the circular shape, evident at Buen Suceso and characteristic of Early Valdivia sites, had been absent in Valdivia villages for 800-1000 years. Circular villages, with their suggestions of communalism and egalitarianism, are simply absent from the landscape at this time, except at Buen Suceso.

The majority of the site is intact, and its inland position has spared it from some of the looting that has been so detrimental to other Valdivia sites. Apart from a few shallow holes dug by local children – which alerted us to the site's rich potential – the most destructive activity carried out had been the tree

removal and farming conducted over several decades. This produced a very deep plow zone that can be seen in profile. A modern dirt road has obliterated the western edge of the site -- this created a logical boundary for mapping and excavation activities in that direction. The southeastern arm of the village midden has been partially eroded by the Río Culebra. While the two tributaries of the Manglaralto River, the Río Culebra and Río Colín, as well as the main channel of the Manglaralto are currently seasonal rivers, as little as 50 years ago, the Manglaralto River ran year-round at sufficient depth to float rafts of paja (palm fronds used for craft production and roofing material) to the coast. This suggests that the rivers may have been a more important year-round environmental resource, for both food and water, in the Valdivia period than they are in the present.

While the predominant feature of the Buen Suceso site is the Late Valdivia village, evidence of much of the coastal, pre-Hispanic sequence is also present in the same space. On the same southeastern corner of the site eroded by the Río Culebra is evidence of a Middle Formative Machalilla (1450-800 BC) cemetery. Dr. Rowe recovered a double burial during her 2009 excavations, and local residents testify to the quantity of skeletal and ceramic material that wash out of this eroded 'cliff' face during the rainy season. Additionally, several fragments from spout-and-handle bottle vessels, which are diagnostic of the Middle Formative Machalilla and Late Formative Chorerra periods, were found scattered over the surface of the site. Opposite the cemetery, on the contiguous ridge bordering the northern edge of the site, there is evidence of an ephemeral Guangala (500 BC – AD 500) occupation. Near the abandoned school house exists a Manteño (AD 800-1532) mound. Thus, in the immediate area surrounding Buen Suceso, almost all of the pre-Hispanic coastal sequence is in evidence.

Excavations at Buen Suceso are currently the central focus of our larger archaeological project in the region, the Proyecto Arqueológico de los Ríos Culebra-Colín (PARCC, Archaeological Project of the Culebra-Colín Rivers). PARCC's geographic foci are the lands alongside the Culebra and Colín Rivers, comprising the upper watershed of the Manglaralto Valley, and the lands of the *comuna* Dos Mangas.

The goals of PARCC are:

- To carry out research-driven archaeological investigations.
- Assist with salvage excavations of archaeological remains within the study area when possible.
- Engage local community members in projects that raise the visibility of local cultural heritage and advocate for its conservation.

DOS MANGAS VILLAGE

As we will be living and working in and around Dos Mangas, a brief description of the village is in order. Dos Mangas is a *comuna*, a registered political entity that holds common title to lands. It is home to around 1,600 people, the majority of whom make their living from animal husbandry or agricultural production. It is not uncommon to see a mass of cattle being herded through the street by men on horseback, or to see chicken have free reign of house yards (and streets). Because of this, Dos Mangas can feel quite rural, even though it is well connected to neighboring towns.

Dos Mangas is located 7km inland from the Pacific coast, at the environmental margin between the humid tropical forest and the cloud forest, which is created by coastal clouds bunching up against the Colonche-Chongon hills. It is an incredible environment in which to observe local flora and fauna including orchids, hummingbirds, leaf cutter ants, and howler monkeys, to name just a few. These spectacular surroundings support a tourism economy and local community guides who conduct ecological hikes. Additionally, artisans in the community use natural resources such as banana leaves, palm fronds, and palm nuts to craft a variety of objects including hats, handbags, and jewelry which they sell to tourists as well.

