

**- ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION –
ANTHROPOLOGY 3K03, Term 1, 2012-13**

Instructor: Tristan Carter (CNH 507) - stringy@mcmaster.ca

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2-3pm and by appointment

Lab Times & Location: Thursdays, 11.30 pm – 2.20 pm - KTH B122A

Course Outline & Aims

The primary aim of the course is to learn how archaeologists construct interpretations about the past on the basis of materials' analysis in conjunction with more general theoretical approaches. This course provides a hands-on introduction to the lab methods, practices & protocols of archaeology such as material identification, recording, quantification and report writing. Through this course, you will enhance your skills in primary & secondary/archival archaeological research. To these ends, you will study the lithics, ceramics & animal remains from the early/mid-seventeenth century AD Walker site (AgHa-9), thought to be the principal town of the Neutral Nation. By working with specific data-sets & engaging in a wider range of regional and methodological/theoretical literature you will come to offer your own insights into the past through writing and discussion.

Goals

There are five main, interrelated goals of the course:

- a) To understand how archaeologists recover, produce and *interpret* archaeological data.
- b) To gain the basic skills required to study three major types of archaeological materials.
- c) To tack between existing reportage on the Walker Site and your own artefact analyses to come to new archaeological interpretations about the community and its practices.
- d) To learn such transferrable skills as technical writing and oral / PowerPoint presentations.
- e) To gain a basic understanding of what questions archaeologists can ask of their materials, i.e. the interpretative potential & limitations of the archaeological record.
- f) To undertake hands-on analyses of archaeological materials in the laboratory to understand more clearly the ancient activities that took place at the Walker site.
- g) To locate your discoveries and research in the broader context of Iroquoian studies and archaeological practice more generally.

NB - As we will be working with a research collection, each student is responsible for ensuring that all artefacts are cared & accounted for. Please respect these materials.

Required Texts:

The major texts required for the course are available in the lab library holdings – to be used by the lab groups during class and extra lab hours (details to be announced in class); some on-line texts are also provided via links in your Avenue facility.

The primary text that we provide for your use is:

Wright, M.J. (1981), *The Walker Site*. Copy of National Museum of Man Mercury Series 103.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Presentations	Due
1	Sept 6	Background to Iroquoian Archaeology LAB 1 – Quantification		
2	Sept 13	LAB 2 – Lithic Analysis Intro	LAB 1 (5 mins.)	LAB 1 report (Fri.)
3	Sept 20	LAB 2 – Lithic Analysis Walker Site		
4	Sept 27	LAB 2 – Lithic Analysis Walker Site		
		<i>Bell ringer quiz – lithics</i>		
5	Oct 4	LAB 3 – Ceramic Analysis Intro	LAB 2 (5 mins.)	LAB 2 report (Fri.)
6	Oct 11	LAB 3 – Ceramic Analysis Walker Site		
7	Oct 18	LAB 3 – Ceramic Analysis Walker Site		
		<i>Bell ringer quiz – ceramics</i>		
8	Oct 25	LAB 4 – Into to zooarchaeology	LAB 3 (5 mins.)	LAB 3 report (Fri.)
9	Nov 1	LAB 4 – Zooarchaeology Walker Site		
10	Nov 8	LAB 4 – Zooarchaeology Walker Site		
		<i>Bell ringer quiz – zooarchaeology</i>		
11	Nov 15	Lab time for final paper	LAB 4 (5 mins.)	LAB 4 report (Fri)
12	Nov 22	Lab time for final paper		
13	Nov 29	Lab time for final paper		
14	Dec 5	No class (Exam Period)		FINAL PAPER – Wednesday Dec 5th

NB - For details on which readings are associated with each lecture/lab, see course Avenue facility.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The course has four labs, four lab reports, three bell-ringer exams and a final paper:

Mark Breakdown

Lab Reports	70%
Bell-ringer exams	15%
Final Project	15%

1) LAB WORK

Lab reports - (70% of final grade) - there are 4 lab reports to be completed by each class member:

Throughout the first $\frac{3}{4}$ of the course you will be working in assigned lab groups of approximately 4 people each. Each group will be assigned one of six assemblages from the Walker Site, comprising a range of lithic, ceramic and faunal remains from: House 4, House 5, Midden A (two groups) and Midden F (two groups).

