Illinois State
Archaeological Survey

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CURATION FROM FIELD TO LAB, ILLINOIS, USA

Course ID: ARCH 300

June 3-July 13, 2024

Academic Credits: *8* Semester Credit Unit

FIELD SCHOOL DIRECTOR(S)

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OVERVIEW

This field school offers intensive hands-on training in skills useful for a career in curation, museums, collections, archives, and field archaeology. You can expect to walk away from this course capable of identifying the various types of artifacts found in precontact North America, have a good working

knowledge of the culture-history of the Midwestern US, understand the challenges of modern curation and how those relate to field work, be proficient in the basic methods employed in managing collections, gain familiarity with relational database use, and become versed in the legislation governing archaeological collections in the US, including the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. Some of these tasks involve a measure of detective work to solve the many unpredictable issues that arise when working with older collections. You will also gain an introduction to excavation methods that will serve as a primer for more comprehensive field excavation experiences and provide the necessary background for understanding how collections are generated.

The 2024 season will be held at the curation and repository spaces of the Illinois State Archaeological Survey in Champaign and Urbana, Illinois. ISAS holds approximately 24,000 ft^3 archaeological material, approximately 80% of which was generated through projects contracted by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the other 20% through research by faculty, staff, and students at the University of Illinois. These span the entirety of human occupation in Illinois and represent professionally excavated sites, donations from private individuals, old museum collections, and some of the earliest archaeological investigations in North America. Collections vary in condition from "ideal and stable" to "in desperate need of attention." Students will work with both over approximately four weeks of the six-week field school.

The excavation portion of the field school will cover approximately two weeks and will take place on the University of Illinois campus, where an experimental reconstruction of precontact features took place over 20 years ago. Excavating this very recent site will allow us to better understand depositional processes and will train students in standard North American field methods.

The pairing of excavation and curation components together provides a rare opportunity to gain a holistic perspective on archaeological collections in a single field school, covering everything from the front-end process of curation to its final steps.

Several field trips, guest lectures from experts in the field, and group discussions enhance this experience.

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 highly ranked liberal arts institution with a deep commitment to undergraduate education. Students will receive a letter grade for attending this field school (see assessment, below). This field school provides a minimum of 360 hours of experiential education. 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's home institution at no cost. Additional transcripts may be ordered at any time through the National Student Clearinghouse.

PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for this program.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This project's main goal is to serve as an exemplary source of education in curation. To achieve that, both excavation and collections work are taught. Some main objectives within that primary goal include:

1) Familiarizing students with the federal standards for curation of archaeological collections and with the material culture of the Midwestern United States through hands-on work with archaeological collections
2) Teaching the how and why of making collections more accessible, including the purpose and use of relational databases, finding aids, and good organizational structure
3) Contributing to the active research of staff of the Illinois State Archaeological Survey, including how soils form on archaeological sites and improving archaeological interpretations on precontact features
4) Introducing students to basic archaeological field methods as an essential skill needed for doing collections work

The curation crisis is a reality that many institutions and archaeologists must tackle, and one that prohibits access to and use of the very items that we as archaeologists hope to preserve and study. *Most* archaeologists will encounter this crisis in some form or another during their careers. Many will unknowingly contribute to it. This course addresses the crisis by encouraging students to become advocates for curation through traditional learning (lectures and readings), hands-on learning (collections work), and archaeological excavation, which is often the genesis of the crisis.

Major tasks students will undertake to achieve the above objectives include:

Organizing large collections of Midwestern precontact era artifacts to make them more accessible for research, outreach, consultation, and education. This includes learning how to properly identify, sort, label, bag, and inventory these materials. As a part of this goal, you will evaluate the utility of specific material classes to professional institutions and their potential value to other stakeholders (descendant communities, local communities, landowners, etc.).

Learn the history and consider the future of curation in versatile settings. This includes reading background materials (see course syllabus) with accompanying lectures and discussions on how the curation crisis came to be, what has/is being done to remedy it, why it remains difficult to resolve, and how it can be prevented. It includes field trips to several curatorial settings to expose you to the various environments in which archaeological collections end up, the different databases they may use to index them, and the challenges particular to each setting.