Archaeological investigations have been conducted in Dos Mangas since 2006, with the broad support of the community. This long-standing relationship has been possible because archaeologists have included community collaboration and service in their project design. Some examples of these activities, both large and small, include: employing local guides as field assistants; compiling pre-Hispanic designs into a reference book for local artisans; giving presentations in the village primary school; conducting training workshops for community guides; and, collaborating on the design for a future site museum. These activities are ongoing and ever-evolving. Students are encouraged to participate and also to develop new ways in which to collaborate and give back.

ACADEMIC CREDIT UNITS & TRANSCRIPTS

Credit Units: Attending students will be awarded 8 semester credit units (equivalent to 12 quarter credit units) through our academic partner, Connecticut College. Connecticut College is a private, highly ranked liberal arts institution with a deep commitment to undergraduate education. Students will receive a letter grade for attending this field school (see grading assessment and matrix). This field school provides a minimum of 160 direct instructional hours. Students are encouraged to discuss the transferability of credit units with faculty and registrars at their home institution prior to attending this field school.

Transcripts: An official copy of transcripts will be mailed to the permanent address listed by students on their online application. One more transcript may be sent to the student home institution at no cost. Additional transcripts may be ordered at any time through the National Student Clearinghouse: <http://bit.ly/2hvurkl>.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to expose participants to a broad range of anthropologically informed research. Students will participate in excavations and laboratory analyses and learn how archaeological data is collected and processed. Participants will learn how to interpret multiple data sets and test working hypotheses. By the end of the session, participants should be able to excavate a unit and engage in comprehensive artifact analysis. They will also have the opportunity to collaborate with the local community on heritage projects.

To achieve these objectives, this course will:

- Provide a practical working knowledge of archaeological field and lab methods, including excavation, analysis, cataloging, and conservation;
- Introduce the intellectual challenges of archaeological research, including research design, the interpretation of data, and the continual refinement of hypotheses and field strategies regarding information recovered in the field.
- Include students in heritage projects and collaborations with community members

PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for this experiential learning course. Students will learn how to conduct archaeological research on-site. Participation in PARCC involves physical labor and rustic living which entails patience and professionalism distinct from a typical university learning environment.

Participants are required to come equipped with eagerness to engage in all aspects of archaeological field research, with a clear understanding of the challenges involved in this type of endeavor. While all are welcome, this program will most benefit students who 1) seek engagement with Spanish-speaking colleagues and community members, and 2) need additional experience to apply to graduate school or fellowship programs. Knowing Spanish is helpful, but not a requirement.

DISCLAIMER – PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Our primary concern is with education. Traveling and conducting field research involve risk. Students interested in participating in IFR programs must weigh whether the potential risk is worth the value of education provided. While risk is inherent in everything we do, we do not take risk lightly. The IFR engages in intensive review of each field school location prior to approval. Once a program is accepted, the IFR reviews each program annually to make sure it complies with all our standards and policies, including student safety.

We do our best to follow schedule and activities as outlined in this syllabus. Yet local permitting agencies, political, environmental, personal, or weather conditions may force changes. This syllabus, therefore, is only a general commitment. Students should allow flexibility and adaptability as research work is frequently subject to change.

Field conditions are different than those you experience in your home or university. Buen Suceso is located in a forested equatorial coastal/riverine area. The temperature range is relatively consistent and generally mild to warm (18-30C/65-85F). It can be wet and uncomfortable, or sunny and humid. Biting flies, mosquitos, snakes, spiders, ants, and prickly foliage can be challenging. You will be expected to walk several kilometers to and from the site every weekday, carrying field gear and archaeological materials. There are no formal bathrooms at the site, so you should prepare yourself accordingly. An important part of this project is learning to deal with the circumstances at hand, and to make the best of a given situation with the tools available. This is not a summer vacation. We expect all members of our project to be patient, flexible, and prepared.

