1. OVERVIEW

Short Description

This module provides a broad introduction to the study of ceramics in archaeology and demonstrates their role in interpreting various aspects of past societies. The module is composed of lectures, practicals, seminars, demonstrations and museum visits. Following a broad introduction to the wide spectrum of world ceramic types and traditions, the course will focus on the ceramic production sequence and wider life history, highlighting the role of ethnography, experimentation and scientific analysis in interpreting past technology and its embedded cultural information. The key topics of distribution, use and discard will also be addressed. The module will provide practical guidelines for the recording and classification of ceramic sherds within archaeology, as well as an overview of the range of specialist laboratory analyses that may be applied to assemblages. The module provides a solid introduction for students interested in ceramics-based dissertations or wishing to study ceramics at post-graduate level.

Week-by-Week Summary

Week 1: 1.5.10.18, 2-5 pm - Introduction to Archaeological Ceramics

Week 2: 12.10.18, 2-5 pm - The Life Cycle of Ceramics. Potters Raw Materials and their Preparation

Week 3: 19.10.18, 2-5 pm - Forming Methods: Tools, Techniques and Recognition

Week 4: 26.10.18, 2-5 pm - Decoration and Surface Treatment
Week 5: 2.11.18, 2-4 pm - Firing: Principles, Processes and Structures

Reading Week - No lectures or practicals

Week 6: 16.11.18, 2-5 pm - Organisation of Ceramic Production

Week 7: 23.11.18, 2-4 pm - Distribution, Trade and Exchange of Ceramics

Week 8: 30.11.18, 2-4 pm - Consumption, Use and Formation of Ceramic Assemblage

Week 9: 7.12.18, 2-5 pm - Recording and Interpreting Pottery Assemblages

Week 10. 14.12.18, 2-5 pm - Scientific Approaches to Archaeological Ceramics

**Locations**

IoA Seminar Room (B13)

IoA Basement Ceramic Technology Area

British Museum

Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology

**Basic Texts**


Orton, C. and Hughes, M. 2013 *Pottery in Archaeology*. Cambridge University Press.


**Methods of Assessment**

The course will be assessed by two equally weighted items of coursework: a series of short questions and a 2,500 word essay. Both parts will contribute 50% to the final mark for the course.

**Teaching Methods**

The module is taught via ten 1.5-2 hour weekly lectures. Most weeks’ lecture will be followed by either a practical session, seminar, demonstration or museum visit. These will help to reinforce the concepts introduced in the lectures.

**Prerequisites**

The course does not assume any previous knowledge of ceramics. Although the course has a significant scientific content, it will not assume a formal scientific background. It is intended to be comprehensible to non scientists.

**Workload**

There will be 15 hours of lectures and 10 hours of practical/laboratory sessions for this course. Students will be expected to undertake around 65 hours of reading for the course, plus 60 hours preparing for and producing the assessed work. This adds up to a total workload of 188 hours for the course.

**2. AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ASSESSMENT**

**Aims**

This module aims to provide participants with a broad introduction to the study of ceramics in archaeology and to demonstrate their role in interpreting various aspects of past societies. Participants should gain basic skills the study of ceramic assemblages within archaeology, as well as an appreciation of the range of specialist laboratory analyses that may be applied to ancient pottery and related artefacts. It aims to deliver a solid foundation for students interested in ceramics-based dissertations or wishing to study ceramics at post-graduate level.
Objectives and Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module participants should:

- Be familiar with the different types of archaeological ceramics
- Be familiar with the role of ceramics in interpreting the past
- Be familiar with the physical processes of pottery production
- Be aware of the relevance of the societal context within which ceramic production, distribution and consumption took place
- Have an overview of archaeological approaches to the collection, analysis and interpretation of ceramics
- Be able to evaluate critically published work relating to archaeological ceramics
- Be able to evaluate the relevance and applicability of various methods of ceramic analysis
- Be able to devise an effective research plan for the analysis of archaeological ceramic material

Assessment

The course will be assessed on the basis of two items of coursework. The two items will contribute equally to the overall mark for the course. Assessment 1 will be a set of short questions covering the broad range of the module. These will be distributed in Week 6. It should be possible for a well-prepared participant to answer these questions from knowledge they have assimilated during the module. The question answers are expected to be between 2,375 – 2,625 words in length. Assessment 1 should be submitted on or before Wednesday 9th January 2019.

Assessment 2 will be an essay or review of research in a particular area. Choose from the potential titles listed below. Please read and comply with the general instructions for presentation and submission of coursework given in the degree handbook and on the Institute intranet. Correct citation of sources is a particularly important aspect. Please use a minimum of 1.5 line spacing and leave ample margins to allow for my written comments. The essay is expected to be between 2,375 – 2,625 words in length. The course co-ordinator is willing to discuss an outline of the student’s essay provided this is planned suitably in advance of the submission deadline. Assessment 2 should be submitted on or before Wednesday 20th February 2019.

