Archeology Program

Archeology is the discipline most directly concerned with the understanding and explanation of past societies through the study of their material remains. The reconstruction of these societies through the interpretation of material culture permits archeology to span both the prehistoric and the historic periods. While certain archeology courses originate within the program, others are cross-listed from the departments of Anthropology, Art and Art History, and Classical Studies. Majors design their own curriculum in close consultation with their advisor according to the specific area of concentration within the discipline.

Affiliated Faculty

Kate Birney
BA, Yale University; MT, Harvard University; PhD, Harvard University
Associate Professor of Classical Studies; Chair, Archeology; Associate Professor, Archeology; Associate Professor, Art History

Christopher Parslow
BA, Grinnell College; MA, University of Iowa; PhD, Duke University
Robert Rich Professor of Latin; Professor of Classical Studies; Professor, Archeology; Professor, Art History

Phillip B. Wagoner
BA, Kenyon College; PhD, University of Wisconsin at Madison
Professor of Art History; Chair, Art and Art History; Professor, Archeology

Visiting Faculty

Katherine Brunson
BA, Harvard University; MA, University of California, Los Angeles; PhD, University of California, Los Angeles
Assistant Professor of Archeology, starting January 1, 2020

Departmental Advising Experts

Kate Birney, Douglas Charles, Clark Maines, Christopher Parslow, Phillip Wagoner

• Undergraduate Archeology Major (catalog.wesleyan.edu/departments/arcp/ugrd-arcp)
• Undergraduate Archeology Minor (catalog.wesleyan.edu/departments/arcp/ugrd-arcp-mn)

ARCP153F Single Combat in the Ancient World (FYS)

This course celebrates the clash of warriors in warfare, sport, and spectacle in the classical world. Using primary sources and archaeological evidence, the class will survey traditions of combat in ancient art, literature, and society, beginning with Greek and Near Eastern epic; the modes of warfare in Greek society; ancient Olympic combat sports; and, finally, Roman gladiator spectacle. We will examine the role of violent sport in Greek and Roman society, the reception of ancient Olympic combat sports; and, finally, Roman gladiator spectacle. We will survey traditions of combat in ancient art, literature, and society, beginning with Greek and Near Eastern epic; the modes of warfare in Greek society; ancient Olympic combat sports; and, finally, Roman gladiator spectacle. We will examine the role of violent sport in Greek and Roman society, the reception of ancient Olympic combat sports; and, finally, Roman gladiator spectacle.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00

Gen Ed Area: HA-CLAS
Identical With: CCIV153F
Prereq: None

ARCP201 Art and Archaeology of the Bronze Age Mediterranean

This course is an introduction to the history, art, and archaeology of the Bronze Age Mediterranean. Throughout the semester we will explore the development of civilization and high society in the Aegean world (mainland Greece, the islands, Cyprus, and Crete), the rise of Minoan and Mycenaean palace power, the origin of the biblical Philistines, and, of course, the historical evidence for the Trojan War. We will also look at the contemporary Near Eastern cultures with which these societies interacted, exploring the reciprocal exchange between the Aegean world and Egypt, Syria, and the Hittite kingdoms. For each period we will survey the major archaeological sites (civilic and cultic), examine archaeological questions, and study the development of sculpture, painting, ceramics, and architectural trends in light of political and social changes.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00

Gen Ed Area: HA-CLAS
Identical With: CCIV201, ARHA202
Prereq: None

ARCP202 Paleoanthropology: The Study of Human Evolution

Paleoanthropology is the study of human origins, of how we evolved from our ape-like ancestors into our modern form with our modern capabilities. Drawing on both biological anthropology (the study of fossils, living primates, anatomy, genetics, and human variation) and archaeology (the study of material culture, such as tools, art, food remains), this course will examine what we know about our own evolutionary past and how we know it. The history of paleoanthropology—how our views of our past have changed—will also be explored. The course will include hands-on laboratory sessions utilizing fossil casts, stone tools, and other materials from the archaeology and anthropology collections.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00

