ANG 6122C ARCHAEOLOGICAL CERAMICS

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Office Hours: Thursday 9:00 to 12:00  
or by appointment

Fall 2015  
Section 1B73  
Thursday 1:55-4:55 PM (Periods 7-9)  
Turlington Hall, Room B357

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Ceramics are one of the most common and durable artifacts on many archaeological sites throughout the world and they are important material for understanding past societies and cultures. The analysis of ceramics often forms a cornerstone of archaeological research programs and is the basis for investigations of a wide range of topics such as diet, cuisine, chronology, technological change, social learning, social boundaries, kinship, trade and exchange, migration, and demography, to name a few.

Archaeological Ceramics is a graduate-level seminar in the analysis and interpretation of pottery. In this sense the course title is a misnomer—we will consider low-fired, unglazed, and unvitrified pottery nearly exclusively. We will review a wide variety of analytical approaches to pottery, but the emphasis is on technological and functional (i.e. “technofunctional”) approaches. The course is organized around a “life cycle” perspective that begins with the selection of clay and temper and follows the manufacture, use, discard, and recycling trajectories of alternative vessel technologies. We will focus on topics such as the mechanical performance of fabrics (pastes), design specifications, vessel forms, use alteration, and assemblage formation processes. Ethnoarchaeological and experimental research provide the criteria for understanding the decisions and behaviors linked to pottery. We will also review some of the analytical techniques used in paste analysis and the study of pottery provenance.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND STUDENT GOALS

The overall goal of the course is to familiarize you with pottery analysis so that you can conduct independent research in the technofunctional variation of archaeological ceramics. Accordingly, you are required to either have access to an assemblage of potsherds for analysis (ideally from a context that is relevant to your research interests), or to review a body of literature outside of the class assignments and concerning technofunctional variation in pottery. Analysis will take a considerable amount of time, so you are strongly encouraged to begin working on an assemblage early in the semester. In this term project, we will employ a vessel unit of analysis and gather data on variables such as temper, wall thickness, vessel profile, orifice diameter, use alteration, and breakage patterns. The actual data you collect will be determined by the question(s) you pose. Our readings and class discussions will provide inspiration for the sorts of questions you might address and will also form the basis for inferences that bridge the gap between your data and the practices that created your assemblage. Your product should be a publication-quality paper, which means that you should present new
data from your analysis of a ceramic assemblage or offer a novel view of an archaeological problem based on your synthesis of existing literature.

REQUIRED TEXTS


Recommended:

Additional readings as specified below. All are available on e-Learning within “Resources”: https://lss.at.ufl.edu/

FORMAT AND GRADING

We meet every Thursday from 1:55-4:55 pm. The format of the course consists of a mixture of lecture, laboratory demonstrations, discussion, and an occasional film. You are required to be prepared to discuss all readings prior to each class meeting. Your grade for the course will be based on your performance on three lab quizzes (30 percent), a 20 page paper (60 percent), and class participation, including a 15-minute presentation to the class on your research project (10 percent).

ACCEPTANCE OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS

By remaining registered in this course, you agree to accept the course requirements and expectations as stated in this syllabus. These are in addition to other general University requirements and codes of conduct as stated in official documents. The following information is included to conform with University Policy: 1) Students seeking modification of due dates for assignments and exams for religious reasons (e.g., holiday observance) should feel free to contact the Professor and request this modification. 2) Students seeking any classroom accommodation to facilitate their education must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Professor when requesting accommodation. 3) The University reminds every student of the implied pledge of Academic Honesty: on any work submitted for credit the student has neither received nor given unauthorized aid. This refers to cheating and plagiarism. Students should consult the Student Guide at www.dso.ufl.edu/stg/ for information.

SCHEDULE

August 27. Prospectus
Lab 1: What can we learn from pottery?

**September 3. Pottery in Prehistory**

*Readings*

Rice (1987) Chapter 1

Brown, James A.

Garraty, Christopher P.

Rice, Prudence M.


**September 10. Pots to Sherds to Pots**

*Readings*

Albero (2014) chapters 14

Rice (1987) Chapter 9

Arnold, Dean E.

Braun, David P.

Crown, Patricia L.

Stark, Miriam

**September 17. Life Cycle Perspective**

Lab 2: Quantifying Assemblages

*Readings*

Arthur, John W.
2009  Understanding Household Population through Ceramic Assemblage Formation: Ceramic
Beck, Margaret
2006 Midden Ceramic Assemblage Formation: A Case Study from Kalinga, Philippines. 

