

ANG 6122C ARCHAEOLOGICAL CERAMICS

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Spring 2024
Class # 21697
Thursdays 9:35-12:35 (Periods 3-5)
Turlington Hall, Room B357

Office Hours:
Thursdays 1:00 to 4:00
or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Ceramics are some of the most common and durable artifacts on archaeological sites throughout the world. Fortunately, they are also exceptionally useful material for understanding the human past. 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 unvitriified pottery nearly exclusively. We will review a wide variety of analytical approaches to pottery, but the emphasis is on technological and functional (a.k.a. “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 (i.e., 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. As a complement to our focus on technology and function, we will also review a variety of analytical techniques commonly used to characterize pottery fabrics, and discuss a series of case studies that use pottery data to interrogate the organization, structure, and practices of past societies.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND STUDENT GOALS

The overall goal of the course is to familiarize you with pottery analysis and interpretation so that you can conduct independent research of pottery assemblages. 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 the technology and function of 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

Rice, Prudence M. (2015) *Pottery Analysis: A Sourcebook*, Second Edition. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Recommended:

Skibo, James M. (2013) *Understanding Pottery Function*. Springer, New York.

Additional readings as specified below. All are available within the modules on Canvas.

COURSE STRUCTURE

We meet Thursdays from 9:35-12:35 pm. The format of the course consists of a mixture of lectures, laboratory demonstrations, discussions, and an occasional film. All lab materials will be provided by the instructor.

You are required to be prepared to discuss all readings prior to each class meeting. In addition, each student is expected to participate in leading a one-hour class discussion two times during the semester. Responsibilities for leading discussion include: (1) selecting one (or maximum two) additional reading one week in advance (2) identifying and outlining the issues most relevant for consideration by the class, (3) posing questions that facilitate discussion, and (4) posting the themes and questions in Canvas at least 24 hours prior to the class meeting. Two students will lead each discussion topic, and topics will be selected on a “first come” basis during the second week of the semester.

Quizzes will be administered in person during class time. These quizzes will be short and have a time limit of 15 minutes. The purpose of the quizzes is to evaluate your familiarity with key concepts. While you are free to consult any resources at your disposal, doing so extensively during the quiz will almost certainly cause you to run out of time before finishing.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Your grade for the course will be based on your performance on three lab quizzes (30 percent), a term paper of approximately 20 pages (40 percent), a 15-minute presentation to the class on your research project (10 percent) and class participation, including leadership of topic discussions (20 percent).

Statement on Attendance and Participation. Attendance in class is required. Make-up assignments for missed labs, quizzes, and topic discussion leadership will be provided only for absences that meet university criteria (e.g., official participation in a university event, scientific

or professional conferences, documented illness, religious holiday). Except for unforeseen circumstances, these conflicts should be discussed with the professor in advance. There will be no extra credit opportunities.

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.

SCHEDULE (*indicates discussion reading)

January 11 Introduction

January 18 Origins and history of pottery

Rice (2015) Chapter 1

Brown, James A.
1989 The Beginnings of Pottery as an Economic Process. In *What's New? A Closer Look at the Process of Innovation*, edited by S. E. van der Leeuw, pp. 203-224. Unwin Hyman, London.

Rice, Prudence M.
1999 On the Origins of Pottery. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 6:1-54.

January 25 Pots to Sherds to Pots

Rice (2015) Chapters 11-12

Braun, David P.
1983 Pots as Tools. In *Archaeological Hammers and Theories*, edited by J. A. Moore and A. S. Keene, pp. 108-134. Academic Press, New York.

Crown, Patricia L.
2007 Life Histories of Pots and Potters: Situating the Individual in Archaeology. *American Antiquity* 72:677-690.

Stark, Miriam
2003 Current Issues in Ceramic Ethnoarchaeology. *Journal of Archaeological Research* 11(3):193-242.

February 1 Life Cycle Perspective

Lab 1: Quantifying Assemblages

Rice (2015) Chapter 15

Arthur, John W.

2009 Understanding Household Population through Ceramic Assemblage Formation: Ceramic Ethnoarchaeology among the Gamo of Southwestern Ethiopia. *American Antiquity* 74:31-48.

Beck, Margaret

2006 Midden Ceramic Assemblage Formation: A Case Study from Kalinga, Philippines. *American Antiquity* 71:27-51.

DeBoer, Warren R.

1974 Ceramic Longevity and Archaeological Interpretation: An Example from the Upper Ucayali Peru. *American Antiquity* 39:335-343.

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 Assemblage Formation. *World Archaeology* 21(1):133-147.

Skibo, James M.

2013 *Understanding Pottery Function*. Springer, New York. (Chapter 1)

Sullivan, Alan P.

2008 Ethnoarchaeological and Archaeological Perspectives on Ceramic Vessels and Annual Accumulation Rates of Sherds. *American Antiquity* 73:121-135.

February 8

Clay Selection and Preparation

***QUIZ 1**

Rice (2015) Chapters 2-3, 5-6

*Arnold, Dean E.

1985 *Ceramic Theory and Cultural Process*. New Studies in Archaeology. Cambridge University Press, New York. (Chapter 2).

