

## ANTH 60a – Introduction to Archaeological Methods – Fall 2012



c. 1870s view of the Samuel  
Harrington House

**When:** Tuesdays, 2:00 – 4:50pm

**Where:** Harrington House or Brown 213. Please check the syllabus before each class session.

**Instructor:** Donald Slater

Office Hours: Tuesdays 5:00 – 6:00pm and by appointment on Tuesdays. Harrington House or Brown 213.

Available anytime digitally: Email: [dslater@brandeis.edu](mailto:dslater@brandeis.edu) Telephone: (603) 591-9966. Skype: donny.slater

**Teaching Assistant:** Ryan Collins

Office Hours: Fridays 11:00am – 12:00pm, Material Culture Room, Brown 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor.

Email: [ryanhco@brandeis.edu](mailto:ryanhco@brandeis.edu)

**Research Assistant:** Elizabeth Watson

Email: [eeatonwatson@gmail.com](mailto:eeatonwatson@gmail.com)

## Course Description and Objectives

“I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.” – Confucius

Anthropology 60a is a practicum. The course will involve readings and lectures, but at the core of the class is experiential, hands-on learning. Students will “do” archaeology. The course is designed as an introduction to the subject – both theoretically and practically. It assumes no prior fieldwork or knowledge of the subject matter. The primary objectives of this course are to provide students with their first field experience, to develop writing skills, and to hone each students’ ability to use reading materials to self teach – all basic foundations of archaeological scholarship.

Readings and field/classroom discussions and lectures will prepare students each class session to practice field archaeology. Students will design research, set up and excavate an archaeological site, recover and process artifacts, and critically interpret their findings all within the paradigm of standard modern archaeological practice.

## Attendance Policy

Since this class is a field practicum and meets only once per week for a total of only 13 classes, regular attendance is critical. It is particularly important to attend the first class session. Here, important field and lab procedures, as well as important safety protocols, will be discussed. The class research project will also begin during the first class. **Students who fail to attend the first class meeting will be administratively dropped from the course.**

After a student’s first unexcused absence he/she may choose to write a three-page analysis of the readings due that day *or* forfeit 1/3 of a letter grade from their *final* grade. For each subsequent unexcused absence another 1/3 of a letter grade will be docked from the *final* grade.

## Assignment Submission

Out of concern for the environment, and to streamline the grading process, **only digital assignment submissions in Microsoft Word format will be accepted.** Assignments must be loaded onto Latte by each student by noon on the due date. Unless prior arrangements have been made with Donald Slater, assignments will be docked 1/3 of a letter grade for each day they are late.

## Grading

### *Overview*

Preparedness and Class Participation	10%
Preliminary Research Report	10%
Mid-term Exam	20%
Field Notes	10%
Final Group Report	30%
Final Group Presentation	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### ***Preparedness and Class Participation***

Students are expected to complete assigned readings before each class session and be ready to discuss key topics. These readings will help prepare students for their field and lab experience and will help hone critical thinking, interpretive, and research skills. Readings may be up to 100+ pages per week, but during some weeks significantly less will be assigned. If this were a three-day-a-week course, it would be acceptable to require 35+ pages of reading for each session, so 100 pages once a week should be reasonable. Please budget your time wisely and do not save all of your reading for Monday night! Please also note that heavier reading assignments are front-loaded early in the semester to prepare you for your dig and research project. As the semester progresses, students will be expected to spend more time in the lab working on their final project, thus the readings become lighter. Each class will begin with a brief (+/- 10 minute) session where the instructor will ask students questions about the readings. In turn, students are expected to come prepared to asked questions of their own. Class participation will be graded upon observed teamwork, interest, interaction, and enthusiasm displayed during field and lab work. 10% of the final grade will be based on preparedness and class participation.

### ***Preliminary Research Report***

Each student will prepare a three-page research report due on September 25<sup>th</sup>. The goal of the report is for each student to become familiar with the history of the Harrington House. Try to answer the following questions: When was Harrington House built? How do we know this date and is it accurate? Who built the house? Who has lived there over the years? Has anything important happened at the house? How has the interior and exterior of the house, and its surrounding landscape, changed over time? Are there cultural or historical explanations for these changes? Is there anything else of interested that should be presented? Please do not simply regurgitate background information heard verbally in class. Find written sources and cite your work! Where could these sources be found? What local resources may be helpful? Please begin your research during the first week of class. Some of the resources will be difficult, and potentially time-consuming, to find. The use of relevant images is highly encouraged. 10% of the final grade will be based on the preliminary research report.

