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ANTY 455.01: Artifact Analysis

John Douglas

University of Montana, Missoula, john.douglas@umontana.edu

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Anthropology 455

ARTIFACT ANALYSIS

Professor:

John Douglas; Office: Social Sciences 233; Office Hours: Monday, 10-11; Wednesday, 2:00-3:00; Friday 11-12. E-mail: john.douglas@umontana.edu.

Purpose:

This class offers an introduction to specifics of interpreting artifacts from archaeological sites that focuses on the analysis of chipped stone tools, ceramics, and historic artifacts. The class consists of lecture, discussion, and laboratory work. It will cover all phases of an artifact analysis: defining problem domains, selecting attributes, coding data, analyzing the data, interpreting results, and presenting the analysis in a coherent professional report. It is also an advanced writing course, and how results are presented in written form to a professional audience is an integrated aspect of this course

Expected Outcomes for the Discipline of Anthropological Archaeology:

1. Demonstrate an upper-level undergraduate knowledge of the interpretation of artifacts from archaeological sites from a laboratory or hands-on perspective.
2. Evaluate the general issues of selecting attributes, using typologies, in a problem-oriented framework that focuses on the life history of artifacts manufacture through deposition.
3. Distinguish some of the specific issues and attributes to analyze common artifacts frequently encountered by archaeologists in North America, such as chipped stone tools, prehistoric ceramics, and historic artifacts.
4. Understand how to conduct a research project on artifacts, beginning with background research and a proposal, through collecting data, analyzing data, and writing the report.

Expected Outcomes for Advanced Writing:

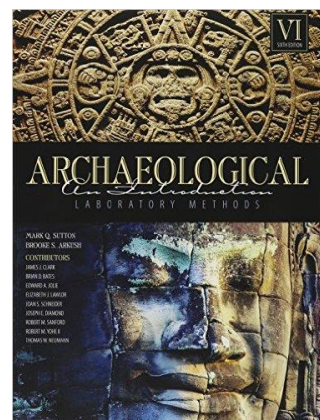
1. Identify and pursue more sophisticated questions for academic inquiry.
2. Find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize information effectively from diverse sources.
3. Manage multiple perspectives as appropriate.
4. Recognize the purposes and needs of discipline-specific audiences and adopt the academic voice necessary for the chosen discipline.
5. Use multiple drafts, revision, and editing in conducting inquiry and preparing written work.
6. Follow the conventions of citation, documentation, and formal presentation appropriate to that discipline.
7. Develop competence in information technology and digital literacy.

Prerequisites:

Completion of Anthropology 250 (Introduction to Archaeology) or the equivalent.

Text:

Gold standard: Mark Sutton and Brooke Arkush, 2019, *Archaeological Laboratory Methods: An Introduction* (7th edition). Kendall/Hunt Publishing, Dubuque. **However, editions 4 and up (6 is illustrated to the right) are almost as good as the last one and used copies are low cost.** Important note: This would be a helpful book to own if you do archaeology fieldwork. But we will work primarily with 4 chapters, so if this isn't your area, consider reading the copy I'll have on reserve in the library.



Optional equipment:

A magnifying glass, preferably 10x “Hastings triplet,” the geologist’s choice, may be helpful on lab days and working on an independent project. It is also a good thing to have in an archaeology field kit. Before buying, you’ll find useful information [here](#).

Grade Determination:

There are five sources of grades in this course: (1) attendance and active participation in class exercises; (2) a test; (3) proposal and bibliography for your project; (4) class presentation of an article you have read; and (5) the project.

Attendance:

Students are expected to be participants in the course, including class exercises. Students who miss multiple classes or do not work fully on the lab exercises will not receive full credit for attendance.

Test:

The test covers the assigned chapters, terms and ideas, and any slides or videos that may be shown. The test consists of multiple-choice questions and short definitions. The test occurs on **March 19**.

General Requirements and Issues for Written Projects:

1. All papers must be uploaded through the appropriate Moodle assignment link on time.
2. If you use Microsoft Word, submit the document in any word format; otherwise, export the document to a PDF file before submitting. You will receive feedback through Moodle in an edited file in the same format as you submitted.
3. All papers should be submitted with your name on the first page, using standard 1" margins, double-spacing, employing a professional 12-point font. Don't forget to check spelling before submission.
4. All written assignments must include citations and references. Primarily use professional, refereed, books and journal articles to support your arguments—there are some professional open websites (such as the [SHA bottle website](#)) that are important sources, but it would be unlikely that a nonprofessional or anonymous source--Wikipedia--would be appropriate.
5. Follow the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) [Style Guide](#) or The Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA) [Style Guide](#), available on the linked pages or on the course Moodle page consistently for all your reference and style questions.
6. If your report has photographs or figures, ensure that these don't bloat the size of the file, making it difficult to upload, download, and edit. I recommend you start with images that are in the 200-400k range. Or, you can take steps afterwards with these [Microsoft instructions](#) that can greatly reduce Word file sizes.