Gen Ed Area: SBS-ANTH
Identical With: ANTH202
Prereq: None

ARCP203 The Secrets of Ancient Bones: Discovering Ancient DNA and Archaeology

New analyses of ancient DNA preserved for millennia in bones and soils have revolutionized the field of archaeology. Suddenly, archaeologists have gained new insight into human origins, past population migrations, ancient diseases, plant and animal domestication, and even the factors that contributed to the extinctions of megafauna such as woolly mammoths. Recent genetic case studies will provide a lens for learning about the archaeology of diverse world regions and time periods, from Oceania to Mesoamerica and from the Paleolithic through recent history. Topics will include: human evolution and genetic relationships between humans, Neanderthals, and Denisovans; the peopling of the globe; extinction and de-extinction; domestication and the origins of agriculture; paleodiseases and paleodiets; and ethics in genetic research.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00

Gen Ed Area: SBS-ARCP
Prereq: None

ARCP209 Tradition & Testimony: Protecting Native American Sacred Lands, Ancestral Remains, & Cultural Items

This course will explore the historic genesis of present-day U.S. and international policies toward Native American peoples and other indigenous communities.
In addition, studies will include traditional indigenous and tribal perspectives, investigate indigenous-specific origin stories and the connections these stories have with historic events and places, and take a hard look at repatriation policies. Students will investigate several case studies involving current issues Native American communities are facing in repatriation and protecting sacred places, both local and national.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-ANTH
Identical With: ANTH209
Prereq: None

ARCP214 Survey of Greek Archaeology
This course introduces the art and archaeology of Greek civilization from Mycenaean palaces of the Bronze Age, to tombs of warriors and battlefields of Marathon, through the theatrical and political centers of democratic Athens. Throughout the semester we will survey the major archaeological sites (civic and cultic) for each period and study development of sculpture, painting, ceramics, and architectural trends in light of political (propaganda) and social changes. More than a tour of monuments and mosaics, however, this course will show students how to interpret and apply literature, material science, anthropology, and art history to address archaeological questions, and to consider the relationship (ancient and modern) between social trends and material evidence.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CLAS
Identical With: CCIV214, ARHA203
Prereq: None

ARCP223 Survey of Roman Archaeology and Art
This course begins with the art, archaeology, and culture of the Etruscans and their important contributions to the early history of Rome. After a brief examination of the influences of Hellenistic culture on Rome, the course surveys the archaeological evidence illustrating the principal architectural and artistic achievements of the Romans down to the reign of Constantine the Great.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ART
Identical With: CCIV223, ARHA207
Prereq: None

ARCP234 Art and Society in Ancient Pompeii
This seminar surveys the art, architecture, and material remains of the cities buried by the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 CE. Through readings, class discussions, and student research presentations, we will explore the ways in which this material can be used to study the social and political life of a small Roman city and examine the unique evidence for reconstructing the private life of Roman citizens, from their participation in local politics and government, to their religious beliefs and lives, to the interior decoration of their homes and their burial customs.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CLAS
Identical With: CCIV234, ARHA225
Prereq: None

ARCP242 Tablets, Temples, and Cities: Near Eastern Art and Archaeology
History starts in the Near East with many firsts in human culture: domestication, writing, cities... Throughout its long history, the ancient Near East has produced a unique corpus of material culture, architecture, and textual records. In this course, we will survey the art and archaeology of the ancient Near Eastern civilizations with contextual information about the cultures that created them.

Every week we will progress chronologically and will explore broader socioeconomic, political, and cultural changes by discussing art historical, archaeological, and textual evidence. We will look at examples from Anatolia, Mesopotamia, and the Levant, and compare these to one another. Students will gain a larger understanding of commonalities and differences in the cultural expressions of these cultures. The last section of this course will be dedicated to current issues concerning the archaeology and cultural heritage of the Middle East.

