

Summer Institute: Field School in Public & Historical Archaeology

May 18-22; May 26-30, 2015, total contact hours 70

Registration: Questions regarding course can be sent to Archaeology@alexandriava.gov

Resources: All excavation and laboratory supplies and equipment are provided at no charge. Books are available through the GWU Bookstore.

About the Institute: This two-week intensive field school offers the opportunity for hands-on experience in excavation and laboratory study of an archaeological site just across the Potomac River from GWU in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia. The city has several historic districts and developed the first community archaeology program in America. It is the perfect place to investigate the Shuter's Hill plantation site, near the King Street Metro Station, and to learn about artifact identification and analysis at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum. This summer's institute focuses on the excavation and study of an area of the site associated with enslaved African Americans. Working with the City of Alexandria's Archaeologists, students will also discuss public heritage values and issues resulting in a public interpretive tour.

Course work: We offer 3 hours of both graduate and undergraduate credit through Anthropology and American Studies (Anth/AmSt 3835 for undergraduates, Anth/AmSt 6835 for graduates)

The ten-day course in field and laboratory methods is designed to introduce students to the archaeological process from research questions through data collection, analysis, and interpretation. This process often takes years, if not decades, to complete for each archaeological site. The field school is taught by a team of archaeologists as a case study/mini-practicum, so that students gain an understanding of the overall process, concepts, and goals of an archaeological investigation while having experience in contemporary methods. Students learn about the site, the 18th- and 19th-century Shuter's Hill Plantation, and results to date of the investigations of the African American laundry/home portion of the site. The changing use and meaning of the hill are discussed in relationship to preservation and shifting community values. The excavation experience includes keeping a field log, recording data, and maintaining vertical and horizontal control. Students then work in the Alexandria Archaeology Museum to wash, sort, identify, and analyze the artifacts they excavated. Workshops are held throughout the course and include topics such as excavation methods, laboratory processing methods, curation/collections management issues, conservation, ceramics, glass, and faunal remains. Discussions of readings include site history, African American archaeology, ethics, preservation, and interpretive planning. At the end of the class, students participate in two capstone interpretive experiences: first a group discussion with the City's archaeologists in which the data derived from the class activities are broadly interpreted; and second, a public tour of the site developed by the students.



The course has relevance to undergraduate and graduate students in American Studies, Anthropology, Archaeology, African American Studies, Africana Studies, History, Museum Studies & Education, Preservation, and Women's Studies, as well as those interested in Race, Gender, Class, Slavery, and Material Culture, and anyone who would enjoy a first-hand opportunity to participate in archaeological research.

Shuter's Hill Site and Alexandria Archaeology Museum are accessible through the King Street Metro Station (Blue or Yellow lines). Free parking is available at the site.

Institute Staff:

The field class is taught in a collaborative manner by a team of archaeologists associated with the City of Alexandria to enrich student knowledge and provide intense, and often individualized, training.

Director: **Pamela Cressey** retired as City Archaeologist with the City of Alexandria in 2012, after directing the Alexandria Archaeology program for 36 years. The program has been acknowledged as a pioneer in community and urban archaeology. A long-time adjunct GWU faculty member in the Anthropology and American Studies, she earned her BA in History at UCLA and MA and PhD degrees in Anthropology from the University of Iowa. Areas of interest include African American archaeology, Heritage Values, Preservation, and Interpretive Planning.

Instructional Staff: The City of Alexandria's Archaeologists provide training and supervision in the field and laboratory. **Francine Bromberg**, City Archaeologist (M.A. Catholic University), and **Garrett Fesler**, Archaeologist (Ph.D. University of Virginia), are field directors, work closely with students on the site, and offer their perspectives during workshops and discussions. **Paul Nasca**, Archaeologist (M.A. College of William and Mary), supervises the laboratory training and teaches workshops in the class. **Ruth Reeder**, Museum Education Specialist (BFA California College of Arts and Crafts), discusses public outreach methods and supervises the interpretive tour.