Lab Methods: Ceramic Analysis  
Anthropology 418  
Spring 2022

Prof. Vincas Steponaitis (vin@unc.edu)  
Office: Alumni 108  
Hours: Tu, Th 3:30-4:30, and by appointment (email or call 962-6574)

Course Description: This course focuses on ancient ceramic technologies and how they can be reconstructed archaeologically. Methods related to the study of ceramic technology are stressed. Students who take this course will learn how traditional potters made their wares, and how archaeologists recognize which techniques were used from the traces left on the finished products. Students will also learn the basic archaeological methods of describing vessel shapes, reconstructing vessel functions, and determining the chemical composition of ceramic materials. The course is intended for serious students of archaeology (undergraduate or graduate) and anyone interested in ancient ceramic technologies. There are no prerequisites.

Course Structure: There will be two meetings per week. In general, each topic will be covered with one or more lectures, followed by a lab designed to give you some practical experience. There will also be three field trips scheduled on Saturdays (see tentative dates below). Class sessions will be informal, hopefully with lots of verbal give-and-take. You will also select an independent project, on which you will present an oral report and write a paper (10-15 pages, double-spaced). The schedule may change and readings may be updated as the semester proceeds (see statement on Spring 2022 Course Delivery below).

Course Requirements: In addition to the assigned readings, requirements include periodic lab assignments (30%); a project prospectus, progress report, and oral report (10%); a term paper based on your independent project (30%); and a final exam (30%).

Class Attendance: Class participation, to the extent possible during the pandemic, is essential. If you must miss class, please tell me in advance if you can. If you can’t, then please contact me as soon as possible afterwards. If your absence is for a valid reason per UNC’s policies or other unavoidable circumstances (in my judgment), you will either have the opportunity to make up any work that was missed or have that work excused, at my discretion. In general, I will allow up to one lab exercise to be excused. For each absence that has no valid reason, I may reduce your final grade by one step (e.g., an A will be reduced to an A-).

Course Web Site: The syllabus, lab exercises, and other relevant information will be posted on the course web site at <http://rla.unc.edu/courses/Anth418/>.

Course Schedule:
1/11 Introduction
1/13-2/17 Ceramic production: principles and reconstruction [project prospectus due 2/17]
2/22-3/10 Vessel function: analysis of shape and use-wear
   [Spring break]
3/22-4/5 Chemical and mineral characterization, [project progress report due 3/24]
4/7 Organization of production
4/12-4/26 Student projects: oral reports
4/29 Paper due (4 pm)
5/5 Final exam (12 pm)
Schedule of Saturday Morning Field Trips (subject to change):

1/29 Wheel throwing and kiln firing (Mark Hewitt, Pittsboro, NC)
2/26 Coiling and open firing (Joe Herbert, UNC Art Lab)
3/26 Cooking with traditional pottery (Rachel Briggs, UNC Art Lab)

Spring 2022 Course Delivery: As long as it is possible to do so safely, we will be meeting in person this semester. I understand the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may require changes to this plan and will be monitoring the situation closely. If I need to change the format of the course temporarily due to outbreaks of illness, I will announce this via email and the course web site.

Honor Code: Students are expected to adhere to UNC's Honor Code. Note that it is perfectly OK to collaborate on lab assignments, so long as the write-up is your own work. If you have any questions about this policy, please feel free to ask.

UNC Community Standards and Guidelines: This fall semester, while we are still in the midst of a global pandemic, all enrolled students are required to wear a mask covering their mouth and nose at all times in the classroom and when meeting in person. This requirement is to protect our educational community — your classmates and me — as we learn together. If you choose not to wear a mask, or wear it improperly, I will ask you to leave immediately, and I will submit a report to the Office of Student Conduct. At that point you will be disenrolled from this course for the protection of our educational community. An exemption to the mask wearing community standard will not typically be considered to be a reasonable accommodation. Individuals with a disability or health condition that prevents them from safely wearing a face mask must seek alternative accommodations through Accessibility Resources and Services (ars.unc.edu). For additional information, see Carolina Together (carolinatogther.unc.edu).

Accessibility Resources: UNC-Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability or pregnancy complications resulting in barriers to fully accessing University courses, programs and activities. Accommodations are determined through the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. See the ARS website (ars.unc.edu) for contact information or connect by email (ars@unc.edu).

Counseling and Psychological Services: CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: https://caps.unc.edu/ or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more.

Title IX Resources: Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Please contact the Director of Title IX Compliance (Adrienne.Allison@unc.edu), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (reportandresponse@unc.edu), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (confidential, gvsc@unc.edu) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available online (safe.unc.edu).

(rev. 1/9/22)
Readings

1/13-2/17

**CERAMIC PRODUCTION: PRINCIPLES AND RECONSTRUCTION**


2/22-3/10

**VESSEL FUNCTION: ANALYSIS OF SHAPE AND USE-WEAR**


Additional Case Studies:


3/22-4/5 CHEMICAL AND MINERAL CHARACTERIZATION


4/7 ORGANIZATION OF PRODUCTION