If you have any medical concerns, please consult with your doctor. For all other concerns, please consult with the project director – as appropriate.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the session, you will have the ability to:

- Learn how archaeological data is collected in the field and the laboratory
- Develop the practical and analytical skills necessary for the interpretation of distinct data sets
- Apply standard excavation methods to archaeological contexts
- Use standard recording techniques to document excavation results
- Undertake preliminary processing of archaeological remains and artifacts

GRADING MATRIX

20% ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES: You are expected to actively participate in all lectures, discussions, seminars, training sessions, and workshops. You are also expected to contribute to weekly discussions based on readings, field trips, and lectures, and other prompts. Remember, fieldwork is not easy, so you must be prepared for frustration, tedious assignments, slow, measured progress, and possible delays. Understand that you will be part of a team, working with professionals who expect you to work together as a unit and contribute as appropriate.

20% FIELD & LAB WORK: You are expected to participate in all field activities which may include, survey, excavation work like digging, sweeping and bucket lifting, screen sifting, bagging and tagging artifacts, mapping units or finds therein, and carrying things which may be bulky or heavy. For all lab work, you must keep accurate and complete records for all materials. In general, lab activates may include: washing, labelling, cataloging or taking inventory, notetaking, drawing, measuring, sampling, sorting, counting, weighing, data entry, photography, bagging things, carrying or moving bags or boxes of objects, conservations work, cleaning, and other similar activities.

20% FIELD JOURNAL: You must keep a detailed notebook which will be submitted and evaluated weekly by supervisors. Remember, you are the first person in over four-thousand years to see and study these contexts and artifacts. As such, reliable registry and observation at every step of the process is the only way of saving this data for future analysis and interpretation. It is vitally important to record everything you saw and thought at the time. Those whose notes do not contain sufficient detail in this category assessment will be put on notice.

10% FINAL PRESENTATION: On our second-to last day in Dos Mangas you will present a brief, 5-10-minute talk to your fellow students about an aspect of the project that you found significant. These can be presented in pairs. Some topics to consider may be: describing what you found in your excavation unit in light of the broader goals of the project; sharing observations from analyses conducted during the lab period; reflecting on the significance of living and working with community members; expanded discussion of a theme raised during one of the lectures; and more. You are encouraged (though not required) to share your presentation at the *despedida* (going away party) on the last day.

20% FINAL UNIT REPORT: Each student will write a report on the unit they were primarily assigned to during the field season. This report will include a detailed description of the context of the unit itself as well as in-depth description of each level and all materials/features uncovered within it. This report should be based on the notes taken throughout the field season, the field laboratory analysis of materials, and the background readings for the site and the project in general. There is no specific length requirements, but understand that you will be graded on the attention to detail you provide as well as the organization of your report. This report is due via email (sarah.rowe@utrgv.edu and guy.duke@utrgv.edu) by Aug. 3, 2019.

10% MINDFULNESS AND ENGAGEMENT: Your participation in this program explicitly acknowledges your intention and desire to contribute to archaeological scholarship. You'll have good days and bad days, but excessive complaining, bad attitudes, tantrums, freak-outs, sluggish enthusiasm, and anger management problems will not be tolerated. One way of avoiding these funks is being mindful and engaging in public education and outreach through planned activities and mini-projects. The goals of outreach are to gain support in preserving the archaeological record, and explain how archaeology informs on the past and the present. While Spanish is not a pre-requisite for such work, being open to cultures other than your own, to different ways of thinking of and interpreting the world is vital. Students are expected to learn as much from the local community tradition, heritage, ideology and social structure as from the archaeology itself.

TRAVEL & MEETING POINT

Hold purchasing your airline ticket until six (6) weeks prior to departure date. Natural disasters, political changes, weather conditions and a range of other factors may require the cancelation of a field school. The IFR typically takes a close look at local conditions 6-7 weeks prior to program beginning and make Go/No Go decisions by then. This time frame still allows the purchase of discounted airline tickets while protecting students from potential loss of airline ticket costs if we decide to cancel a program.