This course will also have various hands-on components: We will learn about textile production by using spindle whorls, learn about cuneiform writing by making clay tablets, and create our own seals based on ancient Near Eastern imagery and mythology.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-ARCP
Prereq: None

ARCP244 Pyramids and Funeral Pyres: Death and the Afterlife in Greece and Egypt
This course explores the archaeology of death and burial in Egypt and Greece, from the royal burials in the pyramids at Giza, to the cremated remains of warriors in Lefkandi, Greece, to the humble burials of infants under house floors. Drawing upon a blend of archaeological, art historical, and mythological evidence, we will examine how the funerary practices and the very notions of the soul, the body, and the afterlife compare in these two societies. We will also explore how social class, gender, and ethnicity influenced those ideas. The course will also provide an introduction to archaeological theory and the interpretive strategies employed by archaeologists, art historians, and historians in the reconstruction of ancient societies.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CLAS
Identical With: CCIV244, ARHA219
Prereq: None

ARCP245 Climate, Change, and the Ancient World
Climate change has recently become shorthand for Global Warming, the clearcutting of rainforests, and the burning of fossil fuels. Yet while anthropogenic climate change on the global scale is indeed a modern phenomenon, climate change itself is nothing new, and human societies have been negotiating their natural world for millennia: adapting to changing conditions by inventing new technologies, adopting new social structures, and even modifying the landscapes around them.

Examples from around the world, including Africa, the Mediterranean, Australia, the Americas, Asia, and the British Isles, will be used to examine how past societies perceived and interacted with their environments. Aspects of collecting, analyzing and interpreting various climate proxies, and the theoretical foundations for interpreting their relevance to archaeological questions, will constitute major components of this course.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-ARCP
Identical With: ENVS245
Prereq: None
ARCP248 Who Owns the Past? Cultural Heritage, Archaeology, and Politics

"Who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past." - George Orwell, 1984

When Orwell wrote these words, there was no ISIS destroying non-Islamic monuments, no Saddam Hussein claiming to be a Babylonian king, and no cultural heritage news appearing on our Facebook feeds every day. Yet this statement is still as relevant as it was in Orwell's dystopia. Cultural heritage is an important part of state ideologies, national identities, and politics in the Middle East. The idea of controlling or owning the past is not new however; even ancient Near Eastern kings and rulers used their heritage or their conquests over older temples and monuments as a tool to claim political power.

In this course students will become familiar with the concept of cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible; learn about cultural heritage institutions and laws; and understand how these institutions protect heritage in different situations. By looking at past and modern case studies from Egypt, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Palestine, Israel, Syria, the U.S., and examples from other parts of the world, students will learn about the role of archaeology, colonialism, international politics, and indigenous cultures in creating, identifying, and protecting (or destroying) cultural heritage.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-ARCP
Prereq: None

ARCP257 Environmental Archaeology

Archaeological materials provide long-term records of how humans have modified past environments and how human societies respond to environmental change. In this course, students will learn how data from ancient plants, animals, and soils can be analyzed in order to draw interpretations about past human-environmental interactions. We will also discuss key topics in environmental archaeology, including the long-term environmental impacts of plant and animal domestication and debates over environmental causes for the "collapse" of civilizations such as the ancient Maya. The course will involve hands-on preparation of plant and animal specimens to add to the Wesleyan Environmental Archaeology Laboratory comparative collections. Students must be available on Sunday, March 1, for the first stage of animal skeleton preparation.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-ARCP
Prereq: None

ARCP258 Archaeometry: How to Science the Heck out of Archaeology

What does it mean to have meteoric elements in "Trojan War era" weapons? How should we understand "Barbarian Ware" of supposed invaders when we now identify local clay fabrics? This seminar is an introduction to the various classes of material culture and the scientific methods utilized today to answer such elusive archaeological questions. We will get hands-on experience with chromatography to identify organic commodities such as perfumes and wine, microscopy to characterize ceramic fabrics and technology, and XRF spectrometry to analyze various inorganics such as colored pigments, bronze implements, and lithic monuments. Based on this knowledge, class sessions will present and assess well-known case studies. We will discuss the conservation of material culture in order to better understand and preserve our past. What should a curator do with deteriorating Roman glass? Should a Preclassic Maya vessel with chocolate be cleaned for display? Is an Egyptian ushabti authentic? As a final project, students in close consultation with the instructor will conduct background research on a cultural artifact of their choice and design a program of archaeometric analyses to produce a poster that addresses intriguing archaeological questions of their own.

