



HOOD COLLEGE ONLINE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SCHOOL
“BACKYARD ARCHAEOLOGY”

Summer 2020

Course Number: ART 370 (Undergraduate)

Course Title: Archaeological Fieldwork

Professor: Dr. David R. Hixson (Ph.D. RPA)

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Department: Art and Archaeology

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Office Hours: By Zoom Appointment

What is a Field School?

Along with a 4-year degree in anthropology, archaeology or a related discipline, the only other qualification needed to be employed as an archaeologist in the United States, or on many projects around the world, is an archaeological “field school”. Field school is where students learn the proper field techniques for excavations and preliminary artifact processing. A bachelor’s degree plus a field school qualifies one to be a “field technician” in our discipline. Therefore, this class will be focused upon the most common skills required of archaeological field technicians, from low-tech pace-and-compass surveying methods to stratigraphic excavations, we will cover each skill together, providing both one-on-one and group feedback live via video conferencing.

This year the professor will be excavating the historic Hendricks House Farm, a middling Shenandoah Valley farmstead founded in 1790, located just outside of Shepherdstown, WV. This also happens to be Dr. Hixson’s back yard. He will be working alongside everyone virtually, using online video conferencing technology and online video hosting. He will be demonstrating proper procedures, while supportively coaching the independent archaeological excavations and background research of each student in their own respective back yards.

Class requirements:

- Ability to conduct moderate to strenuous physical activity.
- Access to a 2 x 2-meter area that can be disturbed by excavations to a depth of less than 1 meter. Gardens are perfect options (or you can convert your excavations into a new garden).
- Verification that there are no utilities or other hazards within that 2 x 2-meter area.
- Express legal permission to excavate on this land. Hood College is not responsible for any permitting that may be required under local HOA or residential codes.
- The ability to conduct this fieldwork while maintaining proper social distancing guidelines.
- Home internet with capability of basic live streaming of video files and zoom sessions.
- Ability to print paperwork.
- Cell Phone / Tablet / Portable Laptop that can be used outside.

Class Hours: Monday through Thursday, 9am – 1pm

Dates: May 25 through July 3 (Six Weeks)

Location: Online via Zoom and Blackboard

Credits: 3 Credit Hours

Often taken in conjunction with ART 380 (Laboratory Analysis) for a total of 6 credit hours.

May be repeated.

PREREQUISITES: 12 Credit Hours in Art & Archaeology at the 200-level or above, and/or permission of the archaeology concentration coordinator.

COURSE DESCRIPTION from the Hood College Course Catalog:

Opportunity to learn archaeological field methods through hands-on experience at an archaeological site selected in collaboration between the student and archaeology concentration coordinator.

Students are expected to observe and learn both survey and excavation techniques, recording, drawing and analyzing finds.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Archaeological Surveying: students will gain experience using essential mapping and surveying techniques to locate archaeological sites, select excavation loci, and place archaeological features within an established grid.

Archaeological Excavations: students will learn and practice how to conduct archaeological excavations, including the proper use of various tools for excavations, interpretation of soil stratigraphy, and the recognition of natural and cultural features.

Artifact Recovery: students will be trained in and execute proper techniques for artifact recovery in the field, such as screening (wet-, dry-, or fine-), piece plotting, and bagging and tagging.

Field Documentation: students will practice proper field documentation techniques, including daily field notes, excavation forms, field photography, and plan/profile drawings.

Report Writing: students will write their own summary field report, including background research and data from their excavations and artifact analyses.

