

Seminar in Archaeology, Fall 2014, ANG 6115, CRN 80085, 3 credit hours, Department of Anthropology
Time: Wednesday, 6:00-8:50 p.m., **Place:** SO 190, Prof. Clifford T. Brown, Office: SO172, Telephone number: (561) 297-3232, E-mail: ctbrown@fau.edu, Web site: <http://www.fau.edu/~ctbrown>
Office hours: 3:20-5:00 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, and by appointment.

Course Description (from Graduate Catalog): “Archaeological method and theory as well as reconstruction and description of prehistoric cultures.”

The primary purpose of this course is to teach you how to do original research in archaeology, and, by extension, in other disciplines as well. This focus is intended to help you develop and carry out your thesis research in the near future. You will also learn about research design and methods in archaeology.

Objectives:

- 1) Learn the process of developing and carrying out problem-oriented research
- 2) Learn how to develop research questions
- 3) Learn how to do problem-oriented reading
- 4) Learn how to write a proposal
- 5) Learn about writing—by exchanging and reviewing drafts
- 6) Learn about archaeology along the way

You will achieve these objectives by writing a mock grant proposal, complete with abstract/summary, schedule, research statement, and budget. The proposal should be in the format required for National Science Foundation (NSF) Dissertation Improvement Grants. There are certain relevant deviations from the Grant Proposal Guide for Dissertation Improvement Grants proposals listed on the Archaeology Program’s website: <http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/bcs/arch/suppdiss.jsp>. You will also make a brief presentation about your project to the class to gain practice making professional presentations. The presentation will be the same length as a paper delivered at a professional conference (15-20 minutes) and should employ appropriate visual aids.

The class will divide up into teams, the purpose of which will be to help each individual with his or her project by providing editorial review, offering supplementary research assistance, and advice. You should distribute each assignment to your team members, get their reactions, and consider their comments before handing it in.

Textbooks: Renfrew, Colin and Paul Bahn (2008). *Archaeology*. Fifth edition. New York and London: Thames and Hudson. The textbook is assigned as both a resource and reference.

Abbott, Andrew (2004). *Methods of Discovery* W. W. Norton. It offers sound suggestions for identifying research problems and their solutions, i.e., how to address them, in the social sciences.

Suggested resources:

Hester, Thomas R, Harry J. Shafer, and Kenneth L. Feder. 1997. *Field Methods in Archaeology*. Seventh edition. Mayfield Publishing Company, Mountain View, Calif. This is the most useful archaeological field manual and can help you design the field techniques for your project, if it has a field component.

Banning, E. B. (2000). *The Archaeologist's Laboratory: The Analysis of Archaeological Data*. New York: Kluwer Academic. This is the best technical manual for archaeological lab and data analysis. It can help you design the laboratory component of your research proposal. It is available as an electronic book through the university library web site.

Bentley, R. Alexander, Herbert D. G. Maschner, and Christopher Chippindale, editors. (2008). *Handbook of Archaeological Theories*. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press. This is a current summary of some important archaeological theories. Consult it to help select an appropriate theoretical approach for your project.

Policies: Class attendance is mandatory. I may make exceptions, at my discretion, in individual cases with reasonable cause if you contact me in advance. I will not penalize you, of course, for officially

excused absences. I reserve the right to reduce the grades of papers that are turned in late. Please treat everyone in the class with respect.

University policy on the use of electronic devices states: "In order to enhance and maintain a productive atmosphere for education, personal communication devices, such as cellular telephones and pagers, are to be disabled in class sessions." So, no texting or cell phone calls, please.

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the University mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the University community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see the Code of Academic Integrity in the University Regulations at http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf.

Please use the *American Antiquity* style guide for citation and reference formats. It is available on the Society for American Archaeology's website, www.saa.org. Please feel free to contact me for help in using references in your papers. All factual statements in your papers should, of course, have citations indicating their source unless they are your own observations. Please feel free to consult with me about how, when, and where to use citations in your writing.

Accessibility Statement: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who, due to a disability, require special accommodation to properly execute course work must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) -- in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880); in Davie, LA 240 (954-236-1222); in Jupiter, SR 110 (561-799-8010) -- and follow all OSD procedures.

Grading: Grades will be based on the grade given on the project (60%), including the periodic progress reports, the presentation (20%), and class attendance and participation (20%).

Course outline: *Be prepared to discuss your project and its progress in class every week.*

Readings: Please use the textbook as a resource to help you determine how different kinds of projects use a range of approaches to address particular kinds of problems.

Week 1. Introduction. Logistics of the course. Discussion of the assignment. Research design. Planning. Start reading Abbott.

Week 2. Puzzles and Ideas

Review the textbook Part II and read Chapter 13 to get a sense of the kind of issues that archaeologists investigate and how they do so.

Submit at least 1 proposed research idea, question, or problem. Explain it in no more than 1 paragraph.

Week 3. Research design and theory. The conceptual structure of research in archaeology. What's your question?

Read Chapter 1 in textbook, focusing on pp. 40-50.

Resubmit your research problem restated in terms of a set of hypotheses and turn in the statement.

Week 4. What data do you need to collect to answer your question or address your hypothesis?

Consult the textbook (Chapters 2-4 and Part II *passim*) to understand what kinds of data archaeologists collect and how they relate to different kinds of problems.

Submit a brief (1 paragraph) statement outlining what data you will need to help you evaluate your hypotheses or address your research question.

Week 5. Statistical and sampling issues.

Submit a brief outline of the statistical test(s) you will use to evaluate your hypotheses. Does this affect your research design?

Week 6. Artifact Analysis and Laboratory Methods.

Submit a 1 paragraph statement explaining what laboratory methods or analyses you will use to generate your measurements/data. Be sure you have read Chapter 2 of the textbook by now.

Week 7. Field methods.

Submit a 1 paragraph statement explaining what field methods you will use to collect the materials you will analyze in the laboratory. Be sure you have read Chapter 3 by now.

Week 8. Theory.

What is the most appropriate theoretical context for your research? Consult Bentley et al. (2008) and the textbook for ideas as necessary.

Submit a 1 paragraph statement of the theory or theories that provide an intellectual context for your research.

Week 9. Practicalities: Budgets and schedules

Submit a draft budget and schedule.

Week 10. The Criteria: Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts.

Read the NSF explanations of the criteria. Submit a 2 paragraph description (1 paragraph for each criterion) of how your project meets the criteria.

Week 11. Round-table discussion of projects.

Bring copies of a brief summary and outline (2 pages maximum) of your project to class to share with everyone. We discuss and critique each project in turn.

Weeks 12-14. Student presentations discussions of them.

Turn in final project at the last regularly scheduled class (not the final exam date).

“... success as an independent scientist will require much more than technical skills. It is critical to be able to design research strategies that are ambitious enough to be important and exciting, innovative enough to make unique contributions likely, and nevertheless have a good chance of producing valuable results. An enormous number of different experiments are possible, but only a tiny proportion will be really worthwhile. Choosing well requires great thought and creativity, and it involves taking risks.”
Bruce Alberts (2009). Editorial: On Becoming a Scientist. *Science* 326: 916.