### ***Mid-term Exam***

The Mid-term exam will be based on the reading assignments due through October 16<sup>th</sup>, but also may cover topics discussed in the field. The format will be multiple choice, short answer, and essay. **This will be a take-home exam.** It will be made available via Latte on October 15<sup>th</sup>, the day before it is due (October 16<sup>th</sup>). Following the honor system, students will be allowed no more than two hours to prepare their answers. Notes, books, and other relevant sources may be consulted during the exam, but students **may not collaborate** with one another for any reason. 20% of the final grade will be based on the mid-term exam.

### ***Field Notes***

Taking thorough notes during archaeological work is perhaps the most important task in the field. Copious notes will allow you, and others in the future, to reconstruct the dig after it has been completed. Field notes may consist of text, maps, sketches, field forms, and any other format that documents your work. Field notes are an essential tool for tracking data needed to write accurate and detailed reports. Each individual should keep their own field notes in a notebook that is separate from any other work related to this course or others. Other items such as level forms and maps will be shared amongst students in each group. A digital copy of all of your field notes will be due on December 11<sup>th</sup>. Notes will be graded on clarity, thoroughness, detail, and

organization. 10% of the final grade will be based on field notes.

### ***Final Group Report***

Due to the size of the class, and the benefits of teamwork in the field, the class will be broken up into six groups of three students. Each group will remain permanent throughout the semester. They will work together in the field and the lab and will collaborate to produce a final report based on their findings. The report should provide background information about the dig, a thesis, the team's methodology, findings in the field, lab/artifact analysis, and overall interpretations and conclusions. Photographs, charts, maps, profile drawings, etc are all expected to be included in the report. The report should be approximately 12 pages in length. However, this is merely a guideline. The report will be graded on quality, not quantity, and is based on content, adherence to guidelines, clarity of presentation, flow, structure, and logic of thesis, arguments, and conclusions. Because this is a group paper, other students depend on your effort for their grades. Please be a good team player and pull your weight in the research and writing. The final report is due on December 11<sup>th</sup>. No papers will be accepted after December 15<sup>th</sup>. 30% of the final grade will be based on the final group report.

### ***Final Group Presentation***

Oral presentation in front of a peer audience is a large part of academic archaeology. To help students increase their comfort level within this forum, during the final exam period from 6-9pm on Monday December 17<sup>th</sup> each team will make a 20 minute PowerPoint presentation to the class detailing the work that they conducted in the field and lab during the semester. The presentation should be an oral version of the findings reported in the group report. The PowerPoint should include photographs, charts, maps, profile drawings, and any other relevant imagery. Each team member should speak for approximately seven of the 20 minutes. Following each presentation will be a five-minute session where anyone in the class may make ask questions or engage you in debate. PowerPoints will be uploaded to Latte at the end of this final session. Half of each students' grade will be based on their individual performance and the content they deliver, with the other half determined by the quality of the group effort. 20% of the final grade will be based on the final group presentation

### **Research Paper Guidelines**

A good research paper, and even short essays, need an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. When appropriate, a thesis should be stated in the introduction and the paper should build to a logical concluding statement or statements. Please proofread your work. Check for typos, but more important be sure that your paper is written clearly.

All students are expected to properly cite their work within the text of the paper. Whether intentional or not, failure to do so could be perceived as plagiarism. The paper should be followed by a "Bibliography" or "Works Cited" section. This course will use the citation style outlined by the Society for American Archaeology (SAA). Their handbook can be found on the Latte course page. If you do not understand the process of citing others' work, please feel free to come to office hours for a tutorial.

### **Field Trip – weather pending**

If logistics and weather permit, during one class we will travel to a two local well preserved early 18<sup>th</sup> century houses. This will occur

on a day when rain will not allow excavation. Please be on the lookout for an email on a rainy Tuesday for instructions on where to meet for the fieldtrip. Depending on the progress of the dig, another trip to a local Colonial graveyard may also be included.

### **Students with Extra Challenges**

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see Donald Slater immediately.

### **Academic Integrity**

You are expected to be familiar with and to follow the University's policies on academic integrity (see <http://www.brandeis.edu/studentlife/sdc/ai>). Faculty may refer any suspected instances of alleged dishonesty to the Office of Student Development and Conduct. Instances of academic dishonesty may result in sanctions including but not limited to, failing grades being issued, educational programs, and other consequences.