Equipment:

Required	Recommended	Professional
First Aid Kit	First Aid Kit	First Aid Kit
1 Shovel	1 Flat "Transfer" Shovel 1 Rounded "Digging" Shovel	1 Flat "Transfer" Shovel 1 Rounded "Digging" Shovel 1 short D-handle Garden Spade
1 Masonry Trowel (Hood College will supply one trowel for each Hood student)	1 Marshalltown Masonry Trowel 1 Bastard File	1 Marshalltown Masonry Trowel 1 Flat Margin Trowel 1 Pointer Trowel 1 Bastard File
¼ inch hardware mesh and wood to make your own Sifting Screen OR any prebuilt Sifting Screen	Any Prebuilt Soil Sifting Screen with ¼ inch hardware mesh.	1 Box Screen (portable) 1 Shaker Screen (larger) Both ¼ inch hardware mesh

1 or 2 Buckets for soil	Two 5-gallon sturdy Buckets with handles.	Several 5-gallon sturdy buckets with handles
2 Tape Measurers	2 Folding Rulers (metric) 1 Long Pull-Tape (metric)	1 Tape Measurer 2 Folding Rulers 2 Long Pull-Tapes Metric, English and Engineering
Plastic, Ziplock, or Paper Sandwich Bags (for artifacts)	Boxes of different sized Ziplock Bags (sandwich, quart, gallon) with write-on surfaces	Special 3mil or 4mil Ziplock Bags with write-on surfaces in a variety of sizes.
Permanent Markers, Pens, and Pencils	2 Sharpie Permanent Markers, 2 Mechanical pencils 1 Ballpoint Pen	Box of Sharpies, both Fine and Regular Point Box of Mechanical Pencils Ballpoint Pens
Clipboard (or similar writing surface)	Clipboard	Aluminum Storage Clipboard
Graph Paper (could print some)	Millimeter ruled graph paper	Millimeter ruled graph paper
At least 10 meters / yards of strong string	Large Spool of Nylon String	Large Spools of Brightly Colored Nylon String
Work Gloves	Work Gloves	Light form-fitting work gloves AND heavy leather work gloves
6-10 Large Nails, Bolts, or Spikes (or be able to fashion stakes from other common materials)	Pack of 20-Penny or 40-Penny 5-inch or longer nails, or similar metal spikes.	Pack of 20-Penny or 40-Penny 5-inch or longer nails, plus Datum Spikes and 2 or more Chaining Pins
1 String Level (bubble level)	1 String Level (bubble level)	2 or more String Levels
Compass (cell phone app ok)	Magnetic Compass	Sighting Compass and/or Pocket Transit
Hand Brush and Dust Pan (like you use to pick up broken glass)	Sturdy Hand Brush and <u>very sturdy</u> Dust Pan (the dust pan will receive heavy use)	Hand Wisk Broom (natural straw), and <u>very sturdy</u> Dust Pan
Plastic tarp OR plastic sheeting OR a large piece of plywood to cover the excavations at night and during rain	Heavy-duty plastic tarp to cover excavations at night and during rain	Heavy-duty plastic tarp AND plastic sheeting AND a large piece of plywood to cover the excavations at night and during rain
	Pin Flags (may not be necessary for backyard excavations)	Many Packs of Pin Flags
	Flagging Tape (may not be necessary for backyard excavations)	Many Assorted Colors of Bright Flagging Tape (Pink, Orange, Red, Yellow)

Class Organization:

Each Lesson (below) will be presented as a video demonstration by the professor. Some demos may be live, but most will be prerecorded and then viewed together with the class live on Zoom. These video demonstrations will also be uploaded to our class Blackboard site to be viewed and reviewed at any time.

Students will then follow the directions provided in the demonstration, applying the techniques to their own back yard excavations.

Classes run Monday through Thursday, 9am to 1pm Eastern (we can negotiate times for those not living in the eastern U.S.). Students will also be expected to conduct research, process artifacts, compose notes, and access Blackboard outside of these hours as homework.

Mondays and Wednesdays: Video Demonstrations and discussion of the daily lessons. Then students break off to perform the weekly tasks, with regular video check-ins via zoom and Blackboard to the professor, who will be monitoring their progress in real time while performing his excavations “alongside” the students.

Tuesdays and Thursdays: Field work. There will be no formal lectures or presentations on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Instead, students will be expected to do a virtual “tailgate meeting” to start the day. We will all meet via Zoom to discuss the day’s operations and any potential hazards or concerns (best practice with any archaeological crew). Then students will continue with their application of the week’s lesson, with regular check-ins in via Zoom and Blackboard throughout the day.