ARCP259 Unearthing Early China: Art and Archaeology

This course introduces early China by examining major archaeological discoveries from prehistory through the second century CE. We will analyze the formal
and material features of early Chinese artifacts from important archaeological excavations at sites such as Liangzhu, Anyang, Zhouyuan, and Mancheng. We will discuss the ways in which these artifacts and archaeological sites demonstrate early Chinese cosmological beliefs and ritual practices, especially notions related to heaven, afterlife, and the transition from ancestor worship to the pursuit of personal welfare in immortality. In addition, we will study the iconography and symbolism of objects found in these archaeological discoveries, which would serve as a foundation for the inception of visual arts in the later periods of Chinese history.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ART
Identical With: ARHA292, ENV5292
Prereq: None

ARCP292 Archaeology of Food, Trade, and Power in South India
This course examines patterns of life in premodern South India, focusing on the millennium from about AD 600 to 1600. It explores the persistent practices and institutions that structured social life—agricultural regimes of food production, patterns of local and long-distance trade, and elite discourses of power and authority—as well as historical events and processes that brought change to those patterns. The course capitalizes on South India’s rich array of archaeological evidence, from surface remains and excavated finds to standing architectural monuments, donative inscriptions on stone and copper plates, and various forms of coinage and hoards informing on economic life. Specific topics investigated include the articulation of cultural space and landscapes; food, subsistence, and modes of agricultural production; domestic architecture and habitation; trade, markets, and monetary systems; and the roles of religion and ritual in legitimating political power. There is an explicit emphasis on methods and their application, including those of epigraphy (the analysis of inscriptions), numismatics (the materially based study of coinage and monetary systems), surface archaeology (survey, documentation, and analysis of exposed surface remains), and the archaeology of buildings. Many class sessions will be devoted to active discussion and analysis of data.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ART
Identical With: ARHA292, ENV5292
Prereq: None

ARCP314 How to Think Like an Archaeologist
Archaeologists think about material culture, time, society, technology, art, religion, food—almost everything. They think about things from particular disciplinary perspectives. This course will introduce students to some of the theoretical and methodological approaches employed by archaeologists. In addition to archaeological case studies, discussions will draw on everyday life at Wesleyan, in Middletown, and in students’ home communities for examples illustrating archaeological perspectives. For example, Wilkie’s STRUNG OUT ON ARCHAEOLOGY: AN INTRODUCTION TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH explains archaeological concepts with examples drawn from her experiences at Mardi Gras. The course is designed for non-majors with no background in archaeology, but it will be sufficiently rigorous to fulfill ARCP major requirements.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-ANTH
Identical With: ANTH314
Prereq: None

ARCP329 Roman Villa Life
This seminar will explore life in the Roman countryside, from the luxurious suburban villas near major urban centers to working estates in Italy and the Roman provinces. The course will begin with a general survey of Roman villa life and then move to a more focused inquiry into specific topics including art and architecture, production, slave life, and transportation. Readings will be drawn from ancient literary sources, inscriptions, and modern social and archaeological studies. The course is intended for students from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds, but some knowledge of the Roman world is recommended.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CLAS
Identical With: CCIV329
Prereq: None

ARCP341 Visualizing the Classical
This project-based learning course integrates archaeology, classical texts, and the technologies of virtual construction to rebuild the material remains of the ancient world. Student teams will draw upon theories of urban design, engineering, and performance theory to create a material or virtual reconstruction of a classical built environment or object. Through the reconstruction of such spaces, we will explore how the ancient builders and craftsmen—through landscape, sound, light, functionality/monumentality, and spatial relationships—shaped the experience of the ancient viewer.

