

NOVA COLLEGE-WIDE COURSE CONTENT SUMMARY HIS 180 – HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY (3 CR.)

Course Description

Introduces both the methods and theories in historical archaeology as practiced in the United States and worldwide. Includes time and space, field survey, excavation, archival and laboratory research. Includes field trips to site excavations. Lecture 3 hours per week.

General Course Purpose

To provide students with an understanding of the practice and applications of historical archaeology, including its role in historic preservation and historical interpretation, and to encourage students to appreciate and apply a variety of research methods, including archival and documentary research, artifact analysis, and field observations.

Course Prerequisites/Corequisites

None.

Course Objectives

Upon completing the course, the student will be able to:

- a) Explain how the field of historical archaeology has developed during the Modern Period in the United States, with an emphasis on research in the Mid-Atlantic region.
- b) Identify the work of archaeologists whose ideas have significantly influenced the current trends in historical archaeology.
- c) Recognize archeological site types and theoretical concepts.
- d) Demonstrate knowledge of basic field and laboratory techniques.
- e) Identify relevant documentary sources and conduct archival research.
- f) Understand archaeological findings and create interpretation to share findings.

Major Topics to be Included

A. The Past as Interpreted through Archaeology

1. Introduction: How can you tell if an object is prehistoric or historical?
2. Site types and thematic concepts, purpose of an archeological site

B. Methods in Historical Archaeology

1. What to do first: the importance of documentary research
2. Field excavation techniques, site organization, and the archaeologist's toolkit
3. Context of space and time
4. Field survey techniques
5. Alternatives to digging and modern technological approaches

C. Coming in from the Field

1. Laboratory techniques
2. Interpreting artifacts
3. The archaeology of groups
4. Interpreting the past
5. Public history, preservation, and scholarly applications
6. The future of historical archaeology