

Introduction to Archaeology

Code: 100720
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Ancient Studies	FB	1

Contact

Name: Esther Rodrigo Requena
Email: esther.rodrigo@uab.cat

Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

Prerequisites

No prerequisites are required to enroll

Objectives and Contextualisation

The objectives of the first year (with 60 compulsory basic education credits) are to provide the student with basic training in archeology, history and other social disciplines, and familiarize themselves with historical-archaeological matters that will be developed in later courses. Thus, half of the credits correspond to the subject History, which is composed of the subject Introduction to Archeology, and a subject for each one of the great historical periods (Prehistory, Ancient History, Medieval History, and Modern History i Contemporaria). The remaining 30 credits correspond to subjects of a social nature that must complement the archeology's literary education such as art, philosophy, anthropology and language. Therefore, while from the subject History begins to the student in the two big blocks of knowledge that compose the degree - those of historical type and those of methodological type -, it is exclusively Introduction to the Archeology that has the responsibility Provide solid foundations on which methodological knowledge must be built throughout the degree. With this objective and with which to provide a panoramic view of the discipline, it is composed of brushstrokes of very diverse subjects and contains excavation practices.

Specifically, the training objectives of the subject are:

1) To provide students with a panoramic view of archeology and the process that involves an archaeological research project.

In this sense, mainly, it is intended that the student:

- Become familiar with the concept of scientific archeology and with the information that can contribute to the analysis and interpretation of the archaeological remains

- reflect on the social importance of archaeological heritage.

- acquire notions about the main methods of archaeological research

2) That the student knows and applies the essential methodology to develop a bibliographic research work (eg bibliographic research, structure, formal aspects, etc.).

3) That the student acquires essential practical knowledge of excavation.

4) That the student acquires first knowledge about different deposits of Catalonia.

Competences

- Apply the main methods, techniques and instruments of historical analysis.
- Demonstrate the basic skills needed to participate in an archaeological excavation and be able to interpret its findings.
- Dominate the use of specific instruments, with special attention to digital tools, for analysing the ancient world.
- Students must be capable of collecting and interpreting relevant data (usually within their area of study) in order to make statements that reflect social, scientific or ethical relevant issues.
- Students must have and understand knowledge of an area of study built on the basis of general secondary education, and while it relies on some advanced textbooks it also includes some aspects coming from the forefront of its field of study.
- Understand and interpret the evolution of ancient societies in the Mediterranean from Egyptian civilisation to the disbanding of Western imperial Rome through analysis of the political, historical, social, economic and linguistic factors.
- Use techniques of compilation, organisation and use of information and documentation related to Antiquity with precision.

Learning Outcomes

1. Describe the political, social and economic reality of the peoples of the Near East in antiquity.
2. Identify and assess the different stages in the historical evolution of the civilisations of the ancient Near East and their main cultural achievements.
3. Identifying the specific methods of history and their relationship with the analysis of particular facts.
4. Interpret ancient societies from an analysis of the surviving material vestiges of these.
5. Interpret material sources and the archaeological register.
6. Interpret textual and iconographic documents as sources for learning about the political, socioeconomic and cultural history of the ancient Near East.
7. Mastering the general diachronic structure of the past.
8. Organise and plan the search for historical and archaeological information.
9. Organising and planning the search of historical information.
10. Use digital tools to gather, classify, interpret and publish significant data for studying antiquity.
11. Use the basic digital tools needed in professional practice related to studies in classical antiquity.

Content

Programming of the subject - Introduction to archeology

Presentation of the subject

1. The Concept of archeology and its evolution throughout history

The current concept of archeology

Evolution of the current concept of archeology

New schools of archaeological thinking

2. The detection of an archaeological site: documentation and prospection

Occasional finds

Bibliographic documentation

Aerial recognition and remote sensing

Superficial prospection of a territory

Geophysical survey and other prospecting methods

3. Prospection project - student work

Preparation of the work and preparation of the presentation

Presentations

4. The archaeological excavation

The archeological excavation as a method to reconstruct the history of the deposits