You are responsible for making your own travel arrangements to Ecuador. International flights into Ecuador arrive in both Quito and Guayaquil. You will need to get to Guayaquil to meet up with the group but it may be more economical to fly into Quito first. Whichever airport you initially fly into, this is where you must go through customs and immigration.

Students are responsible to make their way to the designated meeting point, [Hotel Casa de Romero](#) in Guayaquil, on June 22, 2019. Casa de Romero offers airport pick-up starting at \$10. You will need to contact them to arrange this ([here](#)). You can also simply take a taxi from the airport, though be aware that the driver likely won't know where the hotel is and that rates can vary from \$5-15.

If you can't make it to the meeting point on June 22, we will still be in Guayaquil the following day visiting museums, leaving for Dos Mangas early on June 24 (see detailed itinerary below). The Project cannot reimburse you for any expenses if you fail to reach the meeting place on the scheduled date, or otherwise fail to meet staff due to your own actions. We will travel together to Dos Mangas on June 24 and get set up in our lodgings there. Travel to and from Dos Mangas at the start and end of the trip is included in the program fee.

If you missed your connection or your flight is delayed, please call, text or email project director immediately. A local emergency cell phone number will be provided to all enrolled students.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

US students do not need a visa to travel to Ecuador. The US Department of State ([here](#)) lists the requirements for US travelers to Ecuador as being:

- 6 month passport validity
- 1 page per stamp
- No tourist visa required for stays shorter than 90 days in any 12-month period
- Vaccinations for yellow fever if traveling in the Amazon Basin or other parts of South America.

Citizens of other countries are asked to check the embassy website page at their home country for specific visa requirements.

STAYING HEALTHY

Students and staff are expected to maintain a reasonable level of hygiene that befits communal living. Also, despite precautions, you should expect mild bouts of stomach upset and possibly diarrhea during your travels. Over-the-counter remedies are adequate for most; serious infections require antibiotics. If you have any special health needs, talk with your doctor. You will be covered by the IFR health insurance for the duration of the program, but are ultimately responsible for your health status, treatment options, and any medical costs (before any claims and reimbursements). If you have any conditions that require medications or treatments, or if a lack of treatment could result in you hurting yourself or others, you must inform the Project Directors in writing. The Centers for Disease Control minimally recommends vaccines against Typhoid and Hepatitis A for travel to Ecuador (see [here](#)). You should obtain all vaccinations at least 4-6 weeks before your trip to allow time for them to take effect.

***Note:** Coastal Ecuador is technically listed as a malarial transmission zone by the CDC. The Dos Mangas/Santa Elena region is not known for malaria, however. Other mosquito-borne illnesses such as dengue and zika are known, however. These are not treatable and thus you will need to protect yourself from bites by effectively covering yourself and the use of deet-based repellents. As these are generally effective at keeping mosquitoes at bay, you will also be protected from malaria. Thus, it is not necessary to use anti-malarial medications, though you are certainly welcome to if it would make you feel more comfortable (but be sure to read up on the potential side-effects of anti-malarial medications – they can be rough).

ACCOMMODATIONS

Participants will stay at a community-run hostel which has common rooms and clean, but rustic and basic facilities. Conditions are simple, and participants share accommodations. There is running water, but we do not guarantee that it will be plentiful, potable, or hot. All drinking water comes from a bottle. Rolling blackouts may also occur. Beds and linens are provided but students who are particular about their sleeping conditions may wish to bring a set or two of sheets with them. The project maintains a communal kitchen and dining area with a stove, coffee maker, fridge, and other essentials like pots & pans, and dishes & flatware. Cell service may be limited, but there is an internet café in the village.

With respect to diet, the project provides plenty of nutritious but basic meal offerings in the tradition of local coastal Ecuadorian cuisine. Breakfast usually consists of coffee, tea, powdered milk, cereal, yogurt, bread, jam, and butter. Hot lunches, prepared and served at the comedor in Dos Mangas, are generally a soup following by a “segundo” of protein (chicken, pork, fish, or beef) and rice, usually with a salad and/or beans/lentils. Dinner is generally a hearty stew or small plate similar to lunch. Vegetarian diets can be accommodated with advanced notice but strict vegan, gluten-free, kosher, halal or other specialty diets cannot. Those with specialized diets will find their options very limited and should be prepared to bring their own food down, or purchase items locally to supplement their diet.