### **Access to the Archaeology Lab**

All materials excavated by the class will be stored in the Anthropology Department's Archaeology Lab in Brown 213. This is the same room that is used for class lectures. Because pedagogically and financially valuable artifacts are stored in this room, it is locked 24 hours a day, every day. You will need to access the lab on a regular basis to process your artifacts and to conduct analysis for the final report. Access to the lab is permitted at any time you wish to work. Please keep in mind, however, that Brown is often locked after 9pm. You may call Public Safety to request that an officer let you into Brown to work. To gain access to the locked lab, you will need to punch in a code on a lock box which hangs from the door. This code will be given to you on the first day of class. **FOR SECURITY REASONS IT IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN TO SHARE THIS CODE WITH ANYONE OUTSIDE OF OUR CLASS FOR ANY REASON.** When using the lock box, you **MUST** be sure to put the key back **IMMEDIATELY** after you open the door. If the key goes missing, especially on a weekend, students can be blocked from entering the lab for days at the time. This can cause major problems, especially as project due dates approach.

### **Communications**

Important course communications will come to you via two primary sources: 1) orally during class and 2) via email. All emails will be generated using the Latte system, so please be sure to regularly check your Brandeis email account. In the event of any changes to the syllabus, you will be notified via email and the new syllabus will be uploaded to Latte.

### **Course Materials**

There are several important items that you will need for this class. First, you will need to purchase the course textbook. Please see below for more information. Archaeology is a gear-intensive discipline and can get quite expensive. Fortunately, the great majority of necessary gear will be provided for you. However, you will need to provide the following gear for yourself or your group: 1) One good

camera per group. **NO PHONE CAMERAS, NO EXCEPTIONS.** These will not produce images of high enough quality for archaeological documentation, 2) Appropriate outdoor clothing (see the next section), 3) Sunblock and insect repellent (see next section), 4) Sharpies (both fine and ultrafine point – these can often be found as one unit), 5) Pencils (**NO PENS** – pens are not to be used for field notes, artifacts tags, or anything to do with the excavation and lab work), and 6) Water. Archaeology is hard work, on hot days early in the semester, please bring at least two liters of water each class session.

### **The Harrington House Site and the Dig**

The Harrington House sits along Old South Street on the south side of campus. The house was recently acquired by the university and now houses the Rabb School of Continuing Studies. The colonial style house dates to c. 1750 and was continuously occupied from that point forward. Excavations at the house should allow us to understand the material culture of local Waltham residents from the modern day to back before the Revolutionary War.

Due to the size of the class, and the benefits of teamwork in the field, the class will be broken up into six groups of three students. Each group will be responsible for one roughly 1m x 1m sized excavation unit at a time. Each person will have a certain set of responsibilities. Person 1 will be the excavator. Person 2 will be the screener. Person 3 will be in charge of field forms, artifact labeling and bagging, and mapping. Students should rotate their roles several times each class period so that everyone becomes accustomed to each task. All team members are responsible for regularly washing and rebagging all artifacts in the lab outside of class hours.

### **Safety, Health, and Wellness**

The Harrington House is located in a safe place right on campus. However, we will assume some risks as part of ANTH 60a. Please exercise caution when walking to Harrington House - you must cross busy South Street. This course runs from early September into mid-December, thus we will experience great variations in weather. Please dress according to each day's forecast, and also have contingency plans for the unpredictable New England weather. We will be outside for up to three hours each class session, so sunburn and heat stroke can occur early in the season, while frostbite could take place as winter approaches. Dehydration can happen during any season. PLEASE BRING SUFFICIENT WATER. Barring extraordinary heat or cold, temperature will not bring us indoors - only *heavy* rain or snow will do so.

Sturdy footwear such as sneakers or boots is required. Open-toed shoes, flip-flops, etc are not permitted as it is a danger to feet due to the use of trowels, shovels, heavy buckets, etc. Long pants are recommended to deter bugs and shield you from the sun, though this is not required. A wide brimmed hat is recommended to block the sun. Bandanas work well to keep sweat out of your eyes. If you come to the field inappropriately dressed (especially concerning footwear), you will be asked to return home and change your attire.

The most important safety warning concerns ticks and mosquitoes. Everyone has heard of Lyme Disease, but did you know that there are FIVE **tick-borne illnesses** that can be contracted right here in New England? Did you know that it is not just the Deer Tick that transmits disease? Lyme Disease and other tick-borne illnesses can be severe, life altering, and in extreme circumstances, fatal. Lyme Disease has been contracted by at least one participant of ANTH 60a in recent years. Though it is not known if the individual contracted the illness while digging with ANTH 60a, the case should serve to alert you to the possibility. Each year several cases of the **mosquito-borne illnesses** Eastern Equine Encephalitis and West Nile Virus are reported in Massachusetts. Both ticks and mosquitoes are repelled by a variety of readily available bug sprays on the market. Time and time again those with Deet prove to be the most effective, however it is unnecessary to use anything with higher than 40% Deet content. Do not use 100% Deet formulas.