1. Present a review of what is known about the alteration of ceramics during use and/or burial. What effect does this have on archaeological interpretations based on ancient
pottery?

2. Write a review of the various techniques of pottery firing in past societies around the globe, addressing the relationship between firing and pottery ware.

3. Examine the relationship between form and function in traditional pottery and outline the various methods used to interpret the uses of ancient pottery vessels from fragmentary sherds.

4. Outline the principles and practice of ceramic compositional analysis, comparing and contrasting petrography and geochemical approaches in terms of their practicality, applicability to specific pottery types and archaeological information that they can provide.

5. Using examples, consider the ways in which ethnographic studies of traditional pottery can be used to inform our interpretation of archaeological ceramic assemblages from production and consumption contexts.

The following should not be included in the word-count: title page, contents pages, lists of figure and tables, abstract, preface, acknowledgements, bibliography, lists of references, captions and contents of tables and figures, appendices.

Penalties will only be imposed if you exceed the upper figure in the range. There is no penalty for using fewer words than the lower figure in the range: the lower figure is simply for your guidance to indicate the sort of length that is expected.

In the 2018-19 session penalties for over-length work will be as follows:

For work that exceeds the specified maximum length by less than 10% the mark will be reduced by five percentage marks, but the penalised mark will not be reduced below the pass mark, assuming the work merited a Pass.

For work that exceeds the specified maximum length by 10% or more the mark will be reduced by ten percentage marks, but the penalised mark will not be reduced below the pass mark, assuming the work merited a Pass.

Coursework submission procedures:

All coursework must normally be submitted both as hard copy and electronically. (The only exceptions are bulky portfolios and lab books which are normally submitted as hard copy only.) You should staple the appropriate colour-coded IoA coversheet (available in the IoA library and outside room 411a) to the front of each piece of work and submit it to the red box at the Reception Desk (or room 411a in the case of Year 1 undergraduate work)

All coursework should be uploaded to Turnitin by midnight on the day of the deadline. This will date-stamp your work. It is essential to upload all parts of your work as this is sometimes the version that will be marked.
Instructions are given below.

Note that Turnitin uses the term ‘class’ for what we normally call a ‘module’.

1. Ensure that your essay or other item of coursework has been saved as a Word doc., docx. or PDF document, and that you have the Class ID for the course (available from the course handbook) and enrolment password (this is IoA1819 for all courses this session - note that this is capital letter I, lower case letter o, upper case A, followed by the current academic year)

2. Click on http://www.turnitinuk.com/en_gb/login

3. Click on ‘Create account’

4. Select your category as ‘Student’

5. Create an account using your UCL email address. Note that you will be asked to specify a new password for your account - do not use your UCL password or the enrolment password, but invent one of your own (Turnitin will permanently associate this with your account, so you will not have to change it every 6 months, unlike your UCL password). In addition, you will be asked for a “Class ID” and a “Class enrolment password” (see point 1 above).

6. Once you have created an account you can just log in at http://www.turnitinuk.com/en_gb/login and enrol for your other classes without going through the new user process again. Simply click on ‘Enrol in a class’. Make sure you have all the relevant “class IDs” at hand.

7. Click on the course to which you wish to submit your work.

8. Click on the correct assignment (e.g. Essay 1).

9. Double-check that you are in the correct course and assignment and then click ‘Submit’

10. Attach document as a “Single file upload”

11. Enter your name (the examiner will not be able to see this)

12. Fill in the “Submission title” field with the right details: It is essential that the first word in the title is your examination candidate number (e.g. YGBR8 In what sense can culture be said to evolve?),

13. Click “Upload”. When the upload is finished, you will be able to see a text-only version of your submission.

14 Click on “Submit”

If you have problems, please email the IoA Turnitin Advisers on ioa-turnitin@ucl.ac.uk, explaining the nature of the problem and the exact course and assignment involved.
One of the Turnitin Advisers will normally respond within 24 hours, Monday-Friday during term. Please be sure to email the Turnitin Advisers if technical problems prevent you from uploading work in time to meet a submission deadline - even if you do not obtain an immediate response from one of the Advisers they will be able to notify the relevant Course Coordinator that you had attempted to submit the work before the deadline.

3. SCHEDULE AND SYLLABUS

Teaching Schedule

Lectures will be held 2:00-3:30pm on Fridays, in room B13. Practical/laboratory sessions and visits will be held 3:30-5:00pm on Fridays unless otherwise stated.

