



SICÁN AT HUACA DEL PUEBLO BATÁN GRANDE: UNCOVERING LAMBAYEQUE'S DYNAMIC PAST

Course ID: HIS 489

June 27-July 24, 2027

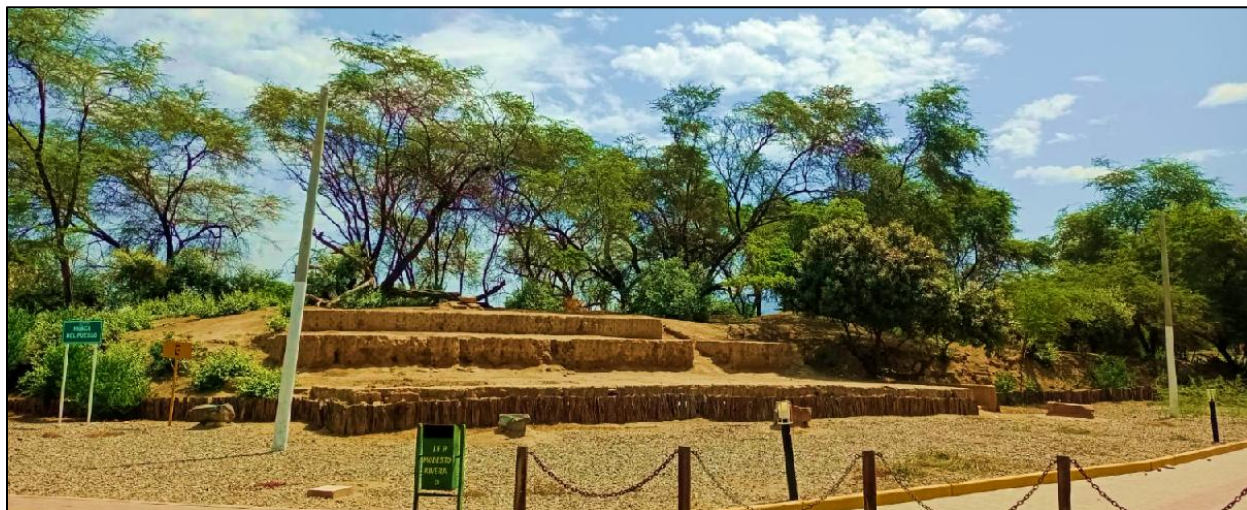
Academic Credits: 8 Semester Credit Units (Equivalent to 12 Quarter Units)
School of Record: Culver Stockton College

DIRECTORS:

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INTRODUCTION

The North Coast of Peru, and especially the Lambayeque Region, has long been regarded as one of the primary cultural centers of the ancient civilization of the Andes which is ranked among the five great ancient civilizations of the world. From 1979-1983, what later became the Sicán Archaeology Project, established the chronological backbone of the region and that of the Sicán polity (aka Lambayeque) that built dozens of monumental temples and dominated the area until the arrival of the Wari, Chimú and later Inca. Initial excavations at Huaca del Pueblo Batán Grande (HPBG), were carried out under the auspices of Princeton University as an interdisciplinary archaeological project aimed to establish the regional cultural chronology through systematic stratigraphic excavations.

These early pioneering excavations defined over 40 habitational floors dating from ca. 650 CE to the modern era.

Among the most important discoveries was evidence of the earliest intensive arsenical bronze technology and its evolution from ca. 900 to 1100 CE, the time when bronze tools replaced stone and pure copper tools. They also found indications of *in situ* pottery making and recorded how the quality and materials for house constructions (e.g., wattle-and-daub or sun-dried adobe bricks) and human burial offerings mirrored the ebb and flow of different cultures. Although these initial excavations transformed our understanding of northern North Coast chronology, we still know remarkably little about life in the rural periphery and the interconnections between the everyday communities, and the impressive monumental centers found throughout the Lambayeque region.