Excavate at an experimental archaeology site. Several weeks of excavation serve to introduce students to the basic concepts of field archaeology, a knowledge of which is essential to interpreting archaeological collections in a curatorial setting. This work also facilitates discussion of how experimental archaeology can contribute to our better understanding of depositional processes and soils science.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, students will:

1. Be proficient in basic artifact class identification for the Midwestern U.S.
2. Acquire a working knowledge of one or more relational database programs
3. Understand the legislation relevant to archaeological collections, including: Federal Standards for Managing Archaeological Collections, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, the Illinois State Burial Law, The Archaeological resources Protection Act, and more

4. Know the difference between curation in museums versus repositories and what careers in each look like
5. Understand the importance of accessibility, accountability, and organization in curation
6. Be aware of the legal and ethical concerns of working with human remains and burial-affiliated objects
7. Recognize the relationship between archaeological practices in the field and post-field curation issues
8. Understand hazards to archaeological collections and how to mitigate or prevent them
9. Understand basic archaeological survey and excavation techniques

ASSESSMENT

Excavation and Collections work:

The bulk of the coursework, and of your grade, involves hands-on work during excavation and with collections. Students are expected to be present and conscientious of the tasks at hand during all class hours except in the case of illness or emergency.

Bi-weekly progress reports:

Students will keep a notebook including brief (1-5 paragraphs), but detailed descriptions of the tasks completed, problems encountered, and resolutions made while working with the collections. Time logs will be kept for each task. Notes should be taken throughout each work session as applicable. The notebook will be kept by ISAS at the end of the semester.

Readings:

Relevant readings on curation, conservation, preservation laws, ethics, artifact identification, and excavation will be assigned throughout the course of the class. Students should be prepared to actively discuss these in class and apply what they have learned.

Exam:

There will be one open-note/open book exam to verify that the students have retained or are able to locate relevant knowledge from the readings to assure that skills are being obtained through hands-on work.

Written assignments:

There will be one written assignment due the week after the course ends in the form of a comprehensive curation report on your activities for the duration of the field school.

Attendance/Participation	60%	(600 pts)	A = 900-1000 points
Bi-weekly Notebook	10%	(100 pts)	B = 800-899
Exam	10%	(100 pts)	C = 700-799
Final Paper	20%	(200 pts)	D = 600-699
			Fail = <600

COURSE MOBILE TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Use of cell phones in class/while working on collections is strictly prohibited. Please *turn off* your cell phone or have it away from your person during class. Situational exceptions such as family emergencies are allowed if cleared with the instructor first. Use of other forms of technology (laptops, iPads, etc.) are permitted if for class purposes. Headphones and earbuds may not be worn during class.

COURSE SCHEDULE

All IFR field schools begin with a safety orientation. This orientation addresses local and program protocols concerning student behavior, appropriate attire, local practices and sensibilities that may be unfamiliar, potential fauna and flora hazards, IFR harassment and discrimination policies, and the student Code of Conduct.

The schedule below accounts for 6-day class weeks, but some weeks will only be 5 days, TBD based on weather and other scheduling items.

WEEK ONE
June 3: Arrival, orientation, and safety lecture
June 4-8: Excavation
Lectures:

- Archaeological Ethics
- Cultural Resource Management laws
- The Mississippian period and Cahokia – guest lecturer Dr. Tim Pauketat, Director of ISAS and State Archaeologist for Illinois

WEEK TWO (June 10-15)
Excavation
Field Trip:
Dickson Mounds Museum and/or local archaeological site – discussion with DMM curator Logan Pappenfort
Lectures:

- Decolonizing the Museum
- Soil formation processes and Experimental Archaeology - guest lecturer Dr. Michael Auivalasit, ISAS Assistant Research Scientist

WEEK THREE (June 17-22)
Collections work
Lectures:

- Curation Crisis
- Illinois Culture History and artifact ID
- Relational Databases

