



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE  
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

# ARCHAEOLOGY



Second Year Programme 2024-25

Welcome to 2<sup>nd</sup> year!

Please note – this document may be subject to change.

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Archaeology Handbook 2024-2025

2<sup>nd</sup> Year Co-ordinator: Conor Newman

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# Welcome Back to Archaeology!

The Department of Archaeology is situated in the Arts/Science Building overlooking the River Corrib on the north side of the main campus. Members of staff have a wide variety of research interests and expertise in different aspects of Irish and European Archaeology. We are ready to help you out and glad to meet you, so contact us with any questions you may have.

- Our Head of Discipline is Dr. Michelle Comber [michelle.comber@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:michelle.comber@universityofgalway.ie)
- Check out our courses and news updates at: [www.universityofgalway.ie/archaeology](http://www.universityofgalway.ie/archaeology).

**The Archaeology Department Library** (Room ARC202) is available as a study space for students enrolled on any Archaeology course. It is typically open during normal daytime hours when staff are present in the Department. If it is locked, you can get the key from the Department administrator Fiona McInerney. However, the room is sometimes used for meetings or other purposes, so check for notices on the door.

## Contacts

Conor Newman is the year co-ordinator for 2BA and is available to answer any queries you may have about the second-year programme at [conor.newman@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:conor.newman@universityofgalway.ie). Our administrator, Fiona McInerney, may be contacted at [fiona.mcinerney@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:fiona.mcinerney@universityofgalway.ie) or on (091) 49 2167. Her office hours are from 9am to 1pm (Room ARC217).

## Courses, Class Times & Venues

Lectures begin on Monday September 9th.

Students enrolled in the BA Joint Honours (GY101) or BA Global Experience (GY129) must take six modules in two subjects to make up the total of 60 ECTS per academic year. The six Archaeology modules over the academic year (5 ECTS each) are scheduled as three in Semester 1 and three in Semester 2.

Students enrolled on a variety of other degrees such as BA Film & Digital Media (GY127), BA Children Studies (GY110), BA History (GY105), BSc in Psychology (GY104), etc. may also take some Archaeology courses (check the specific requirements of your degree).

### Important note for BA Connect Students

When registering your second-year modules, please remember to choose just **25 ECTS** from each of your two subjects, i.e. five modules per subject (and not six modules per subject as required with the BA Joint Honours) **plus 10 ECTS** in your chosen specialism – a total of 60 ECTS.

### Semester 1

#### Core Modules

AR334 Ancient Civilizations (Mesopotamia, Egypt, Indus Valley, Mesoamerica)

AR246 Castles, Colonists and Crannogs c. 1100-1350 AD

#### Option Modules

AR2103 Archaeology and Irish Identity – Celts, Christians, Vikings

TI254 Space, Place and the Irish Landscape

## Semester 2

### Core Modules

AR236 Interpretation in Archaeology

AR245 Archaeology in Practice

AR2106 Introduction to Excavation

## Field Classes

Wear suitable clothing on field classes. Bring a few layers of warm clothing, a full set of waterproofs, a hat, gloves and boots.

Dress appropriately and be fully prepared for all weather conditions on the various planned field classes. Over the years we have experienced everything from blistering sunshine to driving blizzards, so prepare for the worst and hope for the best!

All field classes are for the whole day unless otherwise stated.

### Semester 1 Field Classes

AR2103 Saturday 28th September: field class to Caherconnell in the Burren, County Clare with Dr Michelle Comber

AR246 Saturday 23rd November: field class to Roscommon with Dr Kieran O'Conor

### Semester 2 Field Classes

AR2106 *Date to be confirmed*: field class to excavation site with Dr Michelle Comber  
Bring a few layers of warm clothing, a full set of waterproofs, a hat, gloves and boots.