The course is divided into three modules. The first module will use case studies to survey the principles of archaeological reconstruction and explore the concepts and language of design and planning used by archaeologists and design specialists. These case studies will range from Greek and Roman temples, to city blocks and houses, to public spaces for entertainment or governance. In the second module, a series of technology workshops and in-class projects will give students hands-on training in the analytical mapping, modeling, interpretive, and reconstructive approaches such as ArcGIS, CAD, Sketchup and 3D printing. This practical training will form the foundation for the third module, during which student teams will apply these technologies to collaborate on the reconstruction of an ancient built environment or object. During this section of the course, students will discuss and collectively troubleshoot the problems of design and reconstruction they encounter as they go. Students will present their work at the end of the course, and discussion will focus on the insight that the process of reconstruction has offered into principles of ancient design and the values of ancient communities.

This seminar will be of interest to students with experience in classical studies, archaeology, studio arts, and digital design.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CLAS
Identical With: CCIV341, ARHA205
Prereq: None

ARCP372 Archaeology of Death
The material culture and biological remains associated with death represent a major component of the archaeological record. Funerary assemblages can provide information about, for example, ritual practices, beliefs, social organization, the division of labor, diet, and health. Tombs and monuments are important elements of sacred landscapes. The course will examine how archaeologists and biological anthropologists investigate and analyze mortuary facilities, grave goods, skeletal remains, and sacred landscapes to make inferences about the past.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-ANTH
Identical With: ANTH372
ARCP380 Relic and Image: The Archaeology and Social History of Indian Buddhism
This course investigates the social history and material culture of Indian Buddhism from the fifth century BCE through the period of the Kushan empire (1st–3rd century CE). The course begins with the examination of the basic teachings of Buddhism as presented in canonical texts and then turns to consideration of the organization and functioning of the early Buddhist community, or sangha. The focus then shifts to the popular practice of Buddhism in early India and the varied forms of interaction between lay and monastic populations. Although canonical texts will be examined, primary emphasis in this segment of the course is given to the archaeology and material culture of Buddhist sites and their associated historical inscriptions. Specific topics to be covered include the cult of the Buddha’s relics, pilgrimage to the sites of the Eight Great Events in the Buddha’s life, the rise and spread of image worship, and the Buddhist appropriation and reinterpretation of folk religious practices. Key archaeological sites to be studied include the monastic complex at Sanchi, the pilgrimage center at Bodh Gaya (site of the Buddha’s enlightenment), the city of Taxila (capital of the Indo-Greek kings and a major educational center), and the rock-cut cave monasteries along the trade routes of western India.

ARCP382 Archaeology of Money: Numismatics and GIS
In many parts of the world, lost coins numbering in the millions lie buried in the ground. Periodically, some of these coins come to light in the course of plowing, digging to repair a water main, or prospecting with metal detectors. These “treasure-trove” finds also known as coin hoards—provide the archaeologist of money with rich evidence of how money was actually used in pre-modern times.

ARCP403 Department/Program Project or Essay
Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

ARCP404 Department/Program Project or Essay
Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

ARCP407 Senior Tutorial (downgraded thesis)
Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor. Only enrolled in through the Honors Coordinator.

ARCP408 Senior Tutorial (downgraded thesis)
Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor. Only enrolled in through the Honors Coordinator.

ARCP409 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

ARCP410 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

ARCP411 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

ARCP412 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

ARCP424 Advanced Research Seminar, Undergraduate
Advanced research tutorial; project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
ARCP466 Education in the Field, Undergraduate
Students must consult with the department and class dean in advance of undertaking education in the field for approval of the nature of the responsibilities and method of evaluation.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

ARCP491 Teaching Apprentice Tutorial
The teaching apprentice program offers undergraduate students the opportunity to assist in teaching a faculty member’s course for academic credit.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

ARCP492 Teaching Apprentice Tutorial
The teaching apprentice program offers undergraduate students the opportunity to assist in teaching a faculty member’s course for academic credit.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F