WEEK FOUR (June 24-29)
Field trip:
ISAS-University of Illinois Archaeological Collections and workspaces
Lectures:

- Collections Management & Accessibility
- Evaluating Collections
- The Curation Environment

WEEK FIVE (July 1-6)
(we will take one day off this week for July 4 holiday)
Field Trip:
Prairie Research Institute Collections – discussion with curators of two or more of the following: Mollusks, Fishes/Reptiles, Herbaria, paleontology, coal balls

Lectures:

Paper and other Associated Records
NAGPRA - guest lecturer Krystiana Krupa, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign NAGPRA Officer

WEEK SIX (July 8-12)
Field Trip:
Spurlock Museum of World Cultures
Lectures:

Museums vs repositories
Digital Curation
Stakeholders and Consultation

Depart July 13: *The van will leave no earlier than 7:30 AM for the Indianapolis airport – please schedule your flights accordingly.*

REQUIRED READINGS

PDF files of all mandatory readings will be provided to enrolled students. Students are encouraged to download and/or print readings prior to traveling. Course participants are expected to be prepared to engage the discussions led by facilitators, all of whom will be looking for compelling evidence that students have read and thought about the assigned readings prior to the scheduled day on which they are first discussed.

Burke, Claire Smith and Larry J. Zimmerman (2008) *The Archaeologist's Field Handbook: North American Edition*. Altamira Press. Lanham, Maryland. CH 1-2 only

Childs, S. Terry (2002) Committee on Curation Update: Implementing SAA Ethic #7, Records and Preservation. *The SAA Archaeological Record* 2(3)6-7;41.

Drew, Natalie M. (2004) Preserving Archaeological Associated Records. In, *Our Collective responsibility: The Ethics and Practice of Archaeological Collections Stewardship,* Ed. S. Terry Childs, pp. 55-66. SAA Press, Washington, DC.

Edington, Jenn (2021) *It's Time to Decolonize Museums*. Illinois Heritage Association Technical Insert No. 231.

Emerson, Thomas E. (2018) Creating Greater Cahokia: The Cultural Content and Context of the East St. Louis Precinct. In *Revealing Greater Cahokia, North America's First Native City,* pp.25-58. Edited by Thomas E. Emerson, Brad H. Koldehoff, and Tamira K. Brennan. Studies in Archaeology. No 12. Illinois State Archaeological Survey. Champaign-Urbana, Illinois.

Goff, Sheila (2019) Care, Access, and Use: How NAGPRA has Impacted Collections Management. In, *Using and Curating Archaeological Collections,* pp27-38. Edited by S. Terry Childs and Mark S. Warner. SAA Press. Washington DC.

Illinois Archaeological Survey (2009) *Discover Illinois Archaeology.* Illinois Association for the Advancement of Archaeology and the Illinois Archaeological Survey.

Iseminger, William R. (2014) Identifying and Understanding Artifacts of Illinois and Neighboring States. *Rediscovery,* Volume 6.

Jessup, Wendy Claire (2009) Pest Management. In, *Storage of Natural History Collections: A Preventative Approach, Volume 1,* ed. Caroline L. Rose, Catharine A. Hawks, and Hugh H. Geroways, pp. 211-220. The Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections.

Kintigh, Keith W. and Jeffery H. Altshucl (2010) Sustaining the Digital Archaeological Record *Heritage Management* 3(2):264-274

Kipfer, Barbara Ann (2009) *The Archaeologists Fieldwork Companion* pages 167-168; 184-186; 188; 193; 227; 240-242; 273; 284; 350-351. Blackwell Publishing. Malden, MA.

Knoll, Michelle K. and Bruce B. Huckell (2019) *SAA Guidelines for Preparing Legacy Archaeology Collections.* Chapters 1-5.1 only. Society for American Archaeology.