*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 and Use. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 7:295-331.

February 15

Temper

Lab 2: Identifying Aplastics

Rice (2015) chapter 4

*Bronitsky, Gordon, and R. Hamer
1986 Experiments in Ceramic Technology: The Effects of Various Tempering Materials on Impact and Thermal-Shock Resistance. *American Antiquity* 51:89-101.

*Rye, O. S.
1976 Keeping Your Temper Under Control. *Archaeology and Physical Anthropology in Oceania* 11(2):106-137.

*Schiffer, Michael B., and James M. Skibo
1987 Theory and Experiment in the Study of Technological Change. *Current Anthropology* 28:595-622.

*Skibo, James M., Michael B. Schiffer, and Kenneth C. Reid
1989 Organic-Tempered Pottery: An Experimental Study. *American Antiquity* 54:122-146.

February 22

Forming Techniques, Classification

*Rice (2015) chapters 8, 13

*Arnold, Dean E.
1985 *Ceramic Theory and Cultural Process*. New Studies in Archaeology. Cambridge University Press, New York. (Chapter 8).

*Blitz, John
2015 Skeuomorphs, Pottery, and Technological Change. *American Anthropologist* 117:665-678.

February 29

Finishing and Firing Techniques

***QUIZ 2**

Lab 3: Surface Treatments

Rice (2015) chapters 9-10

*Gosselain, Olivier P.

1992 Bonfire of the Enquiries. Pottery Firing Temperatures in Archaeology: What For? *Journal of Archaeological Science* 19(3):243-259.

*Longacre, William A., Jingfeng Xia, and Tao Yang

2000 I Want to Buy a Black Pot. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 7(4):273-293.

*Pierce, Christopher

2005 Reverse Engineering the Ceramic Cooking Pot: Cost and Performance Properties of Plain and Textured Vessels. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 12:117-157.

*Smith, A. Livingstone

2001 Bonfire II: The Return of Pottery Firing Temperatures. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 28:991-1003.

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

1994 New Perspectives on Experimental Archaeology: Surface Treatments and Thermal Response of the Clay Cooking Pot. *American Antiquity* 59:197-217.

March 7

Form and Function

Lab 4: Vessel Profiles

Rice (2015) Chapters 18-19, 25

*Blitz, John H.

1993 Big Pots for Big Shots: Feasting and Storage in a Mississippian Community. *American Antiquity* 58:80-95.

*Frink, Lisa and Karen G. Harry

2008 The Beauty of “Ugly” Eskimo Cooking Pots. *American Antiquity* 73:103-120.

*Hally, David J.

1986 The Identification of Vessel Function: A Case Study from Northwest Georgia. *American Antiquity* 51:267-295.

Linton, Ralph

1944 North American Cooking Pots. *American Antiquity* 9:369-380.

*Reid, Kenneth C.

1989 A Materials Science Perspective on Hunter-Gatherer Pottery. In *Pottery Technology: Ideas and Approaches*, edited by G. Bronitsky, pp. 167-180. Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado.

Skibo, James M.
2013 *Understanding Pottery Function*. Springer, New York. (Chapter 2)

March 14

Use Alteration

***Quiz 3**

Lab 5: Reporting Results

*Arthur, John W.

2002 Pottery Use-Alteration as an Indicator of Socioeconomic Status: An Ethnoarchaeological Study of the Gamo of Ethiopia. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 9(4):331-355.

*Hally, David J.

1983 Use Alteration of Pottery Surfaces: An Important Source of Evidence for the Identification of Vessel Function. *North American Archaeologist* 4:3-26.

*Skibo, James M.

2013 *Understanding Pottery Function*. Springer, New York. (Chapters 3-4)

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

1997 Ceramic Surface Treatment and Abrasion Resistance: An Experimental Study. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 24:311-317.

March 21

Breaking, Discarding, Recycling

*Deal, Michael

1985 Household Pottery Disposal in the Maya Highlands: An Ethnoarchaeological Interpretation. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 4:243-291.

*Deal, Michael, and Melissa B. Hagstrum

1994 Ceramic Reuse Behavior among the Maya and Wanka: Implications for Archaeology. In *Expanding Archaeology*, edited by J. M. Skibo, W. H. Walker, and A. E. Neilsen, pp. 111-125. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

*Senior, Louise M.

1994 The Estimation of Prehistoric Values: Cracked Pot Ideas in Archaeology. In *Expanding Archaeology*, edited by J. M. Skibo, W. H. Walker, and A. E. Neilsen, pp. 92-110. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

*Stanislowski, Michael B.

1969 What Good is a Broken Pot? An Experiment in Hopi-Tewa Ethnoarchaeology. *Southwestern Lore* 35(1):11-18.

1978 If Pots Were Mortal. In *Explorations in Ethnoarchaeology*, edited by R. A. Gould, pp. 201-227. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

March 28

Analysis of Mineral and Chemical Composition

Rice (2015) Chapter 17, 23

*Hunt, Alice M.W., Robert J. Speakman

2015 Portable XRF analysis of archaeological sediments and ceramics. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 53:626-638.

