Lecture: TuTh 10:10-11:00am  
Honors Discussion: TuTh 12:20-1:10pm

For most of human existence, there were no written texts, so to understand this major part of the human past, archaeologists learn to “read” history by examining material remains and combining a variety of techniques, methodologies and theories. Through an examination of important archaeological places around the world we will review those methodologies as well as explore what kind of knowledge archaeologists can generate. We will investigate how archaeological methods and theories help us answer questions like how pyramids and mummies help us understand Egyptian religion, how we know where the Vikings sailed; what Stonehenge had to do with ancient ideas about life and death, or why human sacrifice was practiced around the world. We will also consider the role the present plays in understanding the past, and alternately, how the past informs the present. Our text, “Strung Out on Archaeology” will take us through archaeological principles using, Mardi Gras, parades and beads as our primary example.

Format: there will be illustrated lectures, films, demonstrations and hands on lab exercises.

Evaluations will be based on exams, short papers and lab projects.

The Honors section will use lab times to go beyond the usual hands on activities and will conduct an actual analysis of archaeological materials. If there insufficient student interest this analysis could be used to generate a professional presentation for use at campus or professional venues.