# AR334 Ancient Civilizations – the rise of complex societies

(Mesopotamia, Egypt, Indus Valley, Mesoamerica)

Semester 1 Core Course

Course Co-ordinator: Dr. Carleton Jones

**Lectures Commence: 12th September**

**Lectures End: 30<sup>th</sup> November**

## Lecture Times and Venues

Thursday 11-12, AC202

Friday 11-12, Larmor

## Course Summary

As early as the 4th millennium BC people in some parts of the world began living in a new form of society characterised by social and economic inequalities. Archaeologists refer to these complex, state-level societies as civilizations. How and why did these ancient civilizations first emerge and can we detect common processes involved in the emergence and development of different early civilizations? This course begins with a review of various theories of state formation with different emphases ranging from economic and environmental factors to social factors. The course then moves on to a more detailed consideration of four areas where some of the earliest states developed: Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus Valley, and Mesoamerica.



Sphynx and pyramid at Giza, Egypt



The 'Stele of the Vultures', an Early Dynastic Period carving from Mesopotamia

## Learning Outcomes

- Have a developed understanding of how and why early civilizations developed.
- Ability to compose an organized, logical argument.
- Have a developed understanding of key international archaeological sites and issues.

**Module Structure and Delivery:**

Twenty four lectures, over twelve weeks.

**Assessment:**

Text comprehension exercise – 15%

In-Class test – 15%

2,500 word Final Essay - 70%

**Core Texts:**

Scarre, C. and B. Fagan 2016, *Ancient civilizations*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.

Available to students as an e-book via the Hardiman Library.

Additional readings will be provided via Canvas.

# AR246 – Castles, Colonists and Crannogs, c.1100AD-c.1350AD

Semester 1 Core Course

Course Co-ordinator: Dr Kieran O’Conor

**Lectures Commence: 9<sup>th</sup> September**

**Lectures End: 26<sup>th</sup> November**

## Lecture Times and Venues

Monday 11-12, Larmor

Tuesday 11-12, AC213

## Course Summary

This module critically examines the archaeology of Ireland during the high medieval period from c.1100 until the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century. The background to the coming of the Anglo-Normans to Ireland in 1169 and the impact they had on the landscape are discussed in depth in the first part of the course. Themes for this section of the course will include the role of castles, the manorial economy, trade, the foundation of villages, rural boroughs and towns by mostly English immigrants and the growth of certain cities. Dispersed settlement in Anglo-Norman dominated parts of eastern Ireland will also be explored. In particular, in the first part of the course, the interplay between castle, town and countryside in Anglo-Norman Ireland is examined in detail. It must be remembered, however, that large parts of Ireland remained in some way under the control of Irish (Gaelic Irish) princes and lords. The Norman conquest in Ireland in the years after 1169 was only partial, unlike England in 1066 which saw the complete takeover of that country by William the Conqueror. Lectures in this section of the course will examine the nature of native Irish settlement in the period under review and will argue that while there was much change, continuity from the pre-Norman early medieval period was seen too. Themes in this part of the course will include the late use of crannogs, ringforts, the Irish adoption of moated sites as princely residences and native agricultural practices. The course will also deal with the changes of the 14<sup>th</sup> century and the virtual collapse of the Anglo-Norman colony across large parts of Ireland at this time. The last lecture will be a summary of the course outlining the main points made. In particular, it will compare and contrast the landscapes of Gaelic and Anglo-Norman Ireland. Questions such as the recognition of ethnicity and cultural interface in the archaeological record will be addressed in this last lecture.



Lough Meelagh Crannóg, Co. Roscommon

## Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course (which includes the completion of the assessment) a student should be able to:

- Demonstrate a knowledge and critical understanding of the archaeology of high medieval Ireland. c.1100-c.1350
- Critically analyse competing interpretations of medieval settlement in high medieval Ireland.
- Properly structure and coherently write a 3,000-word essay.
- Employ bibliographic and referencing skills.
- Have some knowledge of medieval architecture.

### Module Structure & Delivery

The module will consist of twenty-three lectures. A field class to Roscommon associated with the module will be held on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2024. The Announcement function on Canvas and e-mail will be regularly used to answer questions.

