

## **Archaeology Draft Assessment Plan**

Archaeology is an interdisciplinary endeavor that attempts to increase our understanding of the past through the study of the material remains of past cultures and the environments in which they lived. Because, however, the recovery of these remains and their interpretation takes place in the present, students should learn how advances in method and theory, as well as current developments in politics and ethics influence our understanding of the past.

In 2008, we identified 13 student learning outcomes for the Archaeology program at Carleton (see next page). In retrospect, these are too many outcomes. Although we have not had the time to modify our list of student learning outcomes and make a complete plan/process for the program, we have nevertheless moved ahead with assessment of seven of the original learning objectives (see accompanying document on 2010-11 progress):

1. Recognize and understand the contributions that various disciplines make to our understanding of the past (2 on original list)
2. Locate and evaluate information related to archaeology in journals, online, and in the popular press (3 on original list)
3. Tackle complex problems (6 on original list)
4. Work successfully in groups (7 on original list)
5. Think ethically about archaeological practices (8 on original list)
6. Be aware of the interplay between archaeology and politics (9 on original list)
7. Write cogent, thesis-driven essays and make effective oral presentations (10 on original list)

In the next year, we expect to characterize better and more fully the major learning outcomes we hope for from our students.

In 2009-10, assessment focused on student learning outcomes that could be assessed in the capstone seminar (ARCN 395, taught Spring 2010). In 2010-11, assessment will focus on outcomes that can be assessed in ARCN 246 (Archaeological Methodology), which will be taught in Winter 2011. Of our original student learning outcomes, it should be possible to assess 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, and 13 during ARCN 246. Outcome 12 relates to student projects in Geomorphology and/or Geology of Soils, one of which is required for the concentration. Mary Savina is working on an embedded assessment for this goal for these courses.

July 16, 2010

Student Learning Outcomes  
Archaeology Concentration  
2008

1. Evaluate and/or critique recent developments in archaeological research and place them in their historical context.
2. Recognize and understand the contributions that various disciplines make to our understanding of the past.
3. Locate and evaluate information related to archaeology in journals, online and in the popular press.
4. Measure and interpret measurements of archaeological sites.
5. Be able to think three-dimensionally in order to visualize archaeological contexts and create three-dimensional visual models of archaeological spaces.
6. Tackle complex problems
7. Work successfully in groups.
8. Think ethically about archaeological practices as they pertain to the world's cultural heritage and understand the continuing evolution and current status of ethics in archaeology.
9. Be aware of the interplay between archaeology and politics in the interpretation of the past and aware of the role that nationalism has played in the interpretation of the archaeological record.
10. Write cogent, thesis-driven essays and make effective oral presentations
11. Have knowledge of the methods archaeologists use to acquire and interpret data.
12. Understand the effects of landscape on human settlement and on preservation of the archaeological record and appreciate the impact of human activity on the natural landscape.
13. Be acquainted with the development of archaeological theory.