Lido. Database Basics: Concepts & Examples for Beginners https://www.lido.app/post/database-101

MacFarland, Kathryn and Arthur W. Vokes (2016) Dusting off the Data: Curating and Rehabilitating Archaeological Legacy and Orphaned Collections. *Advances in Archaeological Practice*. 4(2):161-175 Read pp161-167 only

National Park Service. Archaeology Program. *Managing Archaeological Collections*. Section 5 only https://home1.nps.gov/Archeology/collections/Index.htm

(1996) *Conserve-O-Gram* 19-17: Handling Archival Documents and Manuscripts

Redmond, Brian M. and Ann S. DuFresne (2018) Dealing with Museum Legacy Collections in the Twenty-First Century: Three Case Studies from Ohio. *Midwest Archaeological Conference Occasional Papers* 3:7–20. Read

SAA (1996) *Society for American Archaeology Principles of Archaeological Ethics.*

SAA (2003) The Archaeological Curation Crisis: An Integrated Action Plan for the SAA and its Partners.

School for Advanced Research (2023) *Standards for Museums with Native American Collections: A Guide to all Aspects of Work Within Museums Holding Native Collections*. https://sarweb.org/iarc/smnac/ Pages 1-8; 25-26; 38-40 only

Sullivan, Lynne P. and S. Terry Childs (2003) *Curating Archaeological Collections: From the Field to the Repository*. Altamira Press. Lanham, Maryland. Chapters 3-5 and 6 only

RECOMMENDED READINGS

25 United States Code Chapter 32: Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation

36 Code of Federal Regulation Part 79: Curation of Federally Owned and Administered Archeological Collections

43 Code of Federal Regulations Part 10: Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Regulations

Archaeology Data Service and the Center for Digital Antiquity (2013) *Caring for Digital Data in Archaeology: A Guide to Good Practice.* Oxbow Books.

Atalay, Sonya (2006) Indigenous Archaeology as Decolonizing Practice. The American Indian Quarterly, Volume 30:280-310

Benden, Danielle and Mara C. Taft (2019) A Long View of Archaeological Collections Care, Preservation, and Management. *Advances in Archaeological Practice* 7(3):217-223

Cato, Paisley and Ann Furman Douglas (2010) Emergency Preparedness Planning. In *Museum Registration Methods, 5th Edition,* edited by Rebecca Buck and Jean Allman Gilmore, pp.360-362. The AAM Press, Washington, DC.

Childs, S. Terry and Danielle Benden (2017) A Checklist for Sustainable Management of Archaeological Collections. *Advances in Archaeological Practice* 5(1):12-25.

Childs, S. Terry, Karolyn Kinsey and Seth Kagan (2010) Repository Fees for Archaeological Collections. *Heritage Management* 3(2):189-212

Heritage Preservation, Inc. (2005) *A Public trust at Risk: The Heritage Health Index Report on the State of America's Collections.*

Litchford, Michael and Stephanie Glienke (2005) This Old House: Reconstructing a Mississippian temple. *Illinois Archaeology* 17

Malaro, Marie C. (1998) Chapter 5. The Disposal of Objects: Deaccessioning. In, *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections, 2nd Edition,* pp.216-238.

Marquardt, William H., Anta Montet-White and Sandra C. Scholtz (1982) Resolving the Crisis in Archaeological Collections Curation. *American Antiquity* 47:409-418.

Milanich, Jerald T. (2005) Homeless Collections: What Happens to Artifacts when they have no Place to Go? *Archaeology* 57-64

National Park Service. Archaeology Program:

Managing Archaeological Collections. CH7: Repositories
https://www.nps.gov/history/archeology/collections/mgt_pr.htm

(1993) *Conserve-O-Gram* 1-4: Use of Acryloid B-72 for Labeling Museum Objects

Richards, Julian D., Tony Austin and Catherine Hardman (2010) Covering the Costs of Digital Curation. *Heritage Management* 3(1):255-263

St. Amand, Frankie, S. Terry Childs, Elizabeth J. Reitz, Sky Heller, Bonnie Newsom, Torben C. Rick, Daniel H. Sandweiss and Ryan Wheeler (2020) Leveraging Legacy Archaeological Collections as Proxies for Climate and Environmental Research. *PNAS* 117(15):8287-8294