Note that the project provides breakfast, lunch, and dinner when we are in Dos Mangas (Monday through Friday, and breakfast on Saturday), but you are responsible for all meals when we are away from the field house. If you decide to supplement a dish with a special ingredient, or fulfil a between-meal craving, the local stores have a variety of snacks and beverages and there are a number of individuals who drive through town daily selling baked goods and other products. Finally, if you want specific “western style” items like soft drinks, ramen noodles, and other imported snacks, you can buy them at the neighborhood bodega or pick them up in Guayaquil or on the few trips the project will make to La Libertad or Montañita.

COURSE SCHEDULE

All IFR field schools begin with safety orientation. This orientation includes proper behavior at the field area, proper clothing, local cultural sensitivities and sensibilities, potential fauna and flora hazards, review of IFR harassment and discrimination policies, and review of the student Code of Conduct.

The schedule below details the anticipated activities for the summer, but is subject to change. Changes will be communicated to students as soon as possible.

June 22, 2019

Students arrive in Ecuador and convene at Casa de Romero in Guayaquil.

June 23, 2019

Official start of the field school. Morning tours of the Museo Municipal de Guayaquil and the Museo de Antropología y Arte Contemporánea (MAAC), lunch together followed by tours of the INPC and MAAC storage areas. **Lecture on Ecuadorian prehispanic cultures by Dr. Rowe.**

June 24, 2019

Morning travel to Dos Mangas, evening Safety Orientation and **lecture on project research design and goals by Drs. Duke and Rowe.**

June 25, 2019

Eco hike – students will visit the site to get familiar with the location and the path they will be walking daily. The hike will continue with a community guide who will introduce them to aspects of the local environment including local flora and fauna. If lucky, students will be able to observe howler monkeys in the forest. Students will visit one of the community ecotourism destinations (waterfalls or natural pools) before returning to the village.

June 26 – July 25, 2019

See Excavation and Lab schedules below

June 26, 2019

Archaeological methods lecture by Drs. Duke and Rowe, during field time.

July 3, 2019

Archaeological theory lecture by Drs. Duke and Rowe

July 12 – July 14, 2019

Trip to Santa Elena. Exact schedule TBA, but will include visits to Real Alto, the Los Amantes de Sumpa Museum, and the San Biritute festival. **Regional archaeology guest lecture TBA.**

July 18, 2019

Community archaeology lecture by Dr. Rowe

July 23, 2019

Student presentations

July 24, 2019

Community despedida

July 25, 2019

Travel from Dos Mangas to Guayaquil.

July 26, 2019

Students fly home or continue independent travel

June 26 – July 21 THE EXCAVATION SCHEDULE

This is the schedule we will keep during the excavation period, with the exception of dates noted above.

Monday through Friday:

6:00 am – breakfast is available

6:30 am – begin hike to site (note: this is a firm departure time. Get up as early as you need to in order to prepare for the day)

2:00 pm – return hike from site

2:30 pm – lunch and post-field downtime

4:30 pm – lab and evening lectures & discussion time

8:00 pm – dinner

Saturdays:

6:30 – 8:00 am – breakfast is available

8:00 am – lab

1:00 pm – free time

Sundays:

Free day

July 22 – July 24 THE LAB SCHEDULE

This is the schedule we will keep during the lab period, with the exception of dates noted above.

Monday through Friday:

6:00 am – breakfast is available

7:00 am – lab

1:00 pm – lunch break
2:00 pm – lab
4:00 pm – downtime
7:00 pm – lecture & discussion time
8:00 pm – dinner

Saturdays:

6:30 – 8:00 am – breakfast is available
8:00 am – lab
1:00 pm – free time

Sundays:

Free day

EQUIPMENT LIST

Consider that anything you bring down could be LOST, BROKEN, and STOLEN, so plan accordingly.