This year, we will return to HPBG to close that gap. Our main goal is to understand how ordinary communities lived, worked, and interacted with major regional centers like Tambo Real, the Sicán Archaeological Complex or Tucumé. Based on the early excavations at HPBG, we expect to encounter a diverse array of well-preserved remains to shed light on long-term habitation of the site, including human burials, food residues (animals and plants), bone, stone and metal tools, all of which will add to our broader understanding of Lambayeque's dynamic social, political, economic and cultural past.

Students will learn from the ground up how to be responsible archaeologists while being actively involved in a real-world research project. We will begin with bootcamp-style asynchronous training for beginners on how to conduct systematic archaeological investigations to answer research questions, and when and how to apply an array of techniques and technologies for studying the past. We will then move directly into the field. Through hands-on practice, students will conduct excavations, as well as non-destructive diagnostic analysis such as drone-based regional surveys or chemical compositional analysis of soils using portable X-ray fluorescent (XRF) analyzer. Both in the field and in the lab, students will be working alongside Peruvian colleagues and peers and will learn to excavate and study archaeological remains responsibly and ethically, while engaging in international cultural exchange.

IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER

The Anthropocene Research Center was established to support field training in a range of sciences at sites within the U.S. & across the world. Traveling and conducting field work involves risk. Students interested in participating in any ARC program must weigh the potential risk against the value of education provided by the program of their choosing.

Risk is inherent in everything we do, and the ARC takes risks seriously. A committee of leading scholars review each field school location prior to approval. Once a program is accepted, the ARC continually monitors conditions at the program's site and so we can provide an experience that is as safe as possible.

The ARC does not provide trip or travel cancellation insurance. Students are encouraged to explore such insurance policies on their own. Post Covid 19, most basic policies do not cover trip cancellation due to pandemics. If you wish to purchase an insurance policy that covers such contingencies, explore Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) plans. [Insuremytrip.com](https://insuremytrip.com), [Squaremouth.com](https://squaremouth.com) or [Travelguard.com](https://travelguard.com) are possible websites where students may explore different insurance policies.

Students should be aware that conditions in the field are different than those experienced at home, in dorms or college towns. Students will be exposed to the elements, live in rustic accommodation, and expect to engage in daily physical activity.

We do our best to follow schedule and activities as outlined in this syllabus. Yet local permitting agencies, political, environmental, personal, and/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 modification.

All students must consult medical professionals to ensure they are fit to participate in an ARC field program. ARC is not qualified to provide medical advice. For all other concerns, please consult with ARC staff members or program director(s) – as appropriate.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course has three general objectives: (1) Enable students to explore the mutualistic social relationships that characterize past lifeways in northern Peru; (2) Apply future-ready computational practices both in the field and in the lab; and (3) Prepare students for careers in archaeology and international heritage management as it emerges in various sectors of anthropology, archaeology, history, museography, or art history in different parts of the world.

The course introduces students to the intellectual challenges presented by archaeological research in fragile ecosystems. It will also prepare students for evidence-based hypothesis testing about the past, interpretation of multi-scalar data, and collaborative research with international institutions. Working alongside Peruvian colleagues, students will work together to capture, manage and analyze archaeological data in accordance with heritage preservation protocols in Peru and how these relate to practices in other parts of the world. Students will also gain practical working knowledge of digital archaeological field methods, including RGB and multispectral drone survey, 3D site and artifact modeling, pXRF analysis, digital recordation, and targeted excavation.

The course will take place at the site of HPBG, a small conical mound near the center of the town of Batán Grande, 50 kilometers NE of Chiclayo, Peru. Students will participate in intensive training lectures and workshops before applying techniques in the field. Students will then conduct fieldwork with archaeologists who are experts in their fields of study. Students will work 5 ½ days per week, with Saturday mornings dedicated to lab work in the Sicán national museum (28 km /35minute drive away, located at the small city of Ferreñafe, Peru). The remainder of weekends are reserved for optional organized group museum visits, site visits, shopping in Ferreñafe, field trips and leisure time.