Suits, Linda Norbut (2001) *How to…Keep Things in Your Collection from Killing You.* Illinois Association of Museums, #28

Voss, Barbara L. (2012) Curation as Research: A Case Study in Orphaned and Underreported Archaeological Collections. *Archaeological Dialogues* 19(2):145–169

PART II: TRAVEL, SAFETY & LOGISTICS

NOTICE OF INHERENT RISK

Traveling and conducting field research can involve risk. The IFR engages in intensive review of each field school location and programming prior to approval. Once a program is accepted, the IFR reviews each program annually to make sure it still complies with all our standards and policies, including those pertaining to student safety. Participants should also take every reasonable step to reduce risk while on IFR programs, including following the safety advice and guidelines of your program director, being alert to your surroundings and conditions, letting someone know where you will be at all times, and assessing your personal security.

The IFR does not provide trip or travel cancellation insurance. We strongly encourage participants to consider purchasing this insurance, as unexpected events may prevent your participation or cause the program to be canceled. Insurance is a relatively small cost to protect your educational investment in an IFR program. When comparing trip cancellation insurance policies, make sure the policy covers the cost of both airfare and tuition.

We do our best to follow a schedule of activities, methods training, and programming as outlined in this syllabus. However, this schedule can be easily disrupted by unforeseen circumstances, including weather, revisions by local permitting agencies, or conditions onsite. While this schedule represents the intentions of the program, adaptability is an intrinsic part of all field research, and necessary alterations to the schedule may happen at any time.

If you have any medical concerns, please consult with your doctor. For all other concerns, please consult with the program director and staff.

PROGRAM SPECIFIC FIELD CONDITIONS

Field – Field work will be outdoors except in cases of heavy rain or thunderstorms. Prepare for the possibility of heat, full sun, and insects. Bathroom facilities while in the field will be a portable toilet.

Curation - Students will be working in a large, climate-controlled repository setting with good ventilation, working approximately 4 feet apart from one another. Masking is optional except in the case of illness, when the ill party will be asked to stay home or wear a mask, depending on the type and severity of the illness.

Students will be working in the same spaces as, and often alongside, the repository staff of the Illinois State Archaeological Survey, who will follow the same safety protocol as students. Hand sanitizer should be used before work begins on any shared computer. Cleaning protocol includes the daily use of disinfectant on all “touched” surfaces, among other tasks.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

Citizens not from the USA are asked to check the US embassy website page at their home country for specific visa requirements.

STUDENT HEALTH

An IFR field school is designed to provide safe, positive, and constructive experiences for participating communities, students, and researchers. We are committed to protocols and practices that support the health and well-being of all involved in our field school projects, including the members of the community in which these projects take place.

We recommend that students adopt best-practices for arriving in a good state of health to protect themselves and their peers' readiness to set about the work of the field school. A thriving field camp environment is a constant exchange of energy, patience, effort, respect, and service. Arriving healthy is every student's first act of service — their first opportunity to behave in a way that respects the safety and wellness of one another.

IFR programs follow the health requirements and guidelines of local health authorities. You may also wish to consult recommendations from the US Centers for Disease Control at: https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list

TRAVEL (TO AND DURING THE PROGRAM)

Natural disasters, political changes, weather conditions and various other factors may force the cancellation or alteration of a field school. IFR recommends students only purchase airline tickets that are fully refundable and consider travel insurance in case a program or travel plans must change for any reason. General information for this program is below, but keep in mind we will discuss any updated travel information and regulations during the required program orientation, which could affect travel plans.

Students have several options for meeting in Champaign-Urbana:

1) A shuttle will pick up students who fly into Indianapolis International Airport at the time designated below.

2) Students may be dropped off or drive a personal vehicle to the field school site, meeting at the second location and time listed below.

3) Students who arrive in Champaign via Amtrak train can take a city bus to the second location and time listed below.