*Golitzko, Mark, and Laure Dussubieux

2017 Inductively Coupled Plasma-Mass Spectrometry (ICP-MS) and Laser Ablation Inductively Coupled Plasma-Mass Spectrometry (LA-ICP-MS). In *The Oxford Handbook of Archaeological Ceramic Analysis*, edited by Alice Hunt, pp. 399–423. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

*Minc, Leah D., and Johannes Sterba

2017 Instrumental Neutron Activation Analysis (INAA) in the Study of Archaeological Ceramics. In *The Oxford Handbook of Archaeological Ceramic Analysis*, edited by Alice Hunt, pp. 424–446. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

*Stoltman, James B.

2001 The Role of Petrography in the Study of Archaeological Ceramics. In *Earth Sciences and Archaeology*, edited by Paul Goldberg, Vance T. Holliday, and C. Reid Ferring, pp. 297–326. Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, New York.

April 4

Case Studies 1: Community, networks, and social interaction

Rice (2015) Chapter 24

*Beck, Margaret E.

2009 Residential Mobility and Ceramic Exchange: Ethnography and Archaeological Implications. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 16:320–356.

*Bowser, Brenda J.

2000 From Pottery to Politics: An Ethnoarchaeological Study of Political Factionalism, Ethnicity, and Domestic Pottery Style in the Ecuadorian Amazon. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 7:219-248.

*Crown, Patricia L.

2016 Secrecy, Production Rights, and Practice within Communities of Potters in the Prehispanic American Southwest. In *Knowledge in Motion: Constellations of Learning across Time and Place*, edited by A. P. Roddick and A. B. Stahl, pp. 67-96. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

*Sassaman, Kenneth E., and Victoria Rudolphi

2001 Communities of Practice in the Early Ceramic Traditions of the American Southeast. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 57:407-425.

*Wallis, Neill J., and Thomas J. Pluckhahn
2023 Understanding Multi-Sited Early Village Communities of the American Southeast through Categorical Identities and Relational Connections. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 71:101527. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaa.2023.101527>

April 11
Case Studies 2: Standardization and Specialization

Rice (2015) Chapters 21-22

*Abbott, D. R.
2009 Extensive and long-term specialization: Hohokam ceramic production in the Phoenix Basin, Arizona. *American Antiquity* 74(3):531–557.

*Costin, C. and Hagstrum, M.
1995 Standardization, labour investment, skill, and the organization of ceramic production in late Prehispanic highland Peru. *American Antiquity* 60:619-39.

*Harry, K. G.
2005 Ceramic Specialization and Agricultural Marginality: Do Ethnographic Models Explain the Development of Specialized Pottery Production in the Prehistoric American Southwest? *American Antiquity* 70(2):295-319.

*Longacre, William A.
1999 Standardization and Specialization: What's the Link? In *Pottery and People: A Dynamic Interaction*, edited by J. M. Skibo and G. M. Feinman, pp. 44-58. The University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

*Roux, R.
2003 Ceramic Standardization and Intensity of Production: Quantifying Degrees of Specialization. *American Antiquity* 68(4):768-782.

*Stark, Miriam T.
1991 Ceramic production and community specialization: A Kalinga ethnoarchaeological study. *World Archaeology* 23:64-78.

April 18
STUDENT PAPER PRESENTATIONS

April 29
PAPERS DUE BY 10:00 AM

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Grading

Grading scale:

- 92.5-100% A
- 90-92.5% A-
- 87.5-90% B+
- 82.5-87.5% B
- 80-82.5% B-
- 77.5-80% C+
- 72.5-77.5% C
- 70-72.5% C-
- 67.5-70% D+
- 62.5-67.5% D
- 60-62.5% D-
- < 60% E

Information on UF grading policy may be found at: UF Graduate Catalog and Grades and Grading Policies.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see the Notification to Students of FERPA Rights.

Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Religious Observances

Students seeking modification of due dates for assignments and exams for religious reasons (e.g., holiday observances) should contact the Professor and request this modification; it will then be granted.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing [online evaluations](#). Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students on the [Gator Evals page](#).

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor

and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/> specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Policy related to class attendance, make-up exams, and other work

Requirements for class attendance, make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: [UF Counseling and Wellness Center \(CWC\)](#), and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services SARS

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies, or [UF Police Department](#).

Academic Resources

[E-learning technical support](#), 352-392-4357 select option 2 or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu.

[UF Career Hub](#), Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.

[Library Support](#), Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

[Teaching Center](#), Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

[Writing Studio](#), 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

[Student Complaints](#)

[SACS Complaints Form](#)

HB-7

The Florida State Legislature in HB-7 has expressed its concern about the risks of indoctrination in higher education. Students are encouraged to employ critical thinking and to rely on data and verifiable sources to interrogate all assigned readings and subject matter in this course as a way of determining whether they agree with their classmates and/or their instructor. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, or compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint, or belief.

HB-233

In accord with recent dictates of the Florida State Legislature HB-233, students are allowed to record video and/or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are 1 for personal educational use, 2 in connection with a complaint to the university, or 3 as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture *does not* include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments quizzes, tests, exams, field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person or persons, including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.