The town of Batán Grande has an array of modern conveniences such as high-speed Internet service, a medical clinic, police station, diverse stores and restaurants, and clean drinking water, in addition to easily accessible archaeological sites and a well-defined archaeological and cultural history. Overall, HPBG offers a unique opportunity to learn and apply holistic study of ancient to modern life while working alongside local and international experts.

Unsupervised, individual trips outside the town of Batán Grande throughout the duration of the field school are not permitted without prior authorization by the directorship (Dr. Sharp and Lic. Roque), to ensure safety of everyone throughout the course of this international experience.

With the above in mind, the five specific learning objectives are as follows:

1. **Digital Recording & Site Monitoring:** Students will gain experience filling out excavation forms, mapping finds, and recording stratigraphy, excavation units, features and artifacts using tablets and drones.
2. **Traditional Excavations & Hypothesis Testing:** Students will participate in targeted and supervised excavations at Huaca del Pueblo Batan Grande to test hypotheses regarding rural interactions with monumental regional centers.
3. **Minimally Invasive Remote Sensing Survey:** Students will conduct remote sensing surveys of archaeological sites in the Lambayeque Region.
4. **Digital Data Management & Reporting:** Students will learn and apply best practices for digital data recording and management, as well as formal reporting procedures mandated by the Peruvian Ministry of Culture.
5. **Laboratory Best Practices:** Scheduled lab tasks will include cleaning, sorting, drawing, and cataloging finds digitally and by hand.

LEARNT SKILLS

We are aware and strongly support students who seek employment in the Cultural Resource Management sector – whether with private CRM companies or in government compliance agencies. CRM employers seek to understand the skills students learn at the field school. To that end, we are listing all the skills students will learn during this program. At the end of the field school, students will get a Certificate of Completion, where each skill will be ranked at one of three levels:

- ✓ **Basic:** Can perform the skill/task with some supervision.
- ✓ **Competent:** Can perform the skill/task without any supervision.
- ✓ **Advanced:** Can perform the skill/task and teach others how to do it.

Students will be trained in the following skills:

Skill	Skill Definition
Compliance-Consultation	Ability to understand the interests and conduct consultation with all relevant stake holders, especially those of indigenes communities (communication with Ministry of Culture)
International Heritage Management	Apply systematic approach to preserving and protecting cultural heritage sites and materials across international borders, while integrating both national global standards and practices.
Artifact Field Processing	Record, document and assign artifacts to accepted material, cultural, technological classes, across space (classification) & time (seriation) prior to removing artifacts from the field.
Formation Processes	Identify cultural and natural formation processes responsible for the observed archaeological remains
Conservation	Conduct initial field conservation and preservation of different artifact types, features & architecture. Learn about laboratory conservation techniques and objectives
Data Recording	Use digital forms to document and record field data using iPads and a custom Filemaker Pro database.
General Excavation Principles	Know how to excavate in cultural or arbitrary layers, document and record all excavation activity and artifacts
Excavation Unit Layout	Ability to lay out excavation grid, delimit reliable vertical and horizontal boundaries for excavations using UTM and/or relative coordinate systems.
Site Monitoring	Monitor archaeological site and identify possible dangers to cultural or natural heritage

Digital Photography	Ability to take clear images and create precise visualizations of excavation areas, levels, features, artifacts & soils in various light and field depth conditions
Collection Management	Ability to document, organize, package for long-term storage and make archaeological artifacts collected from the field accessible to future researchers.
Stratigraphy	Record, measure & describe stratigraphic layering of a site by hand and digitally
Bioarchaeology	Ability to excavate, document, recover & study human remains
Geoarchaeology	Ability to sample and analyze soil and sediment samples
Photogrammetry	Ability to create, interpret, measure 3D models of archaeological phenomena
Drone Survey & GIS	Ability to fly a drone responsibly and plan a flight for the systematic recording and analysis of both natural and cultural evidence and analyze it in a geographical information system.
Remote Sensing/Terrestrial	Ability to operate ground-based physical sensing techniques to produce a detailed image or map of an area