Project proposal:

Completion (and feedback) for this document will prepare you for your individual semester project. The project will either analyze a group of artifacts (usually, at least 30) or will be a library project that explores an artifact analysis issue in detail (for example: can we recognize individuals through artifact analysis?). In the proposal, present a research plan a group of artifacts, prehistoric, historic, or modern, or a research question/literature domain if you choose a library project. You should include at least five (5) references beyond your textbook (references from your textbook can be listed) and what further steps you will take to find references and literature. Proposals are at least a page and a half long but no more than four pages. It will be graded by considering five areas: (1) clarity in stating the problem/aims of the study; (2) strength in linking the proposed research to the problem

area; (3) feasibility; (4) use of appropriate references and plan for research that reflect all aspects of the study; (5) clarity and professionalism of the paper's voice and presentation. It is due **March 14**.

Paper Presentations:

Each student will be assigned a journal paper and a presentation date for a journal about artifact analysis from a "flagship" journal, such as *Journal of archaeological method and theory*, the *Journal of archaeological science*, and *American Antiquity*. Most selected journals are available as electronic resources at the [Mansfield Library](#), available under the listings of the Electronic Journal Subscriptions. This service can be used off-campus with your NetID. After reading the article, you will give a 15-minute presentation to the class, which can include PowerPoint, explaining the aims, methods, results of the article, as well as critiquing the strengths and weaknesses of the article.

Semester project:

The report represents the results of a completed analysis of a group of artifacts in class or an exploration of an artifact analysis issue or approach in detail. Papers should be 12 pages or more in length and must include an abstract, a bibliography with at least 6 references and supports the research, sufficient tables, graphs, figures (drawings or photos) to present your analysis, and whatever appendices needed to provide the supporting data set used for your study. For graduate credit, students will be expected to complete a longer (18 or more pages) paper that will be judged for graduate-level appropriate skills of analysis, interpretation, and presentation. A draft of the paper is due **April 20**; comments/guidance will be returned in one week. The draft version is graded only on completeness. The final version is due on the date of our final, **May 10**.

Bonus:

What did you learn from the project? An informal presentation in class about your project during period can provide bonus points for your grade (up to 5). The expectation is a discussion/friendly presentation, not a formal paper with PowerPoint.

A total of 200 points (not counting bonus points) are possible for the class:

Attendance	15	points
Participation/Exercises	15	points
Project proposal/Bibliography	20	points
Paper Presentation	15	points
Test	25	points
Project draft	10	points
Project	100	points

A total of 179 or more points is required for an "A" for the semester, etc. The plus/minus system is not used in this class.

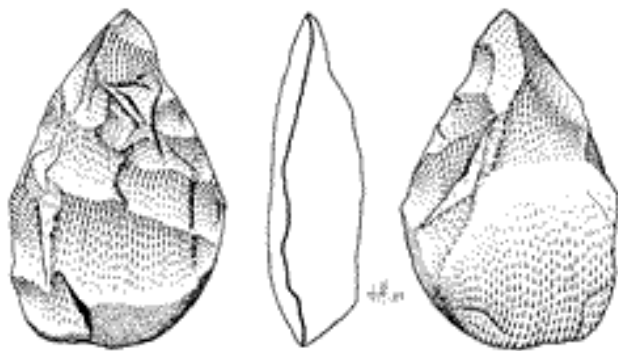
Plagiarism and misconduct:

Honesty is required. Students found cheating, plagiarizing, "patch writing" (writing by taking phrases or sections copied from a variety of sources, linked together with your words), or giving false excuses will be dealt with strictly. Plagiarism is a serious issue, and if you are unfamiliar with the rules, please start with [this webpage](#). Academic misconduct in this class will be subject to an academic penalty (up to receiving a failing grade in this class) and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#).

Other policies:

Students with disabilities receive all needed accommodations for this course. To request course modifications, please contact me as soon as possible. I will work with you and the Office of Disability Equality (ODE) in accommodating needs. For more information, visit the ODE [website](#) or call 406.243.2243 (Voice/Text).

An incomplete will be considered only when requested by the student. At the discretion of the instructor, incompletes are given to students who missed a portion of the class because of documented serious health or personal problems during the semester. Students have one year to complete the course; requirements are negotiated on a case-by-case basis.



A Paleolithic stone tool



http://www.humanitiesprogram.com/images/stone_tool_web.gif
<http://www.nps.gov/fosm/historyculture/february-2007-.htm>