

Department: ANTH

Course No.: 288W

Credits: 3

Title: Experimental Archaeology

Contact: Sally McBrearty

WQ: W

Catalog Copy: ANTH 288W. Experimental Archaeology. Either semester. Three credits. Prerequisite: ANTH 214. Munro, McBrearty. Method and theory of experimental archaeology, including hands-on study of past human behavior through experimentation with modern material cultural, and the execution of an experimental research project addressing an archaeological question.

Course Information: a. The course aims to provide students with: an understanding of the role of experimentation in archaeology.
familiarity with the experimental method.
first-hand experience with all stages of an experimental research project
familiarity with principles of several archaeological data sets (i.e., faunal remains, chipped stone, groundstone, ceramics).
the skills to critically evaluate published archaeological experiments.
experience giving oral presentations.
constructive criticism at all stages of the research project.

b. Course requirements: Specify exam formats, nature and scope of weekly reading assignments, nature and scope of writing assignments, problem sets, etc. This course requires that students undertake an archaeological experiment and write it up in several consecutive stages:

1. Project abstract and outline
2. Annotated bibliography of 10 relevant sources
3. Rough draft of paper
4. Final draft of paper

The students will also make three oral presentations summarizing their written work:

1. Five minute presentation on proposed research
2. Ten minute progress report
3. Fifteen minute final presentation with visual aids

Students will be required to read three published articles about or involving archaeological experiments each week and to discuss these in class.

Students will also be graded on their participation in weekly class discussions. Students must pass the writing component to pass the course.

c. List the major themes, issues, topics, etc., to be covered.

The Experimental Method and the Methods of Experimental Archaeology

Replication Experiments: Ceramics

Replication Experiments: Stone tool technology

Experiments in Ethnoarchaeological Contexts

Experimenting in Archaeological Contexts

Evaluation Material Performance Characteristics: Experiments with Ceramics

Experimenting with Materials with Model Properties

Experimenting with Natural Formation Processes

Experimenting with Animal Bone Taphonomy

Experiments with Cultural Formation Processes

Experiments with Recovery Techniques

Experiments in Analytical Techniques

W Criteria:

1. Describe how the writing assignments will enable and enhance learning the content of the course. Describe the page requirements of the assignments, and the relative weighting of the "W" component of the course for the course grade.

This course in experimental archaeology requires that students gain familiarity with the experimental method and its execution, as well as its application to archaeological questions. Learning the format and style of scientific writing is an essential part of this process. **The student cannot pass the course without passing the W component.**

The four writing assignments will have the following page requirements:

1. Project abstract and outline: 2 pages
2. Annotated bibliography of 10 relevant sources: 3 pages
3. Rough draft of paper: 10 pages
4. Final draft of paper: 15-20 pages

The writing component will comprise 70% of the final grade.

2. Describe the primary modes of writing instruction in the course (e.g. individual conferences, written commentary, formal instruction to the class, and so on.) All written assignments will receive written commentary from the instructor. Writing instructions for each assignment will be given formally in class and the students will be provided with supplementary hand-outs. A class session will be devoted specifically to the style and format of the experimental approach.

3. Explain how opportunities for revision will be structured into the writing assignments in the course. The writing assignments are designed as a cumulative series. The student will receive written feedback on each assignment. Because they will continue to work on the same project throughout the course of the semester, the students will be expected to incorporate feedback on their writing and experimental design into successive writing assignments.