

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the course is to provide students with instruction and practical experience in basic methods and techniques of archaeological fieldwork. The experience is gained in the context of a long-term research project designed to produce specimens, records, and data, which will support further laboratory analysis and eventual publication of research results. Students will be making important contributions to the research, while they learn basic field methods. Through discussions and practical applications, students will develop a thorough understanding of how their work in the field relates to the overall research design of the Ames Plantation Archaeological Project.

LECTURE AND SEMINAR TOPICS

Week 1

- Introduction to Ames Plantation
- Slavery and economy in Tennessee
- Excavation and recording methods
- Basic laboratory procedures
- Ceramics and chronological inference

Week 2

- Survey methods
- Archaeological ethics
- Cultural resource management
- Spatial dynamics and land use

Week 3

- Reconstructing social communities
- Zooarchaeology and diet
- Geoarchaeology: soils and sediments
- Palaeobotany: pollens and phytoliths

COURSE TOPICS

The field and laboratory methods covered include: grid triangulation techniques, optical transit use, EDM (Electronic Distance Measurement with Total Station), EDM software and mapping, GPS mapping, top plan and cross-section recording, square excavation, data collection, ceramic analysis, soil sample collection, botanical flotation and pollen capture, soil chemistry, spatial discard patterns, topographic survey, etc.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

This is a field methods class held in a fairly remote location, requiring students to learn to live and work together as a group while they learn field methods and contribute to the success of a long-term archaeological research project. All students are expected to do their share of camp chores as part of their participation in this class.

The course does not assume students have previous archaeological field experience. An introductory course in archaeology will be helpful, but is not mandatory. Archaeological fieldwork is very demanding. Students should be in excellent physical condition and enjoy sustained, strenuous teamwork.

COST TO PARTICIPANTS

The total cost to students is \$1500 for room and board, all field school activities and fieldtrips, and tuition for 4 credits.

For further information, please contact the project directors:

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Come dig with us this summer!

☞ Rhodes College ☞

Archaeology Field School



May 20 to June 8, 2007

ARCH 450
4 credits • F-11

Rhodes College Archaeology Field School

Experience the thrill of discovery!

ARCH 450 • 4 credits for the F-11 requirement

This is a 4 credit supervised training course in archaeological methods at the Ames Plantation in LaGrange, TN (<http://www.amesplantation.org/>). From May 20 to June 9 students will live on the site in Fayette County, TN and participate as crewmembers in the disinterment, registration, restoration and publication of archaeological remains. Field work and lab processing occupies the mornings and early afternoons, while late afternoons and evenings are reserved for lectures and writing. The field school will include regional studies with field trips to neighboring sites of archaeological, historical and cultural interest.

May 20-June 8, 2007

THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Students will learn basic archaeological excavation, survey, and recording techniques required to execute multi-disciplinary field research in archaeology. The field school emphasizes multidisciplinary approaches to archaeology. Guest lecturers are drawn from a variety of disciplines including the history and geology of West Tennessee, zooarchaeology, botany, architectural history, and social history. On-site instruction, lectures, and discussion sessions at the Ames Plantation will be complemented by field trips to related sites. Students will attend classes forty to fifty hours per week, with the bulk of that time spent doing on-site field research. Reading assignments, lectures, and discussion sessions will cover both technical and historical issues. Weekends are spent processing artifacts, moving material from Ames to the Archaeology Lab at Rhodes, and exploring sites of interest in west and central Tennessee.

RESEARCH FOCUS

Our fieldwork addresses the history of 19th century plantations in Fayette County. The 2007 field season will have two major projects: the excavation of a blacksmith shop on the historical Jones Plantation (near the current Ames Foundation Headquarters); and an archaeological survey of the Holcomb Plantation.

Our research will explore several significant historical questions: (1) how enslaved African-Americans worked and lived on the land; (2) the relationships between large and small plantations on the land base; and (3) the types of commercial enterprises on a large plantation.

