

DIGGING THE PAST: INTRODUCTION TO ARCHAEOLOGY

ANTH 1400/CLAS 3210 Tuesdays/Thursdays 9:30-10:45 am
codes 1922 and 52743 James Hall Room 3613

Information

Prerequisite: None

Location: in person

Instructors: Prof. Kelly M. Britt (she/her)

Email: kellym.britt@brooklyn.cuny.edu

Office/Class: in-person

Student Hours (formerly Office Hours):

Tuesdays 11-12 noon in Ingersoll Hall Ext. Room 538 or by Zoom and/or appointment. (Not open to students who are enrolled in or have completed Anthropology 20 or 2400 or Classics 2.2 or 19 or 3210 or 60).

Class Format

A class discussion with lectures on weekly topics in reference to specific themes will be the main format of the class. Students are expected to do all required reading and contribute to in-class discussions.

Important Dates

Jan 25-start of Spring 2024 semester
Jan 25-first day of class for ANTH 1400/CLAS 3210
Jan 31-last day to add a course for Spring
Feb 12-College Closed-Lincoln's Birthday
Feb 19-College Closed-Washington's Birthday
Feb 22-Classes follow a Mon schedule
Feb 28-Classes follow a Mon schedule
March 29-31-No Classes
April 22-30-No Classes SPRING BREAK
May 15-last day to withdraw with a W grade
May 15-Last day of classes
May 16-22-Final Exams
May 22-Spring term ends

Assignment Due Dates:

Quiz 1:	Feb 13
Topic of Unessay Due	Feb 15
Unessay check-in:	Feb 27
Quiz 2:	March 5
Quiz 3:	March 21
Quiz 4	April 9
Quiz 5:	April 11
Artifact Biography	April 16
Quiz 6:	May 2
Unessay Presentations:	May 7, 9, and 14
Unessay Final Project	May 16th midnight



Course Description

How do we know what we believe to know about the past? This class will dive into this question by introducing students to archaeology, a sub-discipline of anthropology that explores the human past through materiality. An overview of archaeological method and theory and current approaches to the practice in a postcolonial lens will be central to the course. Topics will include history of the discipline, how societies were organized, subsistence patterns, technology and trade, and analytical approaches. In addition, the course will explore some of the present issues within the field of archaeology such as site stewardship, professional ethics, activism, relationships between archaeologists and stakeholders of the past, as well as the display of culture to the general public. Class will use lectures, class discussions, reading materials, visual media, and guest lectures to explore the topics discussed above. This class will *not* be a survey course of archaeological sites.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Demonstrate the understanding of the relationship between and importance of the four subfields of anthropology for the field as a whole.
- Demonstrate the understanding of human diversity and unity of humans.
- Demonstrate the appreciation of individual and social diversity.
- Develop an ethical understanding of the discipline.

Anticipated Outcomes for this Course:

- Students will be able to identify key terminology, theories, theoretical orientations, methods and perspectives in archaeology.
- Students will be able to compare and contrast scientific knowledge with other ways of knowing and be able to apply scientific knowledge to the study of the past.
- Students will be able to discuss the development of archaeology and the fundamentals of human history.
- Students will be able to identify the principles of archaeological investigation and the discuss the theory and method of excavation.
- Students will be able to demonstrate critical thinking in writing and communication about main ideas of archaeological method and theory through a postcolonial lens that draws on readings, exhibits, and class discussions.

Requirements & Expectations

Attendance and participation is mandatory. Participation can include, classroom participation or online discussions. Students **must notify via email for their absence to be excused.** In case of religious holidays, student must inform professor ahead of time about classes missed, and arrangements will be made for make-up work or alternative assignments.

Required Texts

This is an Open Educational Resources Course and all required readings are online.

<https://diggingthepast.commons.gc.cuny.edu/>

Advising for Anthropology Majors and Minors

Professor Schiller is the advisor for anthropology majors and minors. If you're an anthropology major or minor or are interested in becoming one, you can make an appointment to meet with Professor Schiller here: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tqiJHr9qtRROVyi3HKniQoqni5AnaOzzNf6iglkr4/edit> . She has open advising hours every Tuesday and by appointment. Her email is nschiller@brooklyn.cuny.edu.

