



SAN GEMINI PRESERVATION STUDIES

**(WVU) Syllabus for ARHS 421:
Professional Field Experience
Analysis of Archaeological Ceramics***
3 credit hours
(SGPS) SG203A – 3 Units

Summer Semester, 2024

Session 1 (June 3– June 14 - two weeks)

Meets daily 8:30-12:30 and 2:00-6:00

Location: Piazza San Giovanni Battista 8, Centro Giovanile classroom, San Gemini, Italy

Instructor: Professor Elena Gabriella Lorenzetti, elena@casalecydonia.com

Office hours: on site TBA

***Must be taken with the following co-requisite:**

ARHS 422: Professional Field Experience

Restoration of Archaeological Ceramics (3 credit hours)

No prerequisites required.

Catalog Description

Overview of traditional ceramic technology and its evolution. Examines materials and production methods used in the Mediterranean basin. Study historical typologies of architectural ceramics and pottery found in Italy, analyze archaeological artifacts from local excavations (6th C. BCE – 20th C. CE), identify and sort sherds, perform typology analysis of “diagnostic” sherds, catalog and document sherds including analytical drawings and diagrams.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Identify and define materials and production methods and use of pottery found in Italy
- Select and use appropriate analysis methods.
- Fully document ancient ceramic sherds by writing catalog entries, making diagrams, and drawing scale images of ancient ceramic sherds

Format:

The course duration is 2 weeks. Seminars and lectures are held M-F during the morning with hands-on workshops conducted in the afternoons. The course may include some study visits to Carsulae and regional museums.

Lectures: Monday – Friday, 8:30 AM – 12:30 PM (2 weeks)

These are dedicated to the presentation of material, ceramic technologies, and evolution of ceramics in Italy from the archaic to modern age.

Workshop: Monday – Friday, 2:00 PM to 6:30 PM (2 weeks)

As part of the course, students will be working on a field project – a complete analysis of a Proto-Italian (Bronze-Age, Ancient Roman) ceramic’s context through visual inspection,

scientific testing, morphological analysis, drawing, and a written scientific analysis of the context.

All materials for course provided

Grade Breakdown:

Field work project:

As part of the field work project students will complete various assignments including identifying the wares, their technique of modeling, typological identification of the sherds and their function (50%).

Assignments: Report:

8-page paper analyzing ceramic objects' contexts (50%).

Grading scale:

94-100 = A

90-93 = A-

87-89 = B+

84-86 = B

80-83 = B-

77-79 = C+

74-76 = C

70-73 = C-

67-69 = D+

64-66 = D

60-63 = D-

Below 60 = F

Late Assignment Policies

Field Projects

Projects may be completed in any order as there is no individual deadline, but ALL work must be completed by the final day of class in San Gemini, Italy. The workshop lab is dismantled the following day after the program ends and students will not have access to materials or lab space. No work is accepted after the last day of class

Report

The report should ideally be submitted before the end of the course but it may be submitted any time during the following two weeks (during the restoration course).

Lecture Topics:

Introductory lectures

- Historical introduction to San Gemini and the region
- History of the evolution of the city of San Gemini
- Visit to the city of San Gemini
- Visit to the ancient city of Carsulae

Why study pottery

- Pottery in context: the multiple meaning of a ceramic sherd, points of view, goals, methods of cataloging.

Historic ceramic materials and technologies

- Nature of materials: physical and chemical properties, origin and historical use
- Clay forming: techniques, tools, functional shapes and their historical evolution
- Drying: the physical process, recognizing flaws
- Firing: from the clay to the pot, the chemical and physical process, flaws and results
- Decorating and coating: tools and materials, application techniques; historical evolution of the techniques
- Describing and drawing pottery: the description as analyzing method, the parts of a pot, the correct method for a complete and scientific documentation

Evolution of ceramics in Italy

- Archaic: from archaic coarse ware to bucchero pottery, the birth of Roman power
- Classical: from black gloss to Roman sigillatae, the slave production system and the history of Roman trade through pottery
- Medieval: from the archaic maiolica to the colorful production of Renaissance
- Early modern: from maiolica to industrial productions

Archaeological context and ceramic

- Inorganic and organic materials: nature and properties
- The environment of abandonment
- Ceramic decay: processes and morphology

2. Workshop: Analysis of Archaeological Ceramics (afternoon)

Visual inspection

- Recognizing materials, techniques, marks and flaws

Scientific Testing

- Materials
- Dating

Analysis

- Morphology
- Clay forming
- Firing

Materials

- Clay
- Inclusion
- Tempers
- Slips and glazes

Stylistic analysis

Documentation and recording

- Drawings
- Diagrams
- Documentation

| | | Lecture 8:30 - 12:30 | Workshop Afternoon 2:00 - 6:30 |
|------|-----|---|--|
| 6/2 | Sun | Arrival in San Gemini | Orientation and dinner 3:00-9:30 |
| 6/3 | Mon | Visit to Roman city of Carsulae <i>Elena Lorenzetti</i> | Brief Historical Overview of Umbria |
| 6/4 | Tue | Studying pottery: goals, points of view, methods | Students will have a full context of approximately 1000 ceramic sherds coming from an archaeological excavation, usually a mix of different wares. The pottery is usually washed but not sorted. The goal is to simulate the work done by an archaeologist from the sorting to a short edition of a context. Depending on the complexity of the context, the first step, the sorting by classes, can take 2/3 days, dedicated to the observation of the techniques, defaults of modeling/firing, fabrics characteristics, function of the objects, in direct connection with the lectures of the morning. |
| 6/5 | Wed | From clay to pottery: raw materials, purifying, forming From clay to pottery: decorating, coating, firing. | Sorting and observation |
| 6/6 | Thu | Analyzing pottery: function, description | Drawing workshop: through the drawing, the students start to pay attention to formal details, proportion in the parts of the pots, their decorations. The first lesson on drawing can use also samples not in the context. |
| 6/7 | Fri | Ceramics used in Architecture | The second step is the cataloging. The students start to work with typologies, handbooks and site's editions by single classes, identifying the suitable sherds, by function and type, giving them a chronological range. All data are recorded in a shared database |
| 6/8 | Sat | No class | No class |
| 6/9 | Sun | No class | No class |
| 6/10 | Mon | History of ceramic productions: archaic pottery | Cataloging: while cataloging, topics of roman history, ancient economy and social evolution are discussed, related to the origin or composition of the context. |
| 6/11 | Tue | History of ceramic productions: Hellenistic and roman pottery 1 | cataloging |

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| 6/12 | Wed | History of ceramic productions: Hellenistic and roman pottery 2 | cataloging |
| 6/13 | Thu | History of ceramic productions: medieval and modern pottery; History of ceramic productions: transport amphoras | drawing workshop: the most meaningful sherds of the context are drawn to be put in the report |
| 6/14 | Fri | Final report preparation: diagrams and charts | Report writing: the last step is the elaboration of charts and statistics to help the reading of the context. The students have full access to the text of the lectures (shared in pdf) and are instructed on the correct sequence of exposition of the data. The students are free to choose the accuracy of the exposition about the history of the wares, but are required to give a scientific reading of the context, about chronology, economic overview, ceramic's circulation. |

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<https://tlcommons.wvu.edu/syllabus-policies-and-statements>