



JOHN CABOT UNIVERSITY

**ARCH 500  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION AND METHODOLOGY**

**Roman Archaeology in Italy between the 3rd century BC and the 6th century AD.**

Instructor: Prof. Inge L. Hansen / Alberese Archaeological Field School in Tuscany

Schedule: July 21 – August 16, 2014

Prerequisite: Graduate student level

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The course is an on-site, practical program in the methods and techniques of archaeological excavation and interpretation, aimed at developing independent research and supervisory skills. On-site training and seminars led by specialists provide students with a challenging engagement with the methods of complex stratigraphic excavation and interpretation, of artifact and environmental studies, and of archaeological research methods. Taught in context of the Alberese Archaeological Field School in Tuscany (Italy), the course is an outstanding chance to work with Roman archaeology in Italy between the 3rd century BC and 6th century AD.

**Course aim**

The course forms part of a Research Project that investigates international exchange networks and settlement patterns in Roman central Italy between the mid-Republican period and late Antiquity, and which encompasses a series of related excavations: a temple sanctuary dedicated to Diana, a river port and workshop complex, and a Roman villa rustica.

The course is aimed at developing skills in excavation supervision and archaeological research. This is done by providing students with the opportunity to develop their skills in stratigraphic archaeology and recording methods, and to extend their abilities in related fields and methodologies, in order to identify, contextualize and interpret archaeological data independently. The course encourages students to consider the results in a historical and regional context, and hence to develop a familiarity with aspects of ancient trade and exchange networks, 'Romanization' in Etruria, late Antique settlement and economic patterns.

**Course content**

The course combines practical learning projects with seminars and visits to related archaeological sites. It will develop abilities in on-site excavation practices and management, and in the contextual interpretation of excavation and finds data. Seminars and on-site lectures will address specialized topics related to the archaeology and history of the site, aspects of artifact studies and assemblages, the history of the region, and considerations of the ancient economy. Visits to related sites and museums will contextualize the archaeological results and encourage considerations of regional developmental histories.

The primary components of the course are:

- Training in the application and evaluation of stratigraphic excavation methods. Students will be trained in evaluating and choosing excavation methods and approaches, and in analyzing built structures, archaeological features, finds and environmental details in context. They will be asked to propose excavation strategies and to assist in supervising this work.
- Training in archaeological recording methods and interpretation. Students will be trained in best practice recording methods for archaeological contexts and finds. They will be asked to evaluate the data and propose interpretations.
- Training in artifact studies. Students will work closely with specialists in the recording, handling and studies of artifacts for a nuanced approach to the excavation data. They will be asked to consider the finds data and its impact on archaeological interpretation.
- Consideration of other archaeological sites. Students will visit complementary archaeological sites and museums, and will be asked to consider how this contextualizes the excavation data archaeologically and historically.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students will gain in-depth knowledge of archaeological methods and approaches, of the interdisciplinary aspect of the field, and of archaeological research methods. They will develop abilities of independent evaluation and interpretation, they will gain experience of supervising work, and they will be asked to consider research and publication needs

- Students will develop their skills in the methodologies of archaeological excavation, material culture studies and surveying, as well as in methods of data recording and illustration.
- They will develop abilities for evaluating and supervising on-site work, and to take an active part in interpreting archaeological results.
- They will attain a contextual understanding of the excavations through considerations of material culture studies, history and environmental studies, and will be able to apply this knowledge.
- They will acquire an awareness of developmental history of the site in context of other sites in the region.

### **ASSESSMENT METHODS**

Report for publication	40%
Archaeological recording	30%
Work performance	30%

#### *Report for publication*

The report is a written account and analysis of a particular aspect of the excavations, to be determined with the supervision of the excavation directors. The report will use excavation documentation, as well as relevant independent research, to present an excavation report and interpretation of the chosen topic. It should be aimed at publication as part of the interim report of the excavations in an international peer-reviewed journal, and will be included as authored by you. The report must be submitted within six weeks after the close of the course.

### *Archaeological recording*

The evaluation of the archaeological recording will consider: the quality and precision in the execution in all aspects of recording methods pertaining to the excavations; the ability to identify the documentation needed to give a well-rounded account of the results obtained; the quality displayed in recording features and characteristics; the ability to link data for a contextual record of the site; and the insights displayed in proposing interpretations. All archaeological recording must be completed by the end of the fourth week of the course.

### *Work performance*

The evaluation of work performance will consider, in particular, the ability to evaluate and interpret archaeological the evidence; the ability to apply data obtained from other fields of study; the ability to contextualize the archaeological data; and the ability to guide and supervise others in the performance of the work done.

It will also consider the general participation in the project: ability to meet deadlines, willingness to share observations, contribution to the smooth running of the project, attendance and conduct, ability to lead site visits as needed.

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### **Project-specific publications**

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- Chirico, E. and Sebastiani, A. (2010) L'occupazione tardoantica del promontorio dello Scoglietto ad Alberese (GR). *Acheologia Medievale* 37: 333-46.
- Chirico, E., Colombini, M., Rubegni, E. and Sebastiani, A. (2011) Relazione preliminare alla I° campagna di scavi archeologici a Spolverino (Alberese – GR). Prime valutazioni ed ipotesi sul porto romano di cabotaggio a Rusellae. *Fasti Online, FOLD&R Italy Series* 232 (www.fastionline.org)
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- Sebastiani, A. (2013) Spolverino (Alberese – GR). Relazione alla III Campagna di scavi archeologici. *Fasti Online, FOLD&R Italy Series* 287 (www.fastionline.org)
- Sebastiani, A. (forthcoming) New data for a preliminary understanding of the Roman settlement network in South Coastal Tuscany: the case of Alberese (Grosseto, IT). *Antiquity*.

Sebastiani, A., Cygielman, M., Chirico, E. and Colombini, M. (2010) Dinamiche insediative nel territorio della foce dell'Ombrone: nuovi dati agli scavi presso l'area templare dello Scoglietto (Alberese – GR). *Notiziario della Soprintendenza ai Beni Archeologici della Toscana* 5: 35-92.