### Assessment

Multiple-choice class test on the last day of the module in late November (10% of the marks) and a c.3,000-word essay (90% of the marks) due by 4pm on Friday 13th December 2024. A choice of essay titles and a detailed bibliography will be given out by late September

### Core Texts

Please note that your full reading list will be available on Canvas from late September. As many relevant publications as possible will be posted as PDFs on Canvas at that stage. Some core texts are listed below.

**(a)** Barry, T. B. 1987 *The archaeology of medieval Ireland*. London and New York.

**(b)** Duffy, P., Edwards, D. and FitzPatrick, E. (eds). 2001 *Gaelic Ireland, c.1250-c.1650: land, lordship and settlement*. Dublin.

**(c)** O'Connor, K. 1998 *The archaeology of medieval rural settlement in Ireland*. Discovery Programme Monographs 3, Dublin.

**(d)** O'Connor, K. 2004 *Medieval rural settlement in Munster*, Barryscourt Lecture No. VII, 225-56, Gandon Editions, Kinsale.

**(e)** O'Keefe, T. 2000 *Medieval Ireland: an archaeology*. Stroud.

**(f)** Murphy, M. And Potterton, M. 2010 *The Dublin Region in the Middle Ages*. Dublin.



Dominican Friary, Roscommon



# AR2103 Archaeology and Irish Identity – Celts, Christians, Vikings

Semester 1 Optional Course  
Course Co-ordinator: Dr. Michelle Comber

**Lectures Commence: 11<sup>th</sup> September**

**Lectures End: 30<sup>th</sup> October**

## Lecture Times and Venues

Wednesday 11-12, AC213

Wednesday 1-2, Larmor

## Course Summary

This module introduces students to the archaeology of Ireland from the Iron Age to the 12th century AD. It comprises a cumulative exploration of identity both *during* those centuries and resulting *from* those centuries. The archaeology of Ireland's 'Celtic' Iron Age, its 'Golden Age' of Christianity and art, and its interaction with the Viking world, will guide discussions of what it was like to live in Ireland during those eras, and where elements of modern 'Celtic' identity have originated. This last touches on the role of archaeology in the development of identity.



## Module Structure

Sixteen lectures and a field class.

## Field Class

Caherconnell, Co. Clare, Saturday 28th September 2024

## Assessment

Two assignments over eight weeks:

1. Participation in online discussion board at start of module (weeks 1 and 2)
2. End-of-module in-class quiz (last lecture of module, Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October, 1-2pm)

## Lecture Themes

- IRISH IDENTITY: ANCIENT IRELAND.
- CELTIC IRELAND?
- MYTHICAL HEROES.
- 'CELTIC' (?) CHRISTIANITY: SAINTS AND SCHOLARS.
- THE WORK OF ANGELS: SCRIBES, METALSMITHS, SCULPTORS.
- THE WORK OF FARMERS.
- VIKING RAIDERS, TRADERS, AND SETTLERS.
- ARCHAEOLOGY AND IRISH IDENTITY: THE FACT BEHIND THE FICTION.

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module the learner will be able to:

- Discuss the Celtic debate
- Recognise the origins of certain elements of modern Celtic culture
- Describe what life was like in Early Medieval Ireland
- Outline the impact of the Vikings on Irish identity

## Core Texts

Note – additional readings and recordings will be provided on Canvas and/or recommended in class.

Raftery, B. 2000. *Pagan Celtic Ireland*. Any Ed. London, Thames and Hudson.

Edwards, N. 2002. *The Archaeology of Early Medieval Ireland*. Any Ed. London, Routledge.

# TI254 Space, Place and the Irish Landscape

## Semester 1 Optional Course

Course Co-ordinators: Maggie Ronayne and Professor Ulf Strohmayer

\*\*\* Please note – if you choose TI254 as your module in Archaeology, and you are also studying Geography, you must not register for it as one of your Geography modules. \*\*\*

**Lectures Commence: 9<sup>th</sup> September**

**Lectures End: 25<sup>th</sup> November**

### Lecture Times and Venues

Monday 10-11, LARMOR

Monday 1-2, venue tbc

### Course Summary

This module aims to critically explore the historical and contemporary complexities of Irish culture, place and landscape through select case-studies, thematic and/or locational, and through a range of theoretical concerns from both Archaeology and Geography. The module engages the key challenge of carefully contextualising and historicising understandings of landscape, heritage and environment, and exploring urgent contemporary questions of landscape / environment

sustainability, governmentality and management.

