

**CS 4580:  
THE VINDOLANDA FIELD SCHOOL**

**Directors:**

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**SESSION DATES FOR 2016**

In 2016 the Field School course will run from May 28-July 2. Students will be expected to arrive at the course location in Haltwhistle England on Saturday, May 28<sup>th</sup>. The excavations run until Friday, July 1st and we must depart the accommodation on Saturday, July 2<sup>nd</sup> by 10am.

**FIELD SCHOOL OVERVIEW**

The Vindolanda Field School is an intense and very rewarding 5-week experience for Western University students each summer. It is designed for motivated students from varied disciplinary backgrounds with some previous knowledge of the Roman world. No prior excavation experience is required as the archaeology component will provide in-depth field training. Ideally, the participants will be highly motivated individuals who seek a deeper knowledge of the Roman world, field archaeology, and current research tools for understanding the past through history and archaeology.

A primary goal of the field school is for students to gain an appreciation for combining historical and archaeological material to further our understanding of past cultures. The focus of the archaeological component is the site at Vindolanda and daily participation in all aspects of the project: excavation, survey of buildings and landscape, finds processing (ceramic and bone washing, environmental sampling), and data recording (stratigraphic context sheets, artifact accession, etc.). An in-depth understanding of the archaeology at Vindolanda will be supplemented with trips to other sites and visits to active excavations around the north of Britain. The historical component will focus on the history of the Roman period in Britain with particular emphasis on the northern frontier and the role of soldiers and civilians within the province. The historical aspect of training will be achieved through evening lectures, field trips, on-site discussions and student presentations.

The academic rigour of the program is high and students will receive academic course credit for their participation. The 5-week summer program carries a 0.5 course credit. There is an optional 0.5 research component that Field School students may register for in the fall term. This credit is gained by having independent meetings with Dr. Meyer throughout the fall term to produce a substantial (8-10 pages) research paper on a topic related to the Field School curriculum. This may include anything to do with archaeological field methods, the Roman army, Roman frontiers, Roman Britain or the Western Roman Provinces more generally. The research project will be supervised by Dr. Meyer and will be completed in the Fall term after the summer program.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR STUDENT PARTICIPANTS**

This course is designed to offer students an extended period of experiential learning that cannot be achieved in the classroom. The students involved are encouraged to gain knowledge from every aspect of their experiences during the 5-week course, from the traditional factual learning of the lectures and site visits, to appreciating modern cultural differences and becoming educated global citizens.

The practical component of the training is to gain detailed understanding of archaeological field excavation and all of the current tools and skills involved. Students will have the opportunity to participate in every aspect of excavations from basic digging techniques, to finds processing, artifact analysis, environmental sampling, plan and section drawing and site survey. It is hoped that students will have a broad enough experience as part of the field school, that they will be able to identify the aspects of an archaeological project that suit them best as they move forward in their careers. Training will be done mostly through hands-on experience rather than textbook learning (though there is some reading!). Students will handle the pottery and other artifacts found on site during the excavation, and they will learn how to process finds through the course of environmental sample flotation, pottery cleaning, animal bone washing and processing of other non-chemically conserved artifacts. Site survey will be learned through the actual process of recording the excavation.

The primary focus of the students' classical training is to achieve an in-depth understanding of the history and archaeology of Roman Britain. To this end, the historical component must begin with a traditional lecture format in order to gain an introductory understanding of events. After this is achieved, lectures and presentations will be conducted on site visits in the north of England and in Scotland, particularly along Hadrian's Wall and the military installations on this frontier. Sites will be investigated through both the events that took place there and the archaeological remains and monuments of Roman Britain. In the course of these visits students will gain an understanding of how scholars analyze and interpret archaeological remains and reconcile this with historical sources.

We aim to have students learn about diverse approaches to archaeology and history, and to investigate how the different types of evidence inform our overall image of the past. We will discuss various current theoretical frameworks and methodologies and how these can be combined to develop sophisticated research goals and outcomes.

## **ASSESSMENT**

Assessment will be undertaken through practical means whenever possible. It is our belief that the primary benefit of a field school is to teach students how to perform the tasks needed for a successful career in their chosen field; therefore, as much as possible assessment will be an appraisal of students' ability to perform these professional skills. Students are marked on practical projects such as their general skills of excavation and survey, as well as on their ability to communicate the history of the site and the frontier to the community at large. Since the historical aspect of the course necessarily requires that the students gain a factual background of events, this will be the only part of the course assessed through examination. Though each aspect of the course will be graded individually, the course encourages students to find their niche in the fields of archaeology and ancient history. Therefore, if a student lacks skill in one technique but excels at another, this will be taken into account in their overall assessment for the course. The complete syllabus includes detailed description of individual assignments.