The first week to two weeks will be spent conducting the necessary preparatory work before excavations. This will also provide time for students to collect or purchase the required equipment for excavations and verify the safety of their chosen dig site.

Class Content

Lesson 1: Preparation

- 811 – “Miss Utility” and hazard avoidance
- PPE – Proper Protective Equipment
- Tools – Survey and Excavation Tools for the well-stocked archaeologist (see list)
- DIY Sifting Screen
- Making do with what you have – improvising with field equipment.

Lesson 2: Familiarize yourself with the site

- Initial Walkover
- SHPO files and Historic Records Search
- What artifacts and features should we therefore be watching for if we dig?
- Common Artifact Categories: Lithic, Metal, Glass, Shell, Bone, etc.
- Daily Field Notes

Lesson 3: Surveying the site.

- Establish a datum and baseline
- Practice using tape-and-compass
- Grid the area
- Map surface features
- Practice pacing
- Daily Field Notes

Lesson 4: The STP – Shovel Test Pit

Excavation Technique
Stratigraphy
Record Keeping
Bagging and Tagging
Soil Color, Texture, and Inclusions (Munsell)
Daily Field Notes

What do our STPs tell us about what to expect when beginning formal test excavations?

Lesson 5: Setting up a 1x1

Placing the test unit on a grid
Using the Pythagorean theorem to make a perfect square
Nails and String
Measurements, photos and notes before digging
Daily Field Notes

Lesson 6: Digging your first level

Picking the right tool
Removing the sod
Screening 101
Bagging and Tagging
Measurements, photos and notes.
Level Forms
Daily Field Notes

Lesson 7: Stratigraphic Excavations

Continue Excavations of 1x1
Proper Tool Use
Arbitrary vs. Natural or Cultural Strata
Checking depths with Line Level
Cleaning walls and floors
Watching for Features and Soil Changes
Taking Samples
Bagging and Tagging
Closing a Level
Measurements, Photos and Notes
Daily Field Notes

Bonus Lesson 1: Excavation Photogrammetry

Documenting your excavations with simple photography to create a digital 3D model.

Lesson 8: Closing your unit

Subsoil
Looking for Features

Bioturbation
Plan Maps
Profile Drawings
Taking Samples
Measurements, Photos and Notes
Check, Check, and Triple Check all Bags, Tags and Paperwork
Unit Summary Form
Daily Field Notes

Lesson 9: Artifact Processing

Checking the Bag Log
To wash or not to wash? Cleaning different artifact types
Initial artifact classification
Counts, weights and measurements
Data Entry

Lesson 10: Preliminary Analysis and Report Writing

Parts of an archaeological field report
Create your own field report for the season
Integrate your Historic Research, Survey Data, Field Notes, Maps, Photographs, and Artifacts

Bonus Lesson 2: Drone Photogrammetry OR Ground Penetrating Radar!

Using Remote Sensing techniques to survey landscapes for archaeological features.
Demonstration only (students are not expected to have their own drones or GPR).
This lesson will be inserted into the semester when appropriate.

Expectations:

Students will be collecting data throughout the project on the history, pedology (soils), and archaeology of their back yard. By the end of the semester, students will have accomplished the following tangible goals: demonstrated safe work practices; researched their property; mapped their excavation site; excavated at least one shovel test pit; stratigraphically excavated at least one 1x1m test excavation unit; recorded any features or disturbances; created orthographic plan and profile drawings; taken all proper measurements, notes and photographs; and processed, categorized and catalogued any artifacts. The final exam will be the creation of a site report for their backyard archaeological project utilizing a standard format used by many state and federal agencies.

Attendance and Participation:

Field Schools are supposed to be a bit like a training program for work. As such, attendance and participation are a large proportion of the grade. Students will be expected, just like a job, to be punctual, hard-working, and demonstrate a good attitude.