The module will provide an introduction to the various ways in which human societies interact(ed) with their environment, and will be able to provide both chronological depth and thematically-specific case-study knowledge of key sites and spaces across the island of Ireland.

Particular attention too will be given to the range of competing discourses on issues of environment, landscape and development in both rural and urban Ireland and their implications for communities in the present and the future. Some of the case studies will be able to provide a long term trajectory of developments (in rural landscapes, urbanisation etc.), while others may choose to focus on other aspects of the physical or social environment.



This semester the lectures will consist of an introduction to key themes and approaches to landscape studies. This is followed by lectures on themes such as ways of reading landscapes; landscape and representation; symbolic, vernacular and folkloristic landscapes; landscapes and power; landscapes of the North; archaeology, landscape and identity; Ireland's Great Famine: representation and reality; institutional landscapes, landscapes and commemoration.

### Transferable Skills

- Interpretation of written and visual materials
- Creative engagement with material landscapes

- Explanation and justification of interpretative data
- Organising differently structured data and materials
- Representing geographical and archaeological data
- Effective work within a team, including time-management and communicative skills.



### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the module, students will be able to:

- Engage with the history of landscape through many different materialities;
- Differentiate between different sensory engagements that combine to make landscapes;
- Understand and critically engage with the constructed nature of landscapes through history;
- Analyse policies at a range of scales that impact upon the construction and maintenance of landscapes;
- Critically review the uses to which landscapes are being deployed in contemporary society;
- Appreciate aesthetic qualities emanating from landscape;
- Critically read the rich diversity of landscape, culture and heritage across the island of Ireland and to understand its key historical contexts;
- Deconstruct the various political, cultural, economic and symbolic significances of a range of Irish urban and rural landscapes.

### Assessment

The assessment consists of 2 essays (1500 words each), one covering the first, the other covering the second half of the course and worth 50% each of the overall mark. Deadlines will be announced in class with the first essay being due approximately halfway through the course and the second due at the end.

### Bibliography

Below you'll find a list of key general texts as well as more specific texts pertinent to particular segments of the course. Most of these are included in the alphabetically organised "Readings" folder on Blackboard. We will refer to these in our lectures and invite you to engage with readings throughout the course. In addition, the texts below should serve as a first port of call when you start to engage with your two course essays. Further readings may be added to the above list during the term. Please take note of any email announcements. We are happy to suggest further readings for your essays via email.

### Core Texts

- Bender, B. and M. Winer (eds), 2001, *Contested Landscapes: Movement, Exile and Place*. Berg: Oxford and New York
- Brett, D., 1996, *The Construction of Heritage*, Cork University Press, Cork

- Cosgrove, D. and S. Daniels (eds), 1988, *The Iconography of Landscape*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Duncan, J. 1990, *The City as Text: The Politics of Landscape Interpretation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Duncan, J. and D. Ley (eds), 1993, *Place/Culture/Representation*, Routledge, London
- Graham, B.J., Ashworth, G.J. and J.E. Tunbridge (eds), 2000, *A Geography of Heritage: Power, Culture and Economy*, Arnold, London
- Head, L. 2008 Geographical scale in understanding human landscapes. In: B. David & J. Thomas (eds.) *Handbook of landscape archaeology*, 379–85. Left Coast Press, Walnut Creek.
- Hetherington, K., 1998, *Expressions of Identity: Space, Performance, Politics*, Sage, London
- Howard, P, Thompson, I and Waterton, E (Eds), 2013, *The Routledge Companion to Landscape Studies*, Routledge, New York, NY,
- Kearns, G. and C. Philo (eds), 1993, *Selling Places*, Pergamon, Oxford
- Lowenthal, D., 1998, *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Tunbridge, J. and G. Ashworth, 1996, *Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as Resource in Conflict*, Wiley, Chichester
- Turner, S., Shillito, L.-M. & Carrer-Howard, F. 2018. Landscape archaeology. In P. Howard, I. Thompson & E. Waterton (eds.), *The Routledge companion to landscape studies*. Second edition. New York: Routledge. [The version by Turner in the first edition of this book is also fine.]
- Wolf, N., 2008, *Landscape Painting*, Taschen, Köln
- Wylie, J., 2007, *Landscape*, Routledge, New York