Methods of archaeological excavation

Basic principles of archaeological stratigraphy

Individualization and excavation of stratigraphic units

The documentation of the excavation: recording of the site and databases

The reconstruction and dating of the stratigraphic sequence
 i. The concept of relative and absolute chronology
 ii. The stratigraphic relationships and the Harris method
 iii. Ceramics and other dating elements as a fossil director of stratigraphy
 5. Scientific methods of absolute dating
 Types of materials
 Methods based on annual cycles: dendrochronology, varves
 Radioactive systems:
 i. The Carbon 14
 ii. The Thermoluminescence
 Relative calibrated methods: archeomagnetism or rehydroxylation
 6. Material culture
 Type of material - preservation conditions
 Samples of soils, paleofaunes and paleobotany
 7. The Interpretation of Archaeological Evidence
 The diet Alimentaria
 Exchange-Trade
 The religious sphere, ritual, ideology ...
 8. Teaching and dissemination of heritage
 9. Archeology in Catalonia today: legislation and the world of work
 Legislation and the world of work
 10. Underwater archeology
 Historical introduction
 Types of underwater deposits
 Information that subaquatic archeology can provide
 Documentation and prospecting
 Underwater excavation tasks
 Conservation of materials
 11. The conservation of archaeological sites and the social importance of archeology
 Public archeology

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
<hr/>			
Type: Directed			
Classroom activities	35	1.4	10, 3, 5, 4, 8, 11
Field trips	21	0.84	10, 5, 4, 9, 8, 11
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Type: Supervised			
Identification and differentiation of an archaeological stratigraphy	5	0.2	10, 5, 8
Visit to an archaeological site	5	0.2	5, 8
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Type: Autonomous			
Exercises and bibliographical research work	20	0.8	7, 3, 5, 8
Study and reading about the matter taught in class	20	0.8	1, 7, 10, 3, 2, 6, 5, 4, 9, 8

Dirigidas

Classroom activities:	34h 30'	Use the main methods or techniques in archaeological research
- master class		
- Practical exercises:		- Acquire qualifications for team work
introduction and/or review of teaching units and application of theoretical concepts to practice.		- Acquire qualifications for debate based on specialized knowledge
- reading press articles with the subsequent debate		
- videos		

Activities in the field	18	-Develop some first qualifications regarding the different processes involved in archaeological excavation..
Theoretical concepts and practical application of these concepts:		
-Introduction to jaciment		
-		
Archaeological topography		
- Excavation documentation		
- Tractament and classification of archaeological materials.		

Supervised

Camp
practices:

- Observation
and analysis
of the different
stratigraphic
units in an
archaeological
site: Torre
Llauder

Visit at Torre Llauder 5h Acquire knowledge about the possibilities of archaeological diffusion from an example of significant archaeological discovery

Autònomas

Exercises and bibliographic research work 48 h - Put into practice different bibliographic research strategies and take advantage of the UAB's resources (with data bases).

Study and read about the subject taught in class 30 h 30' Consolidate Knowledge

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continuous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Case studies and corresponding oral presentations	15%	15	0.6	1, 7, 10, 3, 2, 6, 5, 9, 8, 11
Exercises and bibliographical research work	25%	25	1	7, 10, 3, 2, 5, 8
Subject theory test Block II	30%	2	0.08	1, 7, 10, 3, 2, 6, 5, 4, 9, 8, 11
Theoretical test Block I	30%	2	0.08	7, 10, 3, 2, 6, 5, 4, 9, 8, 11

Evaluation indicators:

1. Theoretical test I (30%).

There will be two partial examinations to evaluate the theory

Evaluation system:

The concepts taught in class will be evaluated based on a topic-based question - of analysis and synthesis and, optionally, also of critical reflection - to choose between two options.

Competencies to demonstrate to obtain optimal evaluation results:

Knowledges:

A correct assimilation of the knowledge taught in class and its deepening, as a minimum, from one of the bibliographical citations of the basic bibliography for each teaching unit. In case you have not used bibliography to deepen the concepts you will have the option to approve but not to the qualifications of remarkable or excellent.

Abilities:

- Analyze and synthesize information, distinguishing the importance of high school.
- Develop a critical thinking and reasoning.
- Be able to communicate appropriately the acquired knowledge. Write with grammar correction and use appropriate vocabulary and academic style, as well as a specific technical vocabulary and interpretation.
- Master the necessary languages to be able to deepen the class contents with the appropriate bibliography.
- Have developed autonomous learning abilities to deepen the classroom content with the appropriate bibliography.