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

Time	Activity
Sunday 2:00– 5:00pm	Arrival Meal in Chiclayo/Meet-n-Greet; Depart for Batan Grande
Monday 8:00-10:00am	Project Headquarters orientation, safety and respect in the Bosque de Pómac Historic Sanctuary, equipment safety, harassment and discrimination policies, overview of general house rules and defining specifics of our field school season together.
Monday 1:00-5:00pm	Visit to the Sicán National Museum and artifact collections
Tuesday	Asynchronous Training Modules Open and In Field Training Begins
Wednesday-Friday	Morning lectures and In Field Training at HPBG and in Bosque de Pómac
Saturday 8:00-12am	Lab work in Sicán National Museum

Weeks 2-4 (Mon-Sat)

Time	Activity
M-F 6:00am-2:30pm	Fieldwork at HPBG
M-F 3:00-5:30pm	Data/Image Upload, Showers & Family-style Dinner
Sat 8:30am-1:00pm	Laboratory Work
Sat 1:00pm-forward	Free afternoon and evening, optional site visits
Sunday	Free Day

** Course schedule may be subject to change upon directors' discretion based on weather conditions or other limiting factors.*

TYPICAL WORKDAY

The first week is dedicated to instruction, site visits and preparation for research at HPBG. From the second week forward, students will follow this daily schedule:

Time	Activity
6:00am	Wake-up & Coffee/Tea Bar
6:30am	High-Protein Breakfast
7:30am	Depart for HPBG (10 minutes walking)
10:00am	15 minute – snack break
12:00pm	30 minute – lunch break
2:30-3:30pm	Return to field house
3:30-5:30pm	Shower Break & Data/Image Daily Upload
5:30pm	Family-style Dinner

** In case of inclement weather days, lectures and lab work will be performed.*

ACADEMIC GRADING MATRIX

Students will be graded based on their work as follows.

- **50%:** Attend and participate each scheduled day, including lecture and field and laboratory work
- **30%:** Daily data editing & file upload
- **20%:** Keep a field notebook that will be submitted and evaluated at the end of the course

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The required minimum attendance for the successful completion of the field school is 95% of the course hours. Any significant delay or early departure from an activity will be calculated as an absence from the activity.

An acceptable number of absences for medical or other personal reasons will not be considered if the student catches up on the field school study plan through additional readings, homework, or tutorials with program staff members.

TRAVEL & MEETING POINT

We suggest you 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 program. The program and directors will take a close look at local conditions 6-7 weeks prior to the beginning of the program and will make a Go/No Go decision by then. Such a time frame still allows for the purchase of deeply discounted airline tickets while protecting students from potential loss of airline ticket costs if we are forced to cancel a program.

Students will meet with project staff members on Sunday, the first day of the field school, at 12:00pm at Chiclayo International Airport (CIX). We will meet at the upstairs restaurant on the second floor, (use the staircase close to airline check-in counters in the main part of the airport building). CIX is a small airport but is served daily by three Peruvian airlines from Lima as well as by Copa Airline (from Panama City) so participants should have no problem getting there.

If you missed your connection or your flight is delayed, please call, text or email the project director immediately. Local emergency cellular phone numbers and personal WhatsApp contact information will be provided to all enrolled students.