DeBoer, Warren R.
1974 Ceramic Longevity and Archaeological Interpretation: An Example from the Upper

DeBoer, Warren R., and Donald Lathrap
1979 The Making and Breaking of Shipibo-Conibo Ceramics. In *Ethnoarchaeology: 
Implications of Ethnography for Archaeology*, edited by C. Kramer, pp. 102-138. Columbia
University Press, New York.

Mills, Barbara J.
1989 Integrating Functional Analyses of Vessels and Sherds through Models of Ceramic

Sullivan, Alan P.
2008 Ethnoarchaeological and Archaeological Perspectives on Ceramic Vessels and Annual

**September 24. Clay Selection and Preparation**
*QUIZ 1*

*Readings*
Albero (2014) Chapters 6 and 7

Rice (1987) Chapters 2 and 3; Chapter 13: 375-382; Chapter 14: 406-413

Fowles, Severin W., Leah Minc, Samuel Duwe, and David V. Hill
2007 Clay, Conflict, and Village Aggregation: Compositional Analyses of Pre-Classic Pottery
from Taos, New Mexico. *American Antiquity* 72:125-152.

Gosselain, Olivier P.
1994 Skimming Through Potter's Agendas: An Ethnoarchaeological Study of Clay Selection
Strategies in Cameroon. In *Society, Culture, and Technology in Africa*, edited by S. Terry
Childs, pp. 99-107. MASCA Research Papers in Science and Archaeology, Supplement to
Volume 11. University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 
Philadelphia.

Stark, Miriam T., Ronald L. Bishop., and Elizabeth Miksa
2000 Ceramic Technology and Social Boundaries: Cultural Practices in Kalinga Clay Selection
**October 1. Temper Selection and Forming Techniques**
Lab 3: Identifying Aplastics

*Readings*
Albero (2014) chapters 8 and 9, 13

Rice (1987) chapter 5

Arnold, Dean E.
1985 *Ceramic Theory and Cultural Process*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. (Chap. 8 only)

Bronitsky, Gordon, and R. Hamer

Rye, O. S.

Schiffer, Michael B., and James M. Skibo

Skibo, James M., Michael B. Schiffer, and Kenneth C. Reid

**October 8. Finishing and Firing Techniques**
*QUIZ 2*

Lab 4: Surface Treatments

*Readings*
Albero (2014) chapters 10, 11, and 12

Rice (1987) chapters 4, 14.3

Gosselain, Olivier P.

Longacre, William A., Jingfeng Xia, and Tao Yang
Pierce, Christopher

Smith, A. Livingstone

Schiffer, Michael Brian, James M. Skibo, Tamara C. Boelke, Mark A. Neupert, and Meredith Aronson

**October 15. Form and Function**
Lab 5: Vessel Profiles

*Readings*
Rice (1987) Chapters 7, 12.4

Blitz, John H.

DeBoer, Warren R.

Frink, Lisa and Karen G. Harry

Hally, David J.

Linton, Ralph

Mills, Barbara J.
Reid, Kenneth C.

**October 22. Use Alteration**
*Quiz 3*

Lab 6: Reporting Results

*Readings*
Rice Chapter 7.4

Arthur, John W.

Hally, David J.

Skibo, James M.

Skibo, James M., Tamara C. Butts, and Michael Brian Schiffer

**October 29. Breaking, Discarding, Recycling**

*Readings*
Rice Chapter 7.4

Deal, Michael

Deal, Michael, and Melissa B. Hagstrom
Senior, Louise M.

Stanislawski, Michael B.


**November 5. Paste Analysis and Provenance Studies**

*Readings*
Albero (2014) Chapters 3 and 17
Rice Chapter 10

Eerkens, Jelmer, Hector Neff, and Michael Glascock


Rice, Prudence

Speakman, Robert J., Nicole C. Little, Darrell Creel, Myles R. Miller, and Javier G. Iñañez.

Stoltman, James B., Joyce Marcus, Kent V Flannery, James H.Burton, and Robert G. Moyle

Van Keuren, Scott, Hector Neff, and Mark R. Agostini.
November 12. Pottery, Society, Culture

Readings
Rice Chapters 6 and 8

Beck, Margaret E.

Bowser, Brenda J.

Crown, Patricia L.


Mills, Barbara J.


Sassaman, Kenneth E., and Victoria Rudolphi

November 19. Topic to be determined.

November 26. THANKSGIVING DAY. NO CLASS.

December 3. STUDENT PAPER PRESENTATIONS

December 7. PAPERS DUE