

Archaeological Research Methods

ANT 4116, Call No. 16682, 3 credit hours, Spring 2015

Professor Clifford T. Brown, Department of Anthropology, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, Florida

Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30-1:50 pm **Place:** Room SO190, Boca Raton Campus
Contact information: Office: SO172, Telephone number: (561) 297-3232, Email: ctbrown@fau.edu
Web site: <http://www.fau.edu/~ctbrown>, Office hours: 2:00-5:00 pm Tuesdays and Thursdays, and by appointment.

Catalog Description: “This course focuses on what archaeologists actually do in the field and laboratory to learn about ancient societies. Methods are placed in context through discussion of scientific research design in archaeology, which determines what methods are chosen, including field methods, analytical methods, and laboratory methods.”

Objectives: The principal goal of this course is to contribute to the intellectual and professional development of archaeology students by teaching them about archaeological research methods, focusing on what archaeologists actually *do*, in the field and in the laboratory, to learn about ancient societies. We will consider how methods and techniques are determined by scientific research design in archaeology, which in turn is influenced by archaeological theory. We will study the methods used to examine the human experience in the past, including field methods, analytical methods, and laboratory methods. Additional goals of the course include encouraging critical thinking and developing writing skills. This course helps fulfill the research methods requirement for the undergraduate major in Anthropology.

Prerequisites: None.

Instructional Method: Face-to-face, in class. Some class materials will be posted online on Blackboard.

Textbooks and other readings:

Peregrine, Peter N. (2001). *Archaeological Research: A Brief Introduction*. Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, New Jersey. ISBN 0-13-081127-0. [Abbreviated “Peregrine” below]

Peregrine, Peter N., Carol R. Ember, and Melvin Ember (eds.) (2002). *Archaeology: Original Readings in Method and Practice*. Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, New Jersey. ISBN 0-13-093978-1. [Abbreviated “PE&E” below]

Banning, Edward B. (2000). *The Archaeologist's Laboratory: The Analysis of Archaeological Data*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers. [Abbreviated “Banning” below] *This book is available electronically as an e-book through the FAU Library web site.*

Other readings may be assigned during the course.

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.”

Policies: Class attendance is mandatory. I reserve the right to reduce grades because of absences. I may make exceptions, at my discretion, in individual cases if you contact me in advance. I will not penalize you, of course, for officially excused absences. Please come to class prepared to discuss the readings and

ask questions. Classes are your best opportunities to ask questions. You should attend the lectures because I use them to share significant information that does not appear in the readings. My lectures will also highlight the most important ideas for you. Poor attendance will affect your grade directly or indirectly.

Please arrive on time. Coming late distracts the whole class. If you must arrive late, please enter unobtrusively.

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.

The grades of papers turned in late may be reduced. Make-up exams for missed tests will not normally be given except in extraordinary circumstances that can be clearly documented.

Use the *American Antiquity* style guide for formatting citations and references in written assignments. It is available at the journal web site (<http://www.saa.org>). Please feel free to contact me for help in using references in your papers. To avoid plagiarism, all factual statements in your papers should normally have citations indicating their sources.

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.

Assignments: The main written assignment consists of a 10-15 page term paper discussing one particular archaeological method or a case study of methods in a particular archaeological research project. The paper shall include an analysis of at least one case study from the archaeological literature illustrating how the method is used in an actual research project. There will be midterm and final exams.

Grading: The paper and each exam will be worth 30% of the final grade. Homework assignments, in-class projects, and attendance will be worth 10%. I will use the normal university letter grading scale, i.e., A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F.

Course outline and reading assignments:

- Week of 1/5 Archaeological Research Design. Philosophy of science and how archaeology is done; the influence of archaeological theory on research design and problem formulation. Peregrine: Preface and Chapters 1 and 2. Banning: Chapters 1 and 4.
- Week of 1/12 Measurement, Sampling, and Statistics. What kinds of data exist and how are they collected? How do you analyze different classes of data? What statistics are used? How do you take samples in archaeology, of regions, of sites, of artifacts? Peregrine Chapter 3. Banning: Chapter 2. Idea for paper due.
- Week of 1/19 Survey. How do you find sites? Do sites really exist? Peregrine Chapter 4; PE&E, Chapter 1.
- Week of 1/26 Geoarchaeology: What is it? How does geology affect archaeological sites and practice? Applied geomorphology. Banning: Chapter 12. Outline and paper and preliminary bibliography due.
- Week of 2/2: Excavation. Peregrine: Chapters 5 & 6.

- Week of 2/9: Spatial Analysis: Peregrine Chapter 7. Midterm exam.
- Week of 2/16: Artifact Analysis: Conservation and laboratory methods in general. Washing, labeling, data collection, data processing, and curation. Banning: Chapter 7.
- Week of 2/23: Ceramic Analysis: Peregrine Chapter 8, PE&E Chapter 5, Banning: Chapter 9.
- Week of 3/2: Spring Break-No class
- Week of 3/9: Lithic Analysis: Peregrine Chapter 9, PE&E Chapter 4, Banning Chapter 8.
- Week of 3/16: Paleoethnobotany: Peregrine Chapter 10, PE&E Chapter 6, Banning Chapter 11.
- Week of 3/23: Zooarchaeology: PE&E Chapter 7, Banning Chapter 10.
- Week of 3/30: Bioarchaeology: PE&E Chapters 8 and 12.
- Week of 4/6: Dating: Peregrine Chapter 11, PE&E Chapter 2, Banning Chapters 13, 14, & 15.
- Week of 4/13: Recording and Reporting: Forms, Photos, Drawings, and Writing. Peregrine Chapter 12, Banning Chapter 16.
- Week of 4/20: Final review and discussion. Papers due at last regularly scheduled class (Tuesday, 4/22).

Final exam date: Thursday, April 23, 10:30 am - 1:00 pm, SO 190.