## **THE VINDOLANDA FIELD SCHOOL, SUMMER 2016**

### **COSTS AND FEES**

**Participation in the course for 2016 will cost \$2,850.00 for each student. The fees will be due to the Department of Classical Studies on March 15, 2016.**

#### **The fee includes:**

- Accommodation in self-catering cottages for full 5-week program and supplies needed in cottages throughout the program (including wireless internet access).
- All session fees associated with taking part in excavation at Vindolanda, including excavation t-shirt, tea, coffee and cookies at breaks, and special breaks with excavation area tours.
- 'Friends of Vindolanda' membership allows students access to the Vindolanda site and museum and The Roman Army Museum all year, % 10 discount in shop and café, newsletters throughout the year.
- Special group dinners, e.g. opening and closing night celebrations, cultural nights, some meals on field trips.
- All ground travel during the 5-week program for travel to and from site daily
- All travel for weekend field trips during the program
- Entrance fees to all museums and sites visited
- Specialist lectures and site/museum tours by museum curators
- Books (most, you will buy 2 books on your own), course pack, and supplies such as site journals and drawing supplies.
- Accommodation and travel for overnight weekend trips.
- Weekend courses on specialist sub fields in archaeology (e.g. Bioarchaeology, Archaeological Illustration) with practitioners in the field.
- Your own trowel to keep forever

#### **The Fee does NOT include (what will be covered by the participant):**

- International travel to Vindolanda: Students need to cover their costs for travel to the course site. Flights can be bought for under \$1000 direct from Toronto to Manchester, London or Newcastle. Ground train transportation can be taken very affordably to reach the course site in Haltwhistle UK. See separate sheets on 'Travel Tips' for further details.
- Course tuition: There is a standard fee charged by the University Registrar for any course registered for in the summer term. The fee is about \$600.00 and must be paid to the registrar before departure for the course.
- Food (except those covered by program fees as mentioned above)
  - \$400-\$450 for the 5-week program (this may vary individually)
  - The cottages are self-catering so that people may cater to their individual tastes.
  - We suggest students join together for dinner as the most economical option, but students are free to work this out for themselves.
  - Students bring their own bag lunch and snacks to site every day.
- Spending money: Individual needs
  - Personal travel on Sundays and personal purchases while in the UK.

## **SCHOLARSHIP and FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

There are several opportunities for scholarships on campus, as well as from external sources for archaeology and classics programs in the summer. Please see the Field School webpage for current links to information and applications.

### **Western Global Opportunities awards (GO Awards)**

- \$1000-\$2000 scholarships available and open for all students at Western regardless of faculty or department affiliation.
- Competition requirements: open to all students on campus
  - 100-200 available scholarships available
- Donor backed scholarships of \$2000 available specifically for Field School participants (the number of these varies each year)

### **Boarding Pass (Western's initiative for students to go abroad)**

- \$1000 scholarship available to cover students' travel abroad
- Competition requirements: open to all students on campus with an 80% average or above
- All students are guaranteed this scholarship if they have the correct average
- Can only receive one 'Boarding Pass' during career at Western

### **O'Donnell Scholarship**

- \$2000 scholarship for a study abroad program.
- Competition requirements: For program students in Classics and French Departments.
- Only two scholarships available each summer.

### **Archaeological Institute of America Waldbaum Excavation Scholarships**

- \$1000 per scholarship
- Open to first-time excavators only in their 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year of university.
- Competition: North American wide competition with several applications
- 8-10 scholarships available each year

### **Archaeological Institute of America, Toronto Society, Shaw Scholarships**

- \$500 scholarships available
- Competition: Usually applications come from students around the southern Ontario area
- A few scholarships available (in the range of 2)

### **OSAP**

The Field School program qualifies for OSAP funding and students have been successful in the past gaining support to take part in the program. You must qualify for OSAP aid and apply through the regular channels on campus.

There are several other opportunities for students based on individual circumstances. Please look at other sources of funding through the Classical Association of Canada, the Ontario Classical Association, the American Philological Association and other groups with a focus on study of the ancient Mediterranean and the Greek and Roman worlds.