

ANTH 4930/ANG 6930 Syllabus: Field School in Archaeology
University of Florida
Spring 2025 (3 credits)

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Note: First day will meet in Turlington B357

Course Content:

Students gain hands-on experience in basic archaeological excavation, mapping, note-taking, and laboratory processing related to the Franciscan Mission site of San Francisco de Potano. This was the location of a major Native American (Timucua) village at the time the Spanish colony of La Florida was established in 1565. The Franciscan order established a formal mission there in 1606, and it was active until 1706 when it was abandoned and the inhabitants moved to the St. Augustine locality. Today, this site is located on the north side of the city of Gainesville. We will be investigating those portions of the mission developed by the Franciscans (the church and their living areas) in addition to the habitation area of the Native Americans. Some of these features were identified in our 2024 field school.

There will be no required field manual or books for this course. Students will receive two technical reports related to investigations at the Fox Pond site. It will help to at least skim through these to get a sense of the history of the mission and what has been discovered there to date.

Course Organization and Schedule:

Our work schedule runs from about 8:30 am until about 3:30 every Friday. Transportation will be provided. By the end of the semester you will have 14 field days (not including our first day), the equivalent of a shorter summer field school. In case of rain days, we will be doing artifact processing indoors and will also have guest lectures. Given that we are in the field together and rely on one another to work as a team, attendance is mandatory at every field school session (barring sickness or family emergency).

Method of Evaluation:

This is very much a hands-on, in-the-field course. Grades will be largely based on performance in the field and laboratory, on demonstrated field abilities, and on completion of accurate and up-to-date field records (including a personal log book). Graduate students will be asked to provide a summary of a mission site study (reports to choose from will be made available on Canvas). This will be due no later than the Friday before Spring Break, March 14, 2025.

Prerequisites:

Although coursework in anthropology is helpful, no prior experience or courses in archaeology or anthropology are required.

Learning Experiences and Outcomes:

Students taking the course will be expected to gain the skills and knowledge areas outlined below.

- 1) Become acquainted with basic archaeological surveying and site mapping skills. This includes an introduction to surveying equipment commonly used to record site locations (a total station, or computerized transit, and a Trimble handheld global navigation satellite system [GNSS] instrument).
- 2) Learn the fundamentals of archaeological excavation. This includes a wide range of skills such as excavation techniques, proper recording and documentation, field photography and drawing, and soil description. In addition to learning the basics of how to excavate in standard units, students will become acquainted with two of the fundamentals of archaeological excavations: recording and context.
- 3) We also will set aside some time to provide introductions to specialized analyses that result from archaeological excavations. For example, students will receive introductory orientations to ceramic analysis and lithic analysis.
- 4) In our class and field discussions, students will be introduced to the impacts of colonialism on Native American groups, the distinctive characteristics of missionization, and the general history of Spanish colonialism in Florida.

Weekly Schedule

Note that there is not a rigid weekly syllabus that specifies exactly what we will do each Friday. The first day will be dedicated to discussing the fundamentals of archaeological field work and the history of Franciscan missions in Florida. The following Fridays will all be field-oriented; it is not possible to ascertain beforehand what we will discover from week to week. After students learn the basic skills of excavation, every work day will involve conducting survey or working in an excavation unit. There will be no final exam.