Class Requirements:

Attendance	10
Leading Discussion	10
Artifact Biography	20
Quizzes (6 5pt/each)	30
Unessay Topic check-in	05
Unessay Paper and Presentation	25
Total points:	100

- Specific requirements for assignments will be discussed in class and posted to Blackboard.
- We will have a **Grading Contract**-for portions of the assignments based on the labor of your work. Complete the work satisfactorily receive credit. This will be discussed more in class and on BB.
- Options for revisions of written assignments available-requirements will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard.
- **Guidelines of Engagement and Classroom Etiquette will be created together democratically during first class and posted to Blackboard**

Grading scale will be as follows:

Letter	Percentage
A+	above 98
A	98-93
A-	92-90
B+	89-87
B	86-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-77
C	76-73
C-	72-70
D+	69-67
D	66-63
D-	62-60
F	59-0

Attendance and Participation Policy: This is an introductory course and attendance and participation are required and is worth a total of 10 points. I will grant an excused absence only in the case of a documented medical emergency (i.e., intake form from a medical professional). Please see the **Brooklyn College Undergraduate Bulletin 2023-24**, pg. 65 in reference to the state law regarding non-attendance because of religious beliefs. **Two unexcused absences** will be allowed for the semester with no credit reduction (first class will not count towards grade).

Special Needs: In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with CSDS. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to schedule an interview by calling (718) 951-5538 or emailing testingcsds@brooklyn.cuny.edu. If you have already registered with CSDS, email Josephine.Patterson@brooklyn.cuny.edu or testingcsds@brooklyn.cuny.edu to ensure the accommodation email is sent to your professor.

Academic Honesty and Integrity: Your academic honesty is assumed, which means that I expect all of your submitted work to have come from your brain and your hand. If you've submitted the work of someone else or something else (AI sources), in whole or in part and without proper citation, I will not accept the assignment. **Within academic communities, plagiarism represents a serious breach of trust and can carry severe consequences, including disciplinary action.** With that in mind, we'll go over the proper ways of summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting, and citing your materials so you can avoid pilfering information, even accidentally. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for policy implementation can be found at www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies. All work done in this course must be your own. The use of generative AI (GAI), like Chat GPT, will be permitted for some assignments as indicated on the syllabus, but not for all. Whenever GAI is used, it must be cited appropriately. It may be used for refining your ideas, fine-tuning research questions, or drafting an outline of your topic. However, you are responsible for any work you submit based on an AI query. Such use may not violate intellectual property laws or contain misinformation or unethical content. Failure to use GAI properly and ethically may result in failing the assignment, the course, or being reported for academic dishonesty.

Student Bereavement Policy: Please see [here](#) for BC Student Bereavement Policy.

Trauma Exposure, Self-Care, and Trauma-Informed Pedagogy: Some of the material presented in this course—and some of the ways in which it is presented—may be upsetting or temporarily overwhelming at times. It is well-documented that indirect exposure to trauma narratives may put people at risk for developing trauma reactions, particularly those who have a personal trauma history or limited clinical experience. Self-awareness and good self-care go a long way in recognizing and minimizing distress and bouncing back from it. Be sure to do periodic self-checks on how the material in the course—and the ways in which the material is delivered and discussed—are affecting you.

Anti-Racist Pedagogy: I believe that Black Lives Matter and I teach from this perspective. However, as a white middle-class woman I am in a position of privilege and power. If you have any questions or issues with class material or my presentation of that material, please do not hesitate to bring them to my attention. I welcome your input. I hope that we can all be open to frank and honest discussions of racism and privilege.

Immigration status: As an educator, I support the rights of undocumented students to an education. If you have any concerns in that regard, feel free to discuss them with me, and I will respect your wishes concerning confidentiality. For resources and support, please check-out Brooklyn College's Immigrant Student Support Office, website: Immigrant Student Success Office email: isso@brooklyn.cuny.edu Instagram: [@issobc](#) or visit: <https://libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/DACA>.