- If you bring a tablet or laptop, back-up all your files.
- If you bring a digital camera, download your photos before you come to Ecuador.
- Don't bring expensive jewelry or ostentatious accessories.
- Check if your insurance company covers loss or theft of property.
- Make copies of your passport and leave one with a trusted relative.

Clothing and Sleeping: Bring enough clothes so that you can go one week without laundry. Try to pack as light as possible. If you won't wear it more than 3 times, don't bring it.

Required Gear:

- 2 pairs work pants
- 1 pair comfy pants (recommended)
- 2 tanks/t-shirts
- 2 long sleeve shirts
- 1 sweater or sweatshirt
- Enough underwear/socks/bras/etc. for at least one week
- Wide brimmed hat
- Rain jacket
- Hiking shoes
- House shoes (flip flops recommended)
- Towel
- Bed sheets and pillow (optional)
- Eye-mask and earplugs (optional)
- Backpack
- Flashlight/ headlamp
- Sunscreen
- Any medication (prescription and/or over-the-counter) you may need to last for the duration of the field school
- 4½" Pointing Trowel ([Marshalltown](#) is a common brand used by archaeologists)
- Knee-high waterproof rubber/PVC work boots such as [these](#).
- Sun glasses with UV protection
- Insect repellant (deet-based strongly recommended)
- Reusable water bottle
- Snake guards (optional)
- Clipboard – hard plastic boards are the best
- Pencils – mechanical pencil with 0.7mm point are strongly recommended.
- Hard cover writing book for your journal entries. We will collect these at the end of the season and will return them after grading.

REQUIRED READINGS (TO BE READ PRIOR TO ARRIVAL IN ECUADOR)

Bruhns, Karen Olsen

2008 A Series of Unfortunate Events, or the Best Intentions, Thwarted: A Brief History of Archaeological Time in the Northern Andes. *Ñawpa Pacha* 29(1):179-190.

<https://doi.org/10.1179/naw.2008.29.1.008>

Glassow, Michael A.

2005 Excavation. In Herbert D. G. Maschner and Christopher Chippindale (Eds.), *Handbook of Archaeological Methods, Volume I*, (pp. 133-175). AltaMira Press, Lanham, MD.

Hurcombe, Linda M.

2007 Artefacts from the Ground. In *Archaeological Artefact as Material Culture*, (pp. 14-37). Routledge, New York, NY.

Rowe, Sarah M.

2014 The Valdivia Occupation of Coastal Ecuador. In *Community and Memory at the Late Valdivia Site of Buen Suceso, Ecuador*, pp. 85-151. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. University of Illinois, Urbana.

2018 La memoria contra la jerarquia (English version). In *De Arqueología Hablamos las Mujeres*, edited by Mariauxi Cordero. Universidad Laica Eloy Alfaro de Manabí, Manta, Ecuador.

Sutton, Mark Q. and Brooke S. Arkush

1996 Introduction. In *Archaeological Laboratory Methods: An Introduction*, (pp. 1-15). Kendall/Hunt Publishing, Dubuque, IA.

Watkins, Joe and T. J. Ferguson

2005 Working with and Working for Indigenous Communities. In Herbert D. G. Maschner and Christopher Chippindale (Eds.), *Handbook of Archaeological Methods, Volume II*, (pp. 1372-1406). AltaMira Press, Lanham, MD.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Hurcombe, Linda M.

2007 Learning from Contexts. In *Archaeological Artefact as Material Culture*, (pp. 38-53). Routledge, New York, NY.

Raymond, J. Scott, and Richard L. Burger (Eds.)

2003 *Archaeology of Formative Ecuador*. Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks

<https://www.doaks.org/research/publications/books/archaeology-of-formative-ecuador>