ANTH 319
RESEARCH METHODS IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL & BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Instructor: Dr. Stephanie E. Calce

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course will examine basic research methods employed by archaeologists and biological anthropologists through engagement with several different types of datasets. How do you start a research project, and what are the keys to designing strong methodologies and interpretations? What is 'enough data', and how do you understand what it means? How are research results communicated to diverse audiences, and what can you do to deal with writer's block and pressures to publish? Week by week, this course will engage in and with the research process – developing a research proposal and hypotheses; collecting, organizing, interpreting, and presenting data; conducting basic data analyses; designing and pursuing research questions/projects; and communicating findings. Investigating the process of research will be complimented by discussions of best practices and ethics, as well as of the biases inherent to all research that reflects our social, economic, and academic environment. Although there will be some lectures, most classes will be conducted in a "research group" setting: we will talk about research, design group research projects, work through problems, and collaborate.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Combining lectures with hands-on workshops, this course aims to develop critical understanding of the research process and confidence to apply these methods in a range of settings. Students will develop the skills to critically examine scholarly research in archaeological and biological anthropology, alongside pursuing a research project. Working in small groups and independently, students will benefit from hands-on experience in using library databases and software (e.g., Web of Science, citation management tools), data processing software (e.g., MS Excel), research and writing for diverse audiences (scholarly and general public), presentation of research in different formats (e.g., powerpoint, poster PDF), and practice writing a scholarship/funding proposal, all of which focus on developing skills in communication, critical thinking, and project management.