Rendezvous points and times:

1) Indianapolis Airport
Meeting date: June 3
Meeting point: Arrivals
Meeting time: 2 PM

2) Urbana, Illinois, USA, street address TBD
Meeting date: June 3
Meeting point: TBD
Meeting time: 4 PM

If you are held at the border, miss your connection, or your flight is delayed, please call, text, or email Dr. Brennan immediately. A local emergency cell phone number will be provided to all enrolled students. *If you are flying in and are delayed 1 hour or more past the airport pickup time, plan on independently booking alternate transportation to get to Champaign-Urbana*.

Students taking any form of public transportation for any portion of their journey to the field school must mask during travel to minimize the potential of acquiring illness on the way to field school.

Students are required to travel to and from the field site and to and from any excursions in the University van, which holds 15 people. Students may bring a personal vehicle to field school but are responsible for fees associated with parking (if any). There is a reliable and inexpensive form of public transportation in Champaign-Urbana that students without personal vehicles may use during their free time, if desired: the MTD bus system: https://mtd.org/

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

ACCOMMODATIONS

Students will have private bedrooms in a 2-bedroom apartment setting with a shared kitchen, living room, bathroom. Furniture and linens for the beds will be provided, as will all dishes/cook wares, and cleaning supplies. Wi-fi is available, and the housing is near community bus lines.

Dinners will be a combination of meals cooked by you (the students) in teams of 2 or 3 on a rotating basis on most class nights, a weekly meal out at a local establishment, and whatever you, the students choose to arrange for non-class nights. All meals will minimally include a protein and fruit/vegetable. Students will pack their own lunch to bring to class each day. Refrigerators are present at student housing, but not at the class site, so plan to bring a lunch box with cooler packs, if necessary. Groceries for lunch and dinner for the entire week will be provided at the project's expense. Students should plan on providing their own breakfast foods. The project van will make weekly trips to the grocery store so that students can acquire groceries for both.

Vegetarian and lactose-free diets can be easily accommodated, as can many food allergies. The project will do its best to accommodate other dietary needs within reason. Very specialized diets should be discussed with the PI prior to the start of the project to determine the ability to accommodate and make alternate meal plans, if necessary. Some specialized dietary products do not fall within the project budget, so it is important to discuss those needs before the start of field school with your director.

Students are required to clean their personal and shared spaces on a regular schedule. In addition to cooking teams, each night there will be a separate cleaning team to do dishes and clean up the kitchen after meals. All kitchen surfaces should be cleaned with disinfectant prior to and after preparing food. Masks and gloves will be provided for food prep, and a food-safety orientation will be provided before the first cooking session.

Laundry facilities are likely to be on-site and free of charge. If this is not the case, the project will arrange a weekly trip to the local laundromat.

There will be parking for personal vehicles at student housing, though parking fees, if any, will be at the students' expense.

COVID-19 protocol surrounding living and eating will be issued prior to field school as pertinent to the situation at the time of field school. These protocols may include pods, masking, social distancing, and restrictions on indoor activities with people outside of the field school pod.

EQUIPMENT LIST

Mandatory Equipment:

Please be sure to acquire only the brand, color and sizes indicated below!

- Dig kit:
    - 12” Ruler
    - 2 tent stakes (metal kind with green top) or chaining pins
    - 1 hanging level line
    - Bag, backpack, or small toolbox for the above

- Sunscreen, hat, sturdy closed-toed shoes, one pair of work gloves, water jug (1/2 gallon MINIMUM)
- Masks in case of illness or exposure to COVID
- Pencil case to include the following:
    - 2 black fine point Sharpie brand permanent markers
    - 2 black ultra-fine point Sharpie brand permanent markers
    - 2 black gel pens (any brand)
    - 4 #2 mechanical pencils
    - Water bottle or travel mug with a lid
    - Lunch bag or cooler
    - Cooler pack if you intend to pack lunch items that require refrigeration

Optional Equipment

- Laptop and charger. The program will supply communal computers for your use while working on collections. However, most students prefer to bring and use their own.
- Swimsuits and your preferred equipment for recreation (soccer ball, etc.)