Figure 1: Chiclayo International airport arrival area & meeting point

MEALS & ACCOMMODATIONS

Students and staff members will live in the project field house in Batan Grande, Peru, which is approximately 50 kilometers NE from the City of Chiclayo. Conditions are excellent and students will share their rooms at the field house (Fig 2). Food will be prepared by the project staff and include hearty regional cuisine prepared by our local chef, with local ingredients – typically a three-course meal consisting of an appetizer/soup, a main course of chicken, beef, pork or seafood, and a healthy vegetable side dish or salad. Given the relatively small size of the town of Batan Grande and the local traditional cuisine, this program will not be able to accommodate any special diets (Kosher, Halal, etc.), but we are able to prepare healthy vegetarian or nut-free meals. Students must be prepared to challenge their food paradigms as Lambayeque regional cuisine is a source of pride and cultural heritage.

Students will live in triple occupancy rooms with 4 shared bathrooms and 3 showers. The entire project staff will live in the field house so expect privacy to be limited. Project staff & students will take turns at daily housekeeping chores (e.g., breakfast/coffee bar set-up, dishes, trash, etc.) of Casa Oasis group areas so expect to contribute to the process on a rotating basis.

There are laundry facilities at the field house. Students will be assigned times available to wash their field clothes and dry them on cloth lines installed by the project manager.

Please think of the Casa Oasis as not only project headquarters, but as your home away from home where utmost respect, care of the facility and its amenities are essential.



Figure 2: Program accommodations at the town of Batan Grande

VISA REQUIREMENTS

US Citizens traveling to Peru do not require an entry visa. Please be aware, however, your passport's expiration date should exceed the stay by at least 6 months, or you will not be allowed to enter the country.

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

PREREQUISITES

None. This is a hands-on, experiential learning opportunity and students will study on-site how to conduct archaeological research under the direction of a range of international specialists in the

field. **Field work involves INTENSE physical work and exposure to the elements and thus requires a measure of understanding that this will not be the typical university learning environment.** You will have to work outdoors in physically demanding environments, and students will get sweaty and physically tired. You must protect yourself from the equatorial sun and emphasize hydration. Students are required to come equipped with sufficient excitement and an adequate understanding that fieldwork requires intense hard work in the sun and wind. The work requires patience, discipline, attention to detail, and a genuine respect for different cultures and backgrounds.

PROGRAM ETIQUETTE

Life in Batan Grande is rustic and conservative. No excessive or underaged alcohol consumption, and absolutely no marijuana or controlled substances consumption is allowed in the project. Clothing should be modest in appearance. Students are expected to obey local laws as well as the 9:00 pm curfew Monday-Friday. **Absolutely no excursions or visits to other towns, sites or cities that have not been discussed and approved by the directors.**

Northern Peruvian culture is diverse, warm and welcoming like its climate. There are likely to be several occasions during which we are offered food and drink and opportunities to spend time with professional colleagues and peers. In such cases, you are expected to be a polite and gracious guest.

While in Peru, students will have many opportunities to meet and work alongside local university and community members. As such, each student is expected to be a project ambassador. You are thus expected to be patient, kind, courteous, and professional both in public and in the house.

EQUIPMENT LIST

- A pair of sturdy working shoes (thick-soled sneakers or light-weight hiking shoes) and a comfortable pair of shoes for walking in semi-rugged or sandy terrain.
- A wide-brimmed hat and sturdy lightweight (e.g., polyester or nylon), light-colored, full-coverage clothing with long sleeves and long pants (to protect against the equatorial sun, insects, and thorns).
- A professional looking business-casual outfit for invited events and professional engagements.
- House clothes, including shorts and comfortable shirt for the end of hot days of field work.
- A light jacket, as evenings and early mornings can be quite cool.
- A ballcap or hat to protect your head while walking around town.
- One or two reusable 1.5 liter or greater water bottles to pack into the site. Heat exhaustion and sun stroke are dangerous threats. Please be prepared to stay hydrated!
- Ear plugs and an eye mask for sleeping soundly.
- Sunscreen and insect repellent.
- Mosquito net to fit twin-sized bed.
- A small backpack for your water bottles, snacks, cellular, etc.
- Marshalltown or Goldblatt trowel (5 or 6 inch)
- Knee pads and lightweight gloves for excavations
- Protective sunglasses/eyewear for the field.
- Prescription medications -Make sure to bring enough for the duration of the field school.
- Adaptor for Peruvian wall plugs.
- A positive attitude towards work, fun, study, and discovery!