2. Theoretical test I (30%).

There will be two partial examinations to evaluate the theory

Evaluation system:

The concepts taught in class will be evaluated based on a topic-based question - of analysis and synthesis and, optionally, also of critical reflection - to choose between two options.

Competencies to demonstrate to obtain optimal evaluation results:

Knowledges:

A correct assimilation of the knowledge taught in class and its deepening, as a minimum, from one of the bibliographical citations of the basic bibliography for each teaching unit. In case you have not used bibliography to deepen the concepts you will have the option to approve but not to the qualifications of remarkable or excellent.

Abilities:

- Analyze and synthesize information, distinguishing the importance of high school.
- Develop a critical thinking and reasoning.
- Be able to communicate appropriately the acquired knowledge. Write with grammar correction and use appropriate vocabulary and academic style, as well as a specific technical vocabulary and interpretation.
- Master the necessary languages to be able to deepen the class contents with the appropriate bibliography.
- Have developed autonomous learning abilities to deepen the classroom content with the appropriate bibliography.

3. Exercises and bibliographical research work (25%).

Competencies to demonstrate to obtain optimal evaluation results:

Knowledges:

- Be able to develop a formally correct research work both in terms of structure and references and bibliographical citations.

- Demonstrate a correct assimilation of the exposed contents.

Abilities:

- Analyze and synthesize information, distinguishing the importance of high school.

- Develop a critical thinking and reasoning.

- Write with grammar correction and use appropriate vocabulary and academic style, as well as a specific technical vocabulary and interpretation.

- Search, select and manage information independently, both in structural sources (databases, bibliographies, specialized journals) and in information distributed on the network.

- Use basic computer tools (such as word processors or databases).

- Skills for team work: commitment with the team, collaboration habit and ability to incorporate in the resolution of problems.

- Have developed autonomous learning abilities.

4. Case studies and individual dossier (15%).

Competencies to be demonstrated for the obtaining of optimal evaluation results:

Knowledges:

- Respond to all questions raised in the reference scripts of the activities.

- Demonstrate a correct assimilation of the exposed contents.

Abilities:

- Ability to connect theoretical contents with archaeological practice.

- Make clear oral presentations, structured, didactic, and use appropriate vocabulary and academic style.

- Analyze and synthesize information, distinguishing the importance of high school.

- Develop a critical thinking and reasoning.

- Search, select and manage information independently, both in structural sources (databases, bibliographies, specialized journals) and in information distributed on the network.

- Use basic computer tools (such as the Power Point).

- Skills for team work: commitment with the team, collaboration habit and ability to incorporate in the resolution of problems.

- Ability to debate based on specialized knowledge acquired.

- Master the necessary languages to be able to carry out the relevant readings.

- Have developed autonomous learning abilities.

Competencies to demonstrate to obtain optimal evaluation results:

Knowledges:

- Demonstrate that they have been gaining knowledge of archaeological stratigraphy, excavation documentation, and treatment and classification of materials.

Abilities:

- Skills for team work: commitment with the team, collaboration habit and ability to incorporate in the resolution of problems.

Attitudes:

- Dynamism.

- Responsibility.

- Constance.

Single evaluation. Degree of Antique Science:

This subject/module does not foresee the single evaluation system

Evaluation conditions:

- There will be a single call.

- The delayed delivery of the assessment activities without having previously agreed with the teaching staff will be reduced by 10% of the mark for each day of delay.

Not Submitted

Students will obtain a Not assessed/Not submitted course grade unless they have submitted more than 30% of the assessment items.

- If the mark of 50% or more of the assessment activities is less than 5 out of 10, there will be no average between the different activities and the subject will not be approved.

On carrying out each evaluation activity, lecturers will inform students (on Moodle) of the procedures to be followed for reviewing all grades awarded, and the date on which such a review will take place.

Use of artificial intelligence

This subject entirely prohibits the use of AI technologies in all of its activities. Any submitted work that contains content generated using AI will be considered academic dishonesty; the corresponding grade will be awarded a zero, without the possibility of reassessment. In cases of greater infringement, more serious action may be taken.

