ANTH 392
ARCHAEOLOGY & HERITAGE: ETHICS, POLITICS AND SOCIETY

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Katherine Cook

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course examines the interface between heritage and ethics, politics and social systems, and the ways that archaeology and its practitioners are deeply entangled in western value systems and epistemologies. Lectures and group discussion will consider the ways that archaeologists engage with current issues, debates and controversies within the discipline and beyond. After outlining the primary themes in contemporary archaeology, including who practices archaeology, how, and why, we will critically analyse a range of current topics including access and inclusivity of heritage, indigenous archaeology, the commodification of heritage, the dissemination of archaeological data and knowledge, and the sustainability of our discipline.

This course will evaluate case studies from around the world, with special focus on Canada and North America. It will utilize a range of publication types, including academic monographs and journals, news articles, blogs, videos, and social media to access the diversity of contemporary discourses.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Students will develop understandings of archaeology, heritage, politics, and society, and the ways that they shape practice and practitioners, to assess and apply ethical practice in archaeology and heritage management. Assignments, including blogging, class discussion, and a final research project evaluating contemporary issues in archaeology, will emphasise building literacy and communication skills (including digital formats), and independent and group work, as well as building effective arguments and providing the necessary evidentiary support. Students will emerge with the knowledge and skills to carry out best practice in academic-, CRM-, and museum-based environments.