



Archaeological Field Methods (ANT 4824)

Bioarchaeology in Transylvania (ANT 4930)

Location: Odorheui Secuiesc, Transylvania, Romania

Instructor of Record

Dr. Jonathan D. Bethard
University of South Florida
jbethard@usf.edu

Excavation Director

Dr. Katie Zejdlik
The Ohio State University
zejdlik.1@osu.edu

Assistant Excavation Director

Renee Reinman, MA
University of South Florida
lrreinman@usf.edu

Course Description

Required Course Materials

No textbook is required. Related course materials will be made available in a shared, online folder or in hardcopy at the project location.

Physical fitness requirement

Students will be working outside, 40 hours a week, in temperatures ranging from 65- 95 degrees Fahrenheit. Work consists of walking uneven terrain, climbing ladders, climbing lots of stairs, and frequent trowel use. Most of the workday will be spent in a kneeling or sitting position carefully excavating human remains. Students will be expected to participate in all field and classroom activities.

Rationale/Purpose

The Medieval Funerary Project is made up of multiple, bioarcheological projects within the Hungarian-Szekler lands of Transylvania, Romania. Most of the projects are associated with the remains of churches and their mortuary landscapes. Under the direction and collaboration of the descendant community, we explore how centuries of religious and political upheaval have influenced the demographics and health of the individuals interred within cemeteries. This project provides excellent opportunities for students to get involved in international bioarcheology, multi-institution networking, and collaboration to address biological, archaeological, and cultural questions. Over the course of several weeks, students will acquire skills in broad and small-scale excavation, drawing, mapping, note taking, and curation; thereby developing the strategic skills necessary to acquire jobs working in archaeological and forensic anthropology organizations around the world.

Course Aims

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Properly excavate human remains
- Perform basic osteological analysis
- Generate maps of human remains and their surrounding depositional context
- Safely remove human remains and prepare them for curation
- Complete burial paperwork
- Combine information from a variety of contexts for burial interpretation
- Design a project, execute it, and present it at the workshop's capstone colloquium

Couse Objectives

- Demonstrate the ability to interpret and use numerical, written, oral, and visual data
- Demonstrate the ability to read with comprehension, and to write and speak clearly, coherently, and effectively as well as to adapt modes of communication appropriate to an audience
- Demonstrate the ability to critically analyze arguments
- Demonstrate an understanding of:
 - Past human experiences and ability to relate them to the present
 - Different contemporary cultures and their interrelationships
 - Issues involving social institutions, interpersonal and group dynamics, human development and behavior, and cultural diversity
 - Scientific concepts and methods as well as contemporary issues in science and technology
 - Cultural heritage through its expressions of wisdom, literature and art and their roles in the process of self and social understanding.
- Demonstrate an excitement for, and love of, learning

Assessment

Grading Scale

A	B	C	D	F
100-90	89 - 80	79 - 70	69 - 60	≤ 59

Grading Criteria

Attitude/ Morale/ Professionalism (40%)

Attitude is very important when working on an archaeological crew. Excavation is both fun and challenging. Furthermore, working outside presents a series of variables that are new to many students. Willingness to participate as a member of the team, work on improving, and staying positive are imperative for succeeding on this project.

Archaeological Excavation Methods (40%)

Evaluation of the excavation methods will be based on the student's attention to instruction and improvement over time. It is expected that all students will start with little-to-no knowledge of human skeletal excavation techniques. Daily excavation work allows for the practice and refinement of these skills. The first two weeks are meant to move slow as students gets used to the tools, the archaeological matrix, and the gentle but directed 'feel' of excavation. By the end of the session, a successful student will demonstrate an increase in excavation speed, cleaner burial excavation, and an independent understanding of the steps required to excavate human remains.

Project (20%)

Students will design a project based on their interests in the Papdomb site and the resources available. They will then complete the project during their time in Romania and present it at our colloquium held on the last Friday of the session. Students may elect to work alone or in groups.

Tentative Course Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1							
Morning	Orientation	Orientation	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Optional trip	Optional trip
Day	Orientation	Orientation	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork		
Evening	Free	Lecture	Free	Lecture	Free		
Week 2							
Morning	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Optional trip	Optional trip
Day	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork		
Evening	Project time	Lecture	Project time	Lecture	Free		
Week 3							
Morning	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Free	Free
Day	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork		
Evening	Project time	Lecture	Project time	Lecture	Free		
Week 4							
Morning	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Colloquium	Departure	
Day	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork			
Evening	Project time	Project time	Project time	Project time	Departure		

Additional Scheduling Notes

1. Schedule is subject to change based on weather and resources. Rain days will be lab days. Lectures, workshops, and project time will be announced that day.
2. Free time can be used for project time including before and after meals or evening lectures. Access to project spaces and resources must be negotiated based on project and student needs.
3. There are optional weekend tours provided by our collaborator ArchaeoTek. These are for an additional cost outside of the course fees.
4. Breakfast is served from 7am- 8am and is not mandatory. Dinner is served at 7:00 sharp and is mandatory. If you cannot attend dinner, you must notify an instructor ahead of time.

Syllabus Updates:

This syllabus, with its course schedule, is based on the most recent information about the course content and schedule planned for this course. Its content is subject to revision as needed to adapt to new knowledge or unanticipated events. Updates will remain focused on achieving the course objectives and students will receive notification of such changes. Students will be notified of changes and are responsible for attending to such changes or modifications as distributed by the instructor.

Expectations of Students/Course Policies

Standard University Policies

Policies about disability access, religious observances, academic grievances, academic misconduct, academic continuity, food insecurity, and sexual harassment are governed by a central set of policies that apply to all classes at USF. These may be accessed at: <https://www.usf.edu/provost/faculty/core-syllabus-policy-statements.aspx>

Attendance

Students are expected to participate daily in all field and lab activities. Completion of the excavation project is dependent on the crew and absences will be reflected strongly in the course grade.

Timely Submissions

All assignments must be turned in by the end of the course. Un-submitted work will result in either a failing grade or an incomplete for the course. Neither is an advisable option so students must manage their time efficiently.