Plagiarism

In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of several irregularities in assessment activities of the same subject, the student will be given a zero as the final grade for this subject

Conditions for re-evaluation

They must have been submitted to all the tests that appear in the teaching guide of the subject of the current year.

Revaluation calendar

The dates of the reassessment exams are determined by the faculty. It is the responsibility of each one to know the date that corresponds to do the re-evaluation of the your subject

Bibliography

General bibliography

Álvarez Pérez, A. ; Rodà, I. eds. (1992): Sciences, methodologies and techniques applied to archeology. Barcelona etc .: Caja de Pensiones Foundation, etc.

Colomer, L.; González Marcén, P.; Montón, S.; Picazo, M. (Comp.), 1999, Arqueología y teoría feminista, Col. Icaria, El Escorial.

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Fernandez, V. (1994): Theory and method of archeology. 1 ed. 1990. Madrid: Editorial Synthesis.

Greene, K. (2004): Archeology: an introduction. 1st and 1983. London and New York: Routledge.

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Topic 1. The concept of archeology and its evolution throughout history.

Bahn, P. G. (1996): The Cambridge illustrated history of archeology. Cambridge etc. Cambridge University Press.

Daniel, G. E. (1981): A Short History of Archeology. London: Thames and Hudson.

Gamble, C. (2002): Basic Archeology. Barcelona: Ariel.

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Schnapp, A. (1993): La Conquête du passé: aux origins of archeology. Paris: Carre.

Trigger, B. G. (1992): History of archaeological thinking. Barcelona: Criticism.

Topic 2. Archeology in Catalonia today: archeological legislation and the world of work and Theme 3. The conservation of archaeological sites and the social importance of archeology.

Queral, M.A .; Martínez, B. (1996): The management of the archaeological heritage in Spain. Madrid: Editorial Alliance.

Topic4. The detection of archaeological sites: documentation and prospection.

Bowden, M. (1999): Unravelling the landscape. An Inquisitive Approach to Archeology. Stroud: Tempus.

Dabas, M ... and others. (1998): The prospection.Collection "Archéologiques". Paris: Editions errance.

García Sanjuán, L. (2005): Introducción al Reconocimiento y Análisis Arqueológico del Territorio. Barcelona: Ariel.

Wiseman, J., El-Baz, F. (2007): Remote Sensing in Archeology (Interdisciplinary contributions to archeology). New York: Springer Siccence and Bussines Media.

Aerial acknowledgments:

Wilson, D.R. (2000): Air Photo Interpretation for Archeologists. 1st ed.1982. Stroud: Tempus.

Surface Prospection:

White, G .; King, T. (2006): The Archaeological Survey Manual. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press Inc.

Geophysical survey:

Clark, A. (2004): Seing Beneath the Soil. Prospecting methods in archeology. 1st ed.1990. New York: Routledge.

Topic 5. The stratigraphic excavation.

Carandini, A. ... (1997): Historias en la tierra. Archaeological excavation manual. 1st ed. 1981. Barcelona: Editorial Crítica. Barcelona.

Harris, E. (1991): Principles of archaeological stratigraphy. 1st ed. 1989. Barcelona: Critical Editorial.

Roskams, S. (2003): Theory and practice of excavation. Barcelona: Criticism.

Topic 6. Scientific methods of absolute dating.

Aitken, M..J. (1990): Science-based dating in archeology. London and New York: Logman.

Aitken, M.J. Ed. (1997): Chronometric dating in archeology. Series Advances in archeology and museum science, 2. New York and London: Plenum Press.

Barrandon, J-N. ; Guibert, P.; Michel, V. Eds. (2001): Rencontres internationales d'archéologie et d'histoire d'Antibes (21st: 2000: Antibes). Datation: events from meetings, 19-20-21 October 2000. Antibes: APDCA.

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Topic 7. The work of bibliographic research.

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Bellaterra (Barcelona): Servei de Publicacions de la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

Software

No specific software required

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	2	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed
(PCAM) Field practices	21	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed
(PCAM) Field practices	22	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed
(PCAM) Field practices	23	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	2	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed