NEAR EASTERN STUDIES 193  
NEAR EASTERN ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SCHOOL  
SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Forty-seven hours of instruction per week for six weeks. This course teaches archaeological field methods through hands-on instruction. Students work with the project staff and receive exposure to techniques like excavation, survey, illustration, photography, and artifact processing. Students also learn local archaeology and history through weekly lectures and field trips. No prerequisites but courses in archaeology or Middle/Near Eastern studies are recommended.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Students will be assessed on the following assignments:

15% Site survey exercise assignment
15% Field notebook assignment
15% Excavation assignment
15% Environmental sciences assignment
15% Field illustration and photography assignment
15% Artifact processing and analysis assignment
10% Good citizenship and active participation

COURSE SOURCES

The principal source for this class is the archaeological site of Dhiban and the artifacts and geologic samples recovered by the staff and students. Most instruction takes place at the site. Methods of instruction include mini-lectures by the instructor and qualified staff members, and one-on-one instruction between staff members and students. The book, *Jordan: An Archaeological Reader*, and a course packet of readings will be kept on a reserve shelf in the project library. Students will also handle artifacts in the processing laboratory in the afternoons, and visit museums and archaeological sites on the weekend.

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1 Good citizenship includes punctuality, collegial contributions in discussions, and active participation in group exercises.
SCHEDULE

Students work on the site for six weeks from Sunday to Thursday approximately eight hours per day. Over the six-week period, students rotate each week in groups of three or four through set stations designed to teach them different aspects of field research (e.g., site survey, excavation, geologic mapping, artifact processing). Simultaneously, there is a weekly theme in which all students receive more formal instruction from the instructor or a staff specialist. The students’ performance is measured by their completion of an assignment related to each weekly theme.

Week 1 Site Survey
Topics: Identifying archaeological sites; setting up a grid; using a total station

Lecture: Introduction to Dhiban and project research goals
  • Adams ‘Archaeology in Jordan: A brief history’
  • Porter, et al., ‘The power of place: The Dhiban community through the ages’
  • Macumber, ‘Evolving landscape and environment in Jordan’

Assignment: Site survey exercise due on Sunday of following week

Fieldtrip: Madaba churches and archaeological museums (self-guided on Friday or Saturday)

Week 2 The Field Notebook
Topics: Recording archaeological excavations; using different instruments; paperwork

Lecture: Tackling the field notebook

Assignment Field notebook exercise due on Sunday of following week

Fieldtrip: Classical Jordan: Putting Jerash in its historical context (Friday)
  • Freeman, ‘The Roman Period’
  • Watson, P ‘The Byzantine Period’

Week 3 Excavations
Topics: Stratigraphy, excavation tools, managing excavation units

Lecture: Thinking in context: Excavation method and theory

Assignment: Excavation exercise due on Sunday of following week

Fieldtrip: Archaeology of the Madaba Plains: Mount Nebo, Hisban, Machaerus (Saturday)

Week 4 Environmental Sciences
Topics: Excavating and recording soil formations, collecting and processing geologic data

Lecture: Geoarchaeological techniques
Assignment: Environmental sciences exercise due on Sunday of following week

Fieldtrip: The Nabataeans: Wadi Dana Nature Preserve, Petra, Karak Castle (Thursday-Saturday)
  • Schmid, ‘The Hellenistic Period and the Nabataeans’

**Week 5 Field Illustration and Photography**
Topics: Illustrating architecture, field photography

Lecture: Community Archaeology and Site Development
  • Jacobs and Porter, “Excavating *Turath*: Documenting Heritage Discourses in Jordan”

Assignment: Field illustration and photography exercise due on Sunday of following week

Fieldtrip: Museums, Site Development and Presentation (Saturday)
  • Visits to ‘Amman Citadel, National Archaeology Museum, ‘Amman Roman Theatre

**Week 6 Data Processing and Field Analysis**
Topics: Cleaning and storing artifacts, ‘reading’ pottery

Lecture: Wrap-up and reflection on project goals

Assignment: Artifact processing and analysis exercise due on Sunday of following week