**Course Outline**

<b>Class Session</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting Place</b>	<b>Field Task</b>	<b>Reading/Lecture Topic</b>	<b>Readings Due</b>	<b>Other Assignments Due</b>
<b>1</b>	9/4	Brown 213	n/a	Course introduction. What is archaeology? Lab rules. How to handle artifacts.	None	
<b>2</b>	9/11	Harrington House	Site survey and excavation unit setup	History of archaeology, goals of archaeological excavation, research design, and site survey.	1. Hester et al. Chapters 1-4 2. Renfrew & Bahn 2008 Chapter 1	
<b>n/a</b>	9/18	n/a		No Class.	None	
<b>3</b>	9/25	Harrington House	Surface collection and excavation	Stratigraphy, seriation, dating techniques, excavation methods.	1. Hester et al. Chapters 5, 10, & 14 2. Deetz 1977 (only pgs 89-103 required) 3. Renfrew & Bahn 2008 pgs 122-128	<b>Preliminary Research Report Due</b>
<b>4</b>	10/2	Harrington House	Excavation	Recording and collecting data, handling artifacts in the field, photography.	1. Hester et al. Chapters 6-8	
<b>n/a</b>	10/9	n/a	n/a	No Class.	None	
<b>5a</b>	10/15	n/a	n/a	Mid-term take-home exam issued electronically.	None	
<b>5b</b>	10/16	Harrington House	Excavation	Mapping and remote sensing.	1. Hester et al. Chapter 9 2. Garrison et al 2008	<b>Mid-term Exam Due</b>
<b>6</b>	10/23	Harrington House	Excavation	Human, faunal, and botanical remains.	1. Hester et al. Chapters 11-13	
<b>7</b>	10/30	Harrington House	Excavation	Experimental archaeology.	1. Slater 2011 2. Outram 2008	
<b>8</b>	11/6	Harrington House	Excavation	Cognitive archaeology, religion, cosmology.	1. Renfrew & Bahn 2008 Chapter 10 2. Houston & Stuart 1996 3. Brady & Ashmore 1999	

<b>Class Session</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting Place</b>	<b>Field Task</b>	<b>Reading/Lecture Topic</b>	<b>Readings Due</b>	<b>Other Assignments Due</b>
<b>9</b>	11/13	Harrington House	Excavation	Material culture & the biography of things, pt 1.	1. Kopytoff 1986 2. Geary 1986	
<b>10</b>	11/20	Harrington House	Excavation	Material culture & the biography of things, pt 2.	1. Helms 1993 pgs 28-51 and 89-127	
<b>11</b>	11/27	Harrington House	Profile drawing, and site cleanup.	Archaeological ethics.	1. Wylie 1995	
<b>12</b>	12/4	Brown 213	n/a	Lab Session.  Topics: NAGPRA. Who owns the past?	1. <a href="http://www.nps.gov/archeology/sites/NAGPRAsummary.htm">http://www.nps.gov/archeology/sites/NAGPRAsummary.htm</a> 2. Liebmann 2008 3. Slater 2008 4. Renfrew & Bahn 2008 Chapter 14	
<b>13</b>	12/11	Brown 213	n/a	Wrap up, class discussion.	None	<b>Field Notes and Final Group Report Due</b>
<b>Final</b>	12/17	Brown 213	n/a	FINAL – This is a <b>Monday</b> , 6-9pm.	None	<b>Final Group Presentation</b>



## **Required Text**

Hester, Thomas R., Harry J. Shafer, and Kenneth L. Feder  
2009 *Field Methods in Archaeology*. Left Coast Press, Walnut Creek.

## **Bibliography**

- Brady, James E. and Wendy Ashmore  
1999 Mountains, Caves, Water: Ideational Landscapes and the Ancient Maya. In *Archaeologies of Landscape: Contemporary Perspectives*, edited by Wendy Ashmore and A. Bernard Knapp, pp. 124-145. Wiley-Blackwell, Malden.
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- Kopytoff, Igor  
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1995 Archaeology and the Antiquities Market: the Use of "Looted" Data. In *Ethics in American Archaeology: Challenges for the 1990s*, edited by Mark J. Lynott and Alison Wylie, pp. 17-22. Society for American Archaeology, Washington, D.C.