#### Introduction and Approaches to Studying Landscape

- Brown, W, 2017, *Walled states, waning sovereignty*, Zone Book, New York, second edition
- Casey, E. 2002, *Representing Place. Landscape, Painting, Maps*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 131-153
- Graham, B.J., Ashworth, G.J. and Tunbridge, J.E. (eds), 2000, *A Geography of Heritage: Power, Culture and Economy*, Arnold, London (chapters 1-4)
- Henderson, G. 1998, ‘“Landscape is Dead, Long Live Landscape”: A Handbook for Sceptics’, *Journal of Historical Geography*, 24, 1, pp. 94-100
- Johnson, N. 1999, ‘Framing the Past: Time, Space and the Politics of Heritage Tourism in Ireland’, *Political Geography*, 18 (2), pp. 187-207
- Nash, C., 2005, ‘Landscape’, in: Cloke, P., Crang, P. and Goodwin, M., *Introducing Human Geographies*, Hodder Arnold, Abingdon, pp. 156-167

#### Irish Vernacular Landscapes

- Aalen, F, Whelen, K. & Stout, M. (1997) *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape*, Cork University Press
- Birkeland, Y. (2002) *Design for Sustainability: A sourcebook of integrated eco-logical solutions*, Earthscan
- Brook, I. (1998) ‘Goethean science as a way to read landscape’, *Landscape Research*, 23 (91), 51-69  
([http://writtle.academia.edu/IsisBrook/Papers/136326/Goethean\\_Science\\_as\\_a\\_Way\\_to\\_Read\\_Landscape](http://writtle.academia.edu/IsisBrook/Papers/136326/Goethean_Science_as_a_Way_to_Read_Landscape))
- Duffy, P. J. (2007) *Exploring the History and Heritage of Irish Landscapes*, Four Courts Press (see ch. 4 on the built environment)
- Galway County Council (2005) *Design Guidelines for the Single Rural House*, GCC  
(<http://www.galway.ie/en/Services/Planning/DevelopmentPlans/GalwayCountyDevelopment>)

- Mike Shanahan Architects & Colin Buchanan & Partners (2003) The Cork Rural Housing Design Guide, Cork County Council (<http://www.corkcoco.ie/co/pdf/578944050.pdf>)

### 'Constructing' the (Mobile) Irish Landscape

- Addison, J., "from *The Spectator*, No. 414, 25 June 1712" in John Dixon Hunt and Peter Willis, eds. *The Genius of the Place: The English Landscape Garden 1620 - 1820* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1988) 141 - 143
- Burke, E., "A Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and the Beautiful" [1757] in Ian Thompson, *Rethinking Landscape: a critical reader* (Oxford: Routledge, 2009) 41 - 44
- Heely, J., "From *Letters on the Beauties of Hagley, Envil, and The Leasowes* [1777]" in John Dixon Hunt and Peter Willis, eds. *The Genius of the Place: The English Landscape Garden 1620 - 1820* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1988) 326 - 329
- Robinson, T., "Listening to the Landscape" in *Setting foot on the shores of Connemara and other writings* (Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 1996) 151 - 164
- Ryan, A., "Stasis and Mobility" in *Where land meets sea: coastal explorations of landscape, representation and spatial experience* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012) 65 - 95