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

International dialing code: Peru international phone code is +51.

Money/Banks/Credit Cards: Peruvian rural economy is largely cashed based but there are plenty of banks with ATMs and Western Union locations to send and withdraw money in Chiclayo.

ATM Availability: Many ATM machines are available in Chiclayo, but none are walking distance from the field house. Students will be able to withdraw funds when they arrive or during weekends if they wish to take the local bus to Chiclayo – about 40 min bus ride from the field house. We are typically in Chiclayo for weekly shopping on weekends, so please plan ahead.

Local Language: Peruvians speak Spanish (or Castellano as it is locally referred to). Given how popular the Lambayeque region is among tourists who come to visit Peru's north coast, many in cities like Chiclayo and Lima have a good mastery of English. This, however, should not be expected in the rural periphery where our project house is located. Students will find it easy to communicate with project members in English, especially with the younger generation, but it is advisable to have some basic Spanish vocabulary when you arrive in Peru.

Measure units: degree Celsius (°C), meter (m.), gram (gr.), liter (l)

ACADEMIC CREDITS & TRANSCRIPT

Attending students will be awarded 6 semester credit units (equivalent to 9 quarter credit units). Students will receive a letter grade for attending this field school based on the assessment matrix (above). This program provides a minimum of 135 direct instructional hours. Students are encouraged to discuss the transferability of credit units with faculty and the registrar at their home institutions prior to attending this program.

Students will be able to access their transcript through our School of Record – Culver-Stockton College. C-SC has authorized the National Student Clearinghouse to provide enrollment and degree verification (at <https://tsorder.studentclearinghouse.org/school/select>). Upon completion of a program, students will get an email from C-SC with a student ID that may be used to retrieve transcripts. The first set of transcripts will be provided at no cost, additional transcripts may require payment. If you have questions about ordering a transcript, contact the C-SC office of the registrar at registrar@culver.edu.

REQUIRED READINGS

PDF files of all mandatory and recommended readings will be provided to enrolled students via a shared Dropbox folder.

Cleland, Kathryn M. and Izumi Shimada. 1992. Sicán Bottles: Marking Time in the Peruvian Bronze Age. *Andean Past* 3: 193-235.

Graeber, David, and David Wengrow. 2021. Introduction. In *The dawn of everything*. Findaway World. Pp. 1-26.

Shimada, Izumi. "The Batan Grande-La Leche Archaeological Project: The First Two Seasons." *Journal of Field Archaeology* 8, no. 4 (1981): 405–46. <https://doi-org.libproxy.nau.edu/10.2307/529792>.

Shimada, Izumi and Kayeleigh Sharp. 2026 "Excerpt from Chapter 7." In *Archaeology of Northern Coastal Peru*. Cambridge.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Bahn, Paul G. "The Origins and Development of Archaeology: a very short introduction. Vol. 10. Oxford University Press, 2012

Carballo, David M., and Gary M. Feinman. 2016. Cooperation, collective action, and the archeology of large-scale societies. *Evolutionary Anthropology: Issues, News, and Reviews*, 25(6): 288-296.

Shimada, Izumi, and Alan K. Craig. 2013. The style, technology and organization of Sicán mining and metallurgy, Northern Peru: Insights from holistic study. *Chungara, Revista de Antropología Chilena* 45 (1): 3-31.

Turner, Bethany L., and Haagen D. Klaus. 2020. Pre-Hispanic north coast cultures and foodways. *Diet, Nutrition, and Foodways on the North Coast of Peru: Bioarchaeological Perspectives on Adaptive Transitions*. Cham: Springer International Publishing. Pp. 45-66.