Sexual And Gender-Based Harassment, Discrimination, and Title IX Brooklyn College is committed to fostering a safe, equitable, and productive learning environment. Students experiencing any form of prohibited discrimination or harassment, on or off campus, can find information about the reporting process, their rights, specific details about confidentiality, and reporting obligations of Brooklyn College employees at the Office of Diversity and Equity. Gender-based harassment is unwelcome conduct of a nonsexual nature based on an individual's actual or perceived gender, including conduct based on gender identity, gender expression, and/or nonconformity with gender stereotypes. Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature—such as unwelcome advances and requests for sexual favors. Bullying, intimidation, and harassment based on actual or perceived sexuality is discriminatory. Brooklyn College encourages individuals who have experienced sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, or sexual violence to report the incident(s) to campus authorities, even if they have reported it to outside law enforcement and regardless of whether the incident(s) occurred on campus. Students may seek resolution through the Student Affairs office, Dean of Students, the Diversity and Equity Office, the Title IX Coordinator, or Public Safety. Confidential resources on campus include the Office of Personal Counseling, The Women's Center, and the Health Clinic. Appropriate action can include formal disciplinary action, including termination of employment, and suspension or expulsion of students

WK	Dates	Theme	Before Class	In Class	
Unit 1-Introduction to Archaeology and The History of Archaeological Thought					
1	1/25	Introductions and Overview	Required Readings: NONE	Takeaways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is anthropology? • How does archaeology fit into anthropology? Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break into Groups. • Introduce yourselves • Review Syllabus 	
2	1/30	What is Archaeology?	Required Readings: Chapter 1 <i>Digging into Archaeology</i> Nelson, Peter and Sara Gonzalez 2023. What do Archaeologists do? Watch: Solving Mysteries with Archaeologists! (4.36 minutes)	Takeaways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is archaeology? • How do YOU define archaeology? • What do archaeologists do? 	
2	2/1	The Beginnings	Requires Readings: Bruce, Trigger 1984 "Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist" Lydon, Jane and Rizvi, Uzma, "Introduction: Post-Colonialism and Archaeology" Boas, Franz 1904 "The History of Anthropology"	Takeaways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what context did anthropology begin? • What is decolonization and postcolonialism? • What are of the early and critical developments in archaeology? • Who are some of the key people? 	
3	2/6	History of Archaeology 1	Required Readings: Chapters 2 and 3 <i>Digging into Archaeology</i> For thoughts on Unessay Proejct read: Weeber, Christine and Justin D. Wright 2022 What is Anthropological Poetry?	Takeaways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who were some of the key players in the beginning of archaeology as a discipline • What and when was the speculative phase in archaeology? • What marks the beginnings of modern archaeology? When was it? 	Go over Unessay Project
3	2/8	History of Archaeology 2	Required Readings: Chapter 11 <i>Digging into Archaeology</i>	Takeaways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who were some of the key players in the development of archaeology as a discipline? • What and when was the Classification and Consolidation Period? 	

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What and when was the New Archaeology? • What and when did Post Processual Archaeology emerge?
Unit 2-Archaeological Methods				
4	2/13	Archaeology Basics	<p>Required Readings: Chapter 4 <i>Digging into Archaeology</i></p> <p>Watch: What is archaeology: Understanding the archaeological Record (6.44 minutes)</p> <p>Context in Archaeology: More than Just a Pretty Face (4.06 minutes)</p> <p>How are Archaeological Artefacts Preserved in the Ground? (6.35 minutes)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the archaeological record? And how do we 'read' it? • What is stratigraphy? • What is classification? • What is association? • What is provenience? • What is the soil matrix? • How are artifacts preserved?
				Quiz 1 on Unit 1
4	2/15	Time and Depth-	<p>Required Readings: Chapters 5 -8 <i>Digging into Archaeology</i></p> <p>Watch (at least 4): How Do Archaeologists Decide Where to Dig? (4.22 minutes)</p> <p>Doing an Archaeological Field Survey (2.06 minutes)</p> <p>A Day in the Life of the Archaeological Dig at James Fort (4.19 minutes)</p> <p>Typology in Archaeology (3.15 minutes)</p> <p>Earth Science: Crash Course History of Science #20 (13.43 minutes)</p> <p>Principles of Stratigraphy (4.13 minutes)</p> <p>Dating in Archaeology (10.01 minutes)</p> <p>The Scientific Methods: Crash Course History of Science #14 (13.03 minutes) Earth Science: Crash Course History of Science #20 (13.43 minutes)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the scientific method? • What are the four stages of research design? • What is the difference between a survey and an excavation? • How do we decide where to dig? • What is a typology and why are they so important to archaeology? • What is relative dating? • How do relative and absolute dating techniques differ? • What is the Law of Superposition?
				Unessay Topic Due
				Activities:
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cookie Excavation
5	2/20	CRM, Tourism, and Heritage Management	<p>Required Readings: Renfrew, Colin and Paul Bahn, Chapter 14 in <i>Methods in Archaeology</i></p> <p>Watch: History of CRM (9.54 minutes)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who owns the past? • Can we decolonize the practice of archaeology? If so, how?