Field schools are collective experiences, where you also learn to work in a team. Students will be expected to not only be active in their own excavations, but supportive of their fellow students in their investigations.

Zoom:

All zoom sessions must include full video conferencing between all participants (no hiding your faces) and students will be expected to show up appropriately dressed, with full PPE, on days involving field work. Rain days will be negotiated as they occur. Students will be expected to speak and ask questions on-camera, both live via Zoom and in video recordings of their progress.

Blackboard:

Students will also be expected to check Blackboard (our online class management software) at least twice a day throughout the semester, to look for updates, download readings, answer discussion questions, etc.

Blackboard will also be used for your daily field notes. Part of your participation grade will be based on your daily field notes, which you will enter into Blackboard at the end of each session. They will help the professor and fellow students follow your progression, and they will also help you tremendously when you are writing your excavation summaries and final report.

Quizzes and Assignments:

Students will occasionally be given pop-quizzes or asked to answer occasional online questions. But these will cover the obvious topics of the week. Consider them drills more than quizzes. Such questions or mini-assignments will be posted to Blackboard and all students will be required to respond.

Grading:

Category	Percent of Final Grade
Attendance	20%
Participation and Note Keeping	20%
Quizzes and Assignments	20%
Field Technique	20%
Site Report*	20%

Grade	Scale
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79
D	60-69%
F	0-59%

*Hood students may also be required to write a brief reflection paper on their experience following completion of this field school.

Grade	Qualitative Equivalent**
A	Would recommend for participation on professional archaeological projects
B	Acceptable work, room for improvement, student might want to consider a second field school or volunteer on additional projects for experience.
C	There is potential, but taking an additional field school is highly recommended
D	You may want to reconsider field archaeology
F	Archaeological fieldwork is not for you

**Remember that all field school grades are somewhat qualitative, based upon the professor's trust that a student would make a reliable and competent field archaeologist. Attitude, commitment, and a strong work ethic go a long way towards success in archaeology.

Art 380: Archaeological Laboratory Analysis

Because archaeological field schools have a much greater expected student workload than an average 3 credit summer class, Hood offers an additional 3 credits for Archaeological Laboratory Analysis to run concurrently with the Archaeological Fieldwork class. Lab work is already built into this course, and all students will learn the same techniques, but we cannot promise that you will have any artifacts in your backyard excavations! Therefore...

Students enrolled concurrently in Art 380 will be assisting the professor in identifying, cataloging, researching and analyzing all artifacts uncovered by his excavations at the Hendricks House. Each student enrolled in Art 380 will produce an additional summary report on the artifacts they researched for the Hendricks House excavations. Enrolling in both Art 370 and Art 380 would provide students with six hours of upper level credit for the field school.

Registration is open until May 18th. **Students should sign up for Summer Session 1.**

Tuition:

For students of Hood College and its partners in Frederick, MD, there is a \$500 tuition per credit hour.

Art 370 Tuition:	3 Credit Hours	\$1,500
Art 370 & 380 Tuition:	6 Credit Hours	\$3,000

For students outside of Hood College, there is a \$1,180 tuition per credit hour.

Art 370 Tuition:	3 Credit Hours	\$3,540
Art 370 & 380 Tuition:	6 Credit Hours	\$7,080

You may choose to Audit the class for no credit, providing you interactive access to all of the online materials and zoom sessions without any grading requirements. The tuition for auditing this class is \$585 per credit hour.

Art 370 Tuition:	no academic credit	\$1,755
Art 370 & 380 Tuition:	no academic credit	\$3,510

There is a \$195 registration fee per semester for Hood College.

For more information on Hood College summer school, please visit:

<https://www.hood.edu/offices-services/registrars-office/undergraduate-summer-session-2020>

<https://www.hood.edu/offices-services/accounting-services/tuition-fees-2019-20>

For more information on the Department of Art and Archaeology at Hood College, please visit:

<https://www.hood.edu/academics/departments/department-art-archaeology>