

ANT 6198: ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODS

Course Objectives:

This graduate-level seminar is designed to examine in detail archaeological methods used both in the field and in the laboratory, from survey and excavation to scientific analyses of materials. The course is designed to prepare students for advanced training and practice in archaeology, and is intended to serve the following purposes:

- To offer seminar-style discussion of archaeological methods and practices
- To provide practical examples and exercises in learning the most commonly-used techniques of archaeological research
- To provide training and experience in preparation and submission of grant proposals

The range of methods and practices addressed will include survey and excavation techniques, artifact processing, and analyses. Some of the materials to be covered include:

- Organization of field research projects. This typically includes hands-on exercises in library research, mapping, and sampling methods, to address specific anthropological/archaeological questions.
- Critical assessment of published surveys and excavation reports, considering when and where the projects were done.
- Applications of modern scientific methods, including dating, materials studies, and chemical analyses. Exercises generally include computer-based projects using databases, spreadsheets, and other software.

Students should expect to learn and/or get some exposure to:

- Background research, including library databases and historical records
- Survey methods, including remote sensing techniques
- Site mapping, from the use of transits to total stations
- Artifact classification, and data organization
- Relative and absolute dating methods
- Spatial analysis, including the application of GIS
- Reconstruction of environmental and ecological systems
- Analyses of lithic, ceramic, faunal, floral, and skeletal remains
- Ethical issues
- Grant proposals
- Presentation of findings

Depending on the interests and expertise of different faculty members, specific hands-on opportunities may vary. This course is offered every fall, and graduate students are expected to take it their first semester at USF.