Lab 1 - sorting the assemblage by material culture category and then quantifying this material [worth 10%]

Lab 2 – a multi-faceted study of the lithics from the Walker Site [worth 20%].

Lab 3 – a multi-faceted study of the ceramics from the Walker Site [worth 20%].

Lab 4 – a multi-faceted study of the faunal remains from the Walker Site [worth 20%].

NB – full details of Lab aims and requirements will be provided on Avenue as downloadable PDF's.

Each lab group is responsible for analysing the assemblage and entering the data into an Excel spreadsheet (see below), then writing up a report on the intellectual process and its results as individuals. Details of the literature we expect you to use (bare minimum) will be provided on Avenue. The lab reports will be due in class the week following the completion of the respective materials analysis segment.

Data Entry and Submission

A significant component of this class is the construction, use and maintenance of a site-specific database. Within each lab you will be generating data that requires inputting into your group's Excel spreadsheet; these (sub)databases will then be combined to produce the site's master database. To achieve this you are required to send your assemblage datasets to the class TA sometime during the week after the relevant materials analysis section and before the beginning of the next class (see course schedule). Group members should take turns for being responsible for emailing this information; a schedule will be established for this in the first two weeks.

Database templates and standards for data entry by column must be used and diligently followed (otherwise, data sorting will be difficult and material patterns obscured etc.). These will be emailed to everyone after the first class. If non-standard data entry formats are used, you will be required to re-enter data in the appropriate format(s). Please keep up with your data entry obligations to the lab team. **Note: maintaining data entry standards AND sending data on time will be marked.**

Lab Presentations and Report Submissions

An important aim of this course is to improve your presentation skills; to this end we will ask each lab group to produce a snappy PowerPoint presentation the week after each lab has finished. The aim is to give the rest of the class a clear outline of what you have, which will in turn help them interpret their own data. These presentations will be a maximum of 5 minutes / 5 slides; focus on the big picture.

Feedback from instructor and class will be provided immediately after each presentation; this positive criticism can then be used by each lab group to improve their individual lab reports which will then be submitted at the end of the week, i.e. the deadline for each lab will be **4pm of the next Friday** (one day later).

2) BELL-RINGER EXAMS

After the completion of each major lab (2-4) there will be a timed hand-on materials' examination of the particular material just studied (details to be provided nearer the time). These exams are worth 5% each (15% total).

3) FINAL PAPER

The final paper aims to synthesise your interpretations from Labs 2-4; you will work in pairs – but will submit individual papers – with one person from a house assemblage and one person from the related midden assemblage.

The paper is to be 10 pages of text (maximum, plus pertinent graphs, images and bibliography) and is worth 15% of your grade; it is due at **4pm Wednesday 5th December**, to be submitted to the instructor via his Anthropology Department mail box. Details of the paper's format / content requirements will be provided during the course.

Late Assignments

Assignments must be handed in by the assigned date. Late assignments are penalized 5% of the mark per day including weekends & holidays with a maximum of 4 days after which a 0 grade will be awarded. Extensions can only be gained if the student provides an appropriate note/letter from doctor, CSD, or Dean. If you are handing in an assignment out of class time, you must use the drop box opposite the elevators on the 5th floor of Chester New Hall (Dept. of Anthropology). **You CANNOT email/fax your assignment, or slide it under any office door.** Drop box is checked at 4pm each business day. Assignments received after 4pm will be dated the following day.

Academic Skills Counselling and **Services for Students with Disabilities** are available through the Student Accessibility Services (SAS)

Tel: 905-525-9140 x28652

Email: sas@mcmaster.ca

Website: <http://sas.mcmaster.ca>

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, Appendix 3, www.mcmaster.ca/senate/academic/ac_integrity.htm

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g., the submission of work that is not one's own for which other credit has been obtained. (*Insert specific course information, e.g., style guide*)
2. Improper collaboration in group work. (*Insert specific course information*)
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

USE OF COMPUTERS: Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES E-MAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Email Forwarding in MUGSI:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html>

*Forwarding will take effect 24-hours after students complete the process at the above link

(Approved at the Faculty of Social Sciences meeting on Tues. May 25, 2010)