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			<p>ASM Affiliates, Inc.- A Cultural Resource Management Firm (5.09 minutes)</p> <p>Optional: Destruction of Memory, Icarus Films, Director Tim Slade (1 hour 22 minutes- located through BC library online)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why are historic sites targeted in times of conflict? • How can sites be protected from acts of violence or climate change? 	
5	2/22	CONVERSION DAY-Classes follow a Monday Schedule			
6	2/27	Collecting, Repatriation and Reparations	<p>Required Reading: Atalay, Sonya. 2017. NAGPRA Comic 1.</p> <p>Website: https://nagpracomics.weebly.com/?fbclid=IwAR0Y9XwkCtompZl14xVY7oNG70ZfmCgbnW5QFa1atNpD9HTDQ38MGc3Lr-o</p> <p>Nayari, Farah (2023) A 'Digital Heist' Recaptures the Rosetta Stone</p> <p>Watch: The British Museum is Full of Stolen Artifacts (9.42 minutes)</p> <p>Kennewick Man The Ancient One and Repatriation (1 hour 2 minutes)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do objects shape our understanding of history and culture? • What are some ethical considerations archaeologists should think about when working with objects from any culture? 	Unessay Check-in Due
6	2/29	Pseudo-archeology	<p>Required Readings: Feder , Kenneth L.(2019) Ch 9: Prehistoric E.T. from Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries: Science and Pseudoscience in Archaeology</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is pseudoarchaeology and why is it so problematic? • How will social media, fake news and social aspects affect what and how archaeology is done? 	
Unit 3-Thinking from Things					
7	3/5	Subsistence-Part 1	<p>Required Readings: Chapters 9 and 10 in <i>Digging into Archaeology</i></p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What information can we gather from studying subsistence patterns of the past? • Where and how do we get this data? • What can this data tell us? 	Quiz 2 on Unit 2

WK	Dates	Theme	Before Class	In Class
7	3/7	Subsistence-Part 2	<p>Watch: Archaeobotany Excavations at Durham University (2.48 minutes)</p> <p>Archaeology 1010: Zooarchaeology-Reading Bones (17.04 minutes)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is zooarchaeology? • How do we “read” bones and teeth? • What is the difference between MEALS and DIET? <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tooth Wear Lab Go over zooarchaeology Tooth Wear activity with Group. What was one aspect that was challenging? What did you enjoy? What kind of information can we get from this type of analysis?
8	3/12	Technology and Trade	<p>Watch: Tool Technology and Typology (29.01 minutes)</p> <p>Stone Tool Technology of Our Human Ancestors (5.41 minutes)</p> <p>Trade and Exchange: From Jacksonville to Cahokia (36.55 minutes)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some types of material used by ancient people? • How do we source material? • What can source material tell us about trade and exchange? • How are tools manufactured? • What is the difference between function and use? • What is Characterization? • What is Distribution? <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break into Groups. • Complete Tool Activity. • Discuss take-aways as a Group and share with class.
8	3/14	Bioarchaeology and Ethics	<p>Required Readings: Chapters 12 and 16 in <i>Digging into Archaeology</i></p> <p>Watch: AnthroBiology Podcast: History of Race/The State of Race in Biological Anthropology, February 2020.</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is bioarchaeology? • What is the difference between sex and gender? • What are the ethical considerations when working with human remains? • How can policy support/not support ethical interactions?
9	3/19	African Burial Grounds	<p>Required Readings: Flatbush African Burial Ground Website</p> <p>Zierden Landscape and Social Relations (20 pages). Online in library.</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can we see slavery in the archaeological record? If so, How? • What is the difference between slavery in <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Manhattan African Burial Ground Video/Website in class