### Landscapes of 'the North'

- Abdelmonem, M.G. and McWhinney, R., 2015. In search of common grounds: Stitching the divided landscape of urban parks in Belfast. *Cities*, 44, pp.40-49.
- McClelland, A., 2020. Spaces for Public Participation: valuing the cross-border landscape in North West Ireland. *Irish Geography*, 52(2), pp.193-211.
- Murtagh, B., 2011. Ethno-religious segregation in post-conflict Belfast. *Built Environment*, 37(2), pp.213-225.
- Murtagh, B., 2011. Desegregation and place restructuring in the new Belfast. *Urban Studies*, 48(6), pp.1119-1135.
- Selim, G., 2015. The landscape of differences: contact and segregation in the everyday encounters. *Cities*, 46, pp.16-25

### The Great Famine: Representation and Reality

- Crowley, J., Smyth, W.J. and Murphy, M. (eds.) 2012. *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*. Cork: Cork University Press
- McDonough, T. (ed.) 2005. *Was Ireland a Colony? Economics, Politics and Culture in Nineteenth Century Ireland*. Dublin and Portland, Oregon: Irish Academic Press (especially Chapters 3, 4 and 13)
- Morash, C. and Hayes, R. (eds.) 1996. *Fearful Realities: New Perspectives on the Famine*. Dublin and Portland, Oregon: Irish Academic Press (especially chapters by Stout, Orser, Morash and Kelleher)
- Orser, C.E. (ed.) 2006. *Unearthing Hidden Ireland. Historical Archaeology at Ballykilcline, County Roscommon*. Bray: Wordwell.
- Whelan, K. 2011. *The Modern Landscape: From Plantation to Present*. In F.H.A. Aalen, Whelan, K. and Stout, M. (eds.), *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape*. Cork: Cork University Press. 73-113.

# AR236 Interpretation in Archaeology

Semester 2 Core Course

Course Co-ordinator: Maggie Ronayne

**Lectures Commence: 15<sup>TH</sup> January**

**Lectures End: 4<sup>th</sup> April**

## **Lecture Times and Venues**

Wednesday 11-12, AMB008

Friday 11-12, AC204

## **Course Summary**

This course is an introduction to the different theories and frameworks archaeologists have used to interpret the past. The key question today is how our approach to our work as archaeologists can relate positively to communities whose heritage we are investigating. After a look at theories archaeologists used in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, we will examine recent and exciting work by archaeologists together with communities. Examples will be drawn from Ireland and all over the world – from the struggle to reclaim a district of Cape Town bulldozed in apartheid South Africa to explorations of Indigenous women’s role in the development of agriculture in North America and Western Asia to the archaeology of maroons and opposition to slavery in the Americas. The course will provide students with an opportunity to engage in discussion about particular readings and issues.

## **Module Structure and Delivery**

This module consists of 24 lectures as well as background reading and class discussion.

## **Learning Outcomes**

This course will enable students to:

- Recognise a variety of approaches to interpretation in Archaeology
- Place these approaches in their wider academic, historical and social context
- Compare approaches to interpretation in different parts of the world
- Understand the role of interpretation
- Critically discuss and evaluate contrasting interpretations and current debates
- Construct a clear, coherent argument
- Assess the theoretical framework and social context of archaeological writing, projects or other work
- Appreciate the need for professionals to work with communities in the development of interpretations

## **Assessment**

Assessment for this module consists of a class test which is worth 30% of the total mark for the module and an essay, worth 70%. The class test will occur at the end of the module and the essay deadline is 7<sup>th</sup> April 2025.



### Core Texts

- Gamble, C. 2001. Chapter 2: How Many Archaeologies Are There? In *Archaeology: The Basics*. London and New York: Routledge, 21-44.
- Hodder, I. and Hutson, S. 2003. *Reading the Past*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Orser, C. 1996. *A Historical Archaeology of the Modern World*. New York and London: Plenum Press.
- Trigger, B. 1996 [1984]. Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist. In R. Preucel and I. Hodder (eds.), *Contemporary Archaeology in Theory*. Blackwell: Oxford and Cambridge, Mass., 615-631.
- Trigger, B. 1989. *A History of Archaeological Thought*. Cambridge: University Press.

