



## SAN GEMINI PRESERVATION STUDIES

**(WVU) Syllabus for ARHS 422:  
Professional Field Experience  
Restoration of Archaeological Ceramics\*  
3 credit hours  
(SGPS) SG 203B – 3Units**

Summer Semester, 2024

San Gemini, Italy

Session 1 (June 17 – June 28)

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

Location: Piazza San Giovanni Battista 8, Centro Giovanile class room

Lead Instructors: Profs. Domizia Colonnello and Prof. Alice Rivalta

Email: domiziacolonnello@gmail.com, alice.rivalta@gmail.com

Office hours: on site TBA

Note: this is a course that can only be completed in San Gemini, Italy and not on the WVU campus or online. There are flight, meal, and program costs related to the course. Please go to the WVU Education Abroad website for current cost information.

<https://educationabroad.wvu.edu/>

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

ARHS 421: Professional Field Experience–Analysis of Archaeological Ceramics

**No prerequisites required.**

### **Catalog Description**

Theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the field of conservation of archaeological pottery. Students learn various methods of cleaning pottery sherds, the reassembly of pottery from surviving sherds, in-filling gaps left in the pottery after reassembly, the aesthetic treatment of the infilling for display and how to document the restoration procedure on pottery.

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Document analyze and asses sherds
- Analyze appropriate cleaning methods and apply them to pottery
- Assess sherds and reassemble pottery
- Evaluate various in-fill methods and apply them to pottery
- Evaluate aesthetic aspects of infill treatment
- Document the restoration process

**Format**

The course duration is 2 weeks. From Monday to Friday, seminars and lectures will be held 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 the basics of the Italian theory of restoration: principles, methods, materials used for the interventions.

**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 restoration of one or more archaeological pottery.

**Grade Breakdown****Field work: 50%**

As part of the field work project students will complete various assignments including: analysis of the state of conservation of the object, proposal of the possible conservation treatments, and the hands-on practical intervention and treatment (cleaning, consolidation, restoration, etc.).

- Graded on quality and completeness of analysis, proposed intervention plan, and hands-on treatment of object.

**Assignments: Term Paper: 50%**

Compilation of the Conservation Form including, description of object, detailed description of restoration work, explanations of methods and techniques used, and explanation of why a particular approach was implemented. Eight-page paper (50%).

- Your paper will be evaluated on content, organization, and clarity.

**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:**

The practical 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.

The Conservation Form must be consigned within a week of the final day.

**Lecture Topics:**

- Introduction to the theory of restoration in Italy: conservation-restoration and preservation. Definitions.
- Ceramic conservation
- Cleaning techniques and materials
- Consolidation techniques and materials
- Fragments search methodology
- Gap filling, surface protection and supports
- Conservation in the field
- Ceramic decay
- Handling and moving objects of art
- Museum and storage environments
- Packing and display materials
- Site study visits

The lectures may be concentrated in the first week depending on the needs of the course, and the study visits may be in other days depending on the availability of the museums.

Course schedule

<b>Date</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Lecture 8:30 - 12:30</b>	<b>Workshop Afternoon 2:00 - 6:30</b>
6/17	Mon	<p><b>Introduction to the concepts of conservation, restoration and preservation in Italy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theory and philosophy of restoration</li> <li>• differences between conservation and preservation</li> </ul> <p><b>The role of the conservator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in the field</li> <li>• in the laboratory</li> <li>• in the museum.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Identification of the materials</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organic materials</li> <li>• Inorganic materials</li> </ul> <p><b>Ceramic classification by firing temperature and its properties</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unfired</li> <li>• low-fired</li> <li>• high- fired</li> </ul> <p><b>Ceramic decay</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decay processes and damages</li> <li>• Different environments (before and after the abandonment)</li> <li>• Agents of decay</li> <li>• Physical damage</li> <li>• Chemical factors and processes</li> </ul>

6/18	Tue	<p><b>Ceramic conservation</b> The methodological approach Documentation of restoration work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photographic, textual and graphic methods</li> <li>• Examples and lab practice</li> </ul> <p><b>Cleaning techniques and materials</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Types of dirt and foreign materials</li> <li>• Mechanical and chemical methodologies and instruments</li> <li>• Safety measures</li> <li>• Materials from previous restorations</li> </ul>	<p>Restoration workshop: Students will have a variety of objects that require different interventions and put into practice lessons learned in lectures. Students will learn to visually analyze objects, do some scientific basic scientific testing, clean objects, consolidate sherds, adhere sherds, fill gaps, photograph objects, make drawings and diagrams, record metadata, and write reports.</p> <p>Due to the size and complexity of the restoration of each object, students will be at different points in projects during the workshop on any given day.</p>		
6/19	Wed	<p><b>Consolidation techniques and materials</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advantages and limits of the procedure</li> <li>• Consolidant requirements</li> <li>• Different application methods</li> </ul>	Restoration workshop		
6/20	Thu	<p><b>Fragments search methodology</b> Joining techniques and materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adhesive general requirements</li> <li>• Adhesive choice</li> <li>• Thermosetting/thermoplastic resins: differences, application</li> </ul>	Restoration workshop		
		<p>methods, safety measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Useful supplies for bonding</li> </ul>			
6/21	Fri	<p><b>Gap filling, surface protection and supports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thoughts and issues around gap fillings</li> <li>• Characteristics and requirements of the materials</li> <li>• Most commonly used fillers in Italy</li> <li>• Application techniques, refinishing, painting</li> </ul>	Restoration workshop		
6/22	Sat	No class	No class		
6/23	Sun	No class	No class		

6/24	Mon	<b>First Aid on excavation site</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roles of conservator during excavation</li> <li>• Field conservation lab</li> <li>• Lifting techniques</li> <li>• Micro-excavation</li> <li>• Temporary protection materials</li> <li>• Packing and storage (short/long time), materials and methods</li> </ul>	Restoration workshop	
6/25	Tue	<b>Handling and moving objects of art</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidelines and techniques to handle and lift delicate objects</li> <li>• Useful devices</li> </ul> <b>Museum and storage environments</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preventive conservation in museums</li> <li>• Agents of deterioration in museums</li> <li>• Object locations</li> </ul> <b>Packing and display materials</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rigid and semi-rigid materials (natural and synthetic)</li> <li>• Flexible and elastic materials (natural and synthetic)</li> <li>• Buffering, scavenger and monitoring devices</li> </ul>	Restoration workshop	
6/26	Wed	Restoration workshop	Restoration workshop	

6/27	Thu	Restoration workshop	Report writing	
6/28	Fri	<b>Site study visits</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit to museums and restoration laboratory</li> </ul>	<b>Site study visits</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit to museums and restoration laboratory</li> </ul>	

**For all WVU Academic Policies and Syllabus Statements Please go to:**  
<https://tlcommons.wvu.edu/syllabus-policies-and-statements>