WK	Dates	Theme	Before Class	In Class
				urban versus rural contexts?
Unit 4 Thinking from Things (Part 2)				
9	3/21	Social Archaeology	<p>Required Readings: Chapter 11 <i>Digging into Archaeology</i></p> <p>Watch: Awesome Aztecs! Politics, Economics, and Social Structure (5:44 minutes) Social Structure: men, women Ancient History (8.39 minutes)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is social archaeology? • How do we analyze societies? • What is ethnoarchaeology?
Quiz 3 on Unit 3				
10	3/26	Identity/ Identities	<p>Required Readings: Diaz-Andreu, "Introduction" (9 pages)</p> <p>Pearson and Mullins <i>Domesticating Barbie</i> (35 pages-with citations). Online in library.</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we look at identity?
10	3/28	Cognition	<p>Required Readings: Renfrew, Colin and Paul Bahn, Chapter 10 in <i>Methods in Archaeology</i></p> <p>Watch (at least 1): Aspects of Archaeology: Cognitive Archaeology (10.18 minutes) Is the Human Mind Unique? (56.14 minutes)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are symbols are how do they relate to cognitive archaeology? • What are some of the ways people of the past measured their world?
11	4/2	Environmental Archaeology-	<p>Required Readings: Reitz, Elizabeth J. and Myra Shackly 2012 "Chapter 1 Introduction to Environmental Archaeology"</p> <p>Watch: What is Environmental Archaeology? A-Z Archaeology Advent Calendar History of CRM (1.18 minutes) Environmental Archaeology / Paleoclimate - Hiroo Nasu, SOKENDAI: The Graduate University for Advanced Studies (15.51 minutes)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is environmental archaeology? • How can we use archaeological techniques to reconstruct past environments? • What contributions do you think environmental archaeology can make to modern society? • What does sustainability mean to you?
Unit 5-Field Work				
11	4/4	Mock Excavation	<p>Watch: How to lay out a 1 x 1 M Unit (2:55 minutes) How to take measurements (2:38)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you layout a unit? • How do you take field notes? • What information can soil tell you?
				<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lay out a 1 x 1 m unit • Learn to excavate in natural soil levels • Learn to take field notes and complete field forms • Mapping

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12	4/9	Lab Methods	<p>Required Readings: Martin, Ann Smart 2001 <i>Magical, Mythical, Practical, and the Sublime</i> (19 pages)</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you process artifacts? • What information can be gathered from objects? <p>Quiz 4 on Unit 4</p> <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artifact Biography-start
Unit 6-Communities, Heritage, and Heritage Management				
12	4/11	Community-Based Participatory Research	<p>Required Readings: Atalay, Sonya Chapters from <i>Community-Based Archaeology: Research with, by, and for Indigenous and Local Communities</i>. Online in library.</p> <p>Britt, Kelly M. 2019 "Collaborating on the Federal Level: Moving beyond Mandated Consultation in the Section 106 Process"</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is community-based research? • What makes it different than other forms of research? • How do we Indigenize archaeology? • How is this different from decolonizing it? <p>Quiz 5 on Unit 5</p>
13	4/16	Indigenous Archaeology	<p>Required Readings: Laluk, Nicholas C. 2020 "Changing how archaeology is done in Native American contexts: An Ndee (Apache) case study"</p> <p>Optional: Contemporary Native Issues: Indigenizing Archaeological Thought and Practice</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we Indigenize archaeology? • How is this different from decolonizing it? <p>Artifact Biography Due</p>
13	4/18	Guest Lecturer- Dr. Diane George, Fordham University	<p>Readings: TBA</p>	<p>Takeaways: TBD</p>
14/ 15	4/22- 4/30	SPRING BREAK!!!		
15	5/2	Archaeology Futures	<p>Required Readings: Questions Worth Asking Symposium 2023 "Advocating for Archaeology's New Purpose"</p>	<p>Takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will the archaeology of the future look like? • How do shows like Ancient Apocalypse contribute to systematic racism? And/or other forms of social inequities? <p>Quiz 6 on Unit 6</p>
16	5/7	Unessay Presentations		
16	5/9	Unessay Presentations		
17	5/14	Unessay Presentations		

* Note syllabus subject to change.

Tentative Final Date: Thursday 8-10 am May 16th

Resources and Organizations:

[Archpodnet](#)

[Society of American Archaeology](#)

[Society of Black Archaeologists](#)

[Archaeological Institute of America](#)

[Society of Historical Archaeology](#)