A detailed reading list will be provided in class and a good amount of this reading material will be on Canvas.



# AR245 Archaeology in Practice

Semester 2 Core Course

Course Co-ordinator: Dr Carleton Jones

**Lectures Commence: 13<sup>th</sup> January**

**Lectures End: 1<sup>st</sup> April**

## Lecture Times and Venues

Monday 11-12, AC214

Tuesday 11-12, McMunn

## Course Summary

This course teaches students about the wide range of ways in which archaeologists go about researching the past. Students learn about the nature of the archaeological record (formation processes, preservation conditions, etc.), different types of data collection and analyses used by archaeologists, dating methods, and different research foci. Case studies as diverse as Pharaoh Tutankhamun's tomb, Bronze Age houses preserved in the mud of the English fens, modern ethnographic studies used to interpret Ireland's prehistoric megaliths, shipwrecks in the Mediterranean, and long-distance exchange patterns in Mesoamerica are all used. The cutting-edge techniques of isotope analysis and ancient DNA analysis that are revolutionizing our understanding of ancient people and animals are a particular focus. Students will also be given hands-on introductions to topographical and geophysical surveying equipment.



*Clockwise from top left: Uluburun Bronze Age shipwreck in the Mediterranean, Vessels from Must Farm England with food still in them, 'Ballynahatty woman' – first prehistoric Irish individual to have whole genome sequenced, Building a megalith in West Sumba Indonesia in the recent past.*

**Structure of Course**

Lectures and a practical tutorial on topographical and geophysical surveying equipment.

**Assessment**

In-class test (35%)

Short Essay (1400 words) on the use of isotopes & aDNA by archaeologists (40%)

Survey methods practical (25%)

**Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this course, students will have acquired a basic knowledge about the many diverse ways in which archaeologists go about researching the past, understand how the new techniques of isotope analysis and ancient DNA analysis are shaping our understanding of the past, and will have gained some hands-on experience with topographical and geophysical survey equipment.

**Core Texts**

Reading lists will be provided in class.

# AR2106 Introduction to Excavation

Semester 2 Core Course

Course Co-ordinator: Dr. Michelle Comber

**Lectures Commence: 15<sup>th</sup> January**

**Lectures End: 13<sup>th</sup> March**

## Lecture Times and Venues

Wednesday 1-2, IT125

Thursday 11-12, Dillon

## Course Summary

This module is designed to introduce students to various aspects of archaeological excavation, commencing with the historical development of such investigations. This will trace the main stages internationally, from the work of antiquarians right through to that of modern archaeologists. The methods involved in modern archaeological excavation will then be presented. In addition to all of this internationally relevant material, some Irish-specific content will be explored. This will include the legal framework governing archaeological excavation in Ireland, a practical account of the licensing system and a taste of how it works.



## Lecture Topics will include:

- History of excavation
- Planning requirements
- Excavation grids and mapping
- Equipment and logistics
- Stratigraphy, contexts and features
- On-site recovery of artefacts and samples
- Marine/underwater excavation
- Irish licensing requirements and applications

## Course Structure

Two on-campus lectures per week and a field class to an excavation site, date to be confirmed 2025.

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module the learner will be able to:

- describe the main historical steps in the development of archaeological excavation
- outline the processes involved in excavating an archaeological site
- read/interpret a stratigraphic sequence
- write an excavation-licence application (or parts thereof)

## Assessment

One assignment at end of module:

Students will be assigned an archaeological site and will prepare a mock excavation-licence application. This will involve a little research into the site itself and then draw largely on the module content to outline the relevant processes required to successfully excavate such a site.

Due date: Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> April

## Core Texts

Note – additional readings and recordings will be provided on Canvas and/or recommended in class.

Renfrew, C. & Bahn, P. 2019 *Archaeology: Theories, Methods and Practice*. London, Thames & Hudson.

OR

Greene, K. 2010 *Archaeology: An Introduction*. London, Routledge.

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