Lecturers: Dr Patrick Quinn (PQ); Maja Mise (MM); Anna Garnett (AG); Darren Ellis (DE)

Detailed Outline of Module

Week 1

Lecture (5.10.18, 2:00-3:30 pm, B13) - Introduction to Archaeological Ceramics (PQ)

Following an outline of the module, we will introduce the topic of archaeological ceramics. The main ceramic bodies will be outlined and their distinguishing features explained. A brief account of the history of ceramic production will be presented, highlighting its origins, reasons for adoption and the major innovations in ceramic technology. We will then briefly consider how pottery is studied in archaeology and how this has changed through time. The different types of cultural information that can be obtained from pottery assemblages will be covered.

Practical (5.10.18, 3:30-5:00 pm, British Museum) - Introduction to Archaeological Ceramics (PQ & MM)

In the practical session, we will visit the nearby British Museum to examine their pottery collections. Participants will be expected to find specific exhibits within the museum to observe and answer questions about the pottery on display. The exercise, which can be carried out in pairs is meant to reinforce the information and concepts provided in the lecture, by highlighting different types of pottery bodies, shapes, uses, meanings, traditions of manufacture and innovations. A handout will be provided and distributed at the end of the afternoon’s lecture. We will then head over together.

Recommended Reading:


Week 2

Lecture (12.10.18, 2:00-3:30 pm, B13) - The Life Cycle of Ceramics + Potters Raw Materials and their Preparation (PQ)

In this lecture the concepts of the pottery life cycle and the production sequence will be introduced. We will then consider the types of raw materials used by potters, their occurrence and physical properties, as well as discussing the cultural, economic and environmental influences on raw material procurement. We will also cover in detail the ways in which potters process and combine natural raw materials in order to make them suitable for ceramic production.

Practical (12.10.18, 3:30-5:00 pm, Basement Ceramic Technology Area) - Potters Raw Materials and their Preparation (PQ & MM)

In the practical session we will explore experimentally the functional effects of specific methods of raw material processing and paste preparation. We will refine, temper and mix clay pastes and observe how this alters their workability. Test pieces will be allowed to dry and fired for Week 3 when we will discuss the effects of certain processing steps on the later parts of the pottery production sequence.

Recommended Reading:


Week 3

Lecture (19.10.18, 2:00-3:30 pm, B13) - Forming Methods: Tools, Techniques and Recognition (PQ)

Moving on through the pottery production sequence, we will focus on the important process of shaping clay paste into a functional or aesthetic object. The wide range of primary and secondary forming methods will be outlined, detailing their advantages and disadvantages for specific types of pottery, as well as the raw materials, tools and equipment required and the motor habits used. Particular emphasis will be given to wheel throwing, its inception, its benefits for pottery production and the attempts that have been made to distinguish it from hand-forming via the petrographic and scanning electron microscope.
Practical (19.10.18, 3:30-5:00 pm, B13 and Basement Ceramic Technology Area) - Pottery Forming Methods: Tools and Techniques (DE, PQ & MM)

In the practical session Darren Ellis will demonstrate several hand and wheel forming techniques. Participants will then have a go at forming their own pots under Darren’s instruction. We will also consider how to recognise forming methods on pottery vessels using macro-traces visible with the naked eye.

Recommended Reading:


Week 4

Lecture (26.10.18, 2:00-3:30 pm, B13) - Decoration and Surface Treatment (PQ)

This lecture will cover the topic of surface treatment and decoration, outlining the many diverse ways in which potters modify and decorate the surface of pots. The technology, function and influences on the choice of surface modification will be considered. Special attention will be given to glazes, including their classification, chemical characteristics, invention and methods of production. The concept of decoration will be closely examined and contrasted with other aspects of the pottery production sequence in terms of the cultural information that it contains.

Practical (26.10.18, 3:30-5:00 pm, Basement Ceramic Technology Area) - Decoration and Surface Treatment (PQ & MM)

We will experiment with different types of surface modification in the practical. Participants will be able to modify the surface of the pots that they created in Week 3. Different glaze mixtures will be applied to clay test tiles and fired for next week.

Recommended Reading:


Week 5

Lecture (2.11.18, 2:00-3:30 pm, B13) - Pottery Firing: Principles, Processes and Structures (PQ)

In the lecture we will cover the crucial process of firing pottery. The chemical, mineralogical and microstructural changes taking place in clay pastes during the progressive firing of ceramics will be outlined, as well as the main parameters of firing that influence these. We will then cover the topic of firing structures including bonfires, pits and kilns, discussing their inception and use, their benefits, design and evolution. The topic of interpreting firing technology from archaeological pottery will also be introduced.

There will be no practical this week, but participants can look at and collect their fired decorated ceramic pieces.

Recommended Reading:


Reading Week

No lecture or practical. Participants are encouraged to catch up on recommended reading.

Week 6

Lecture (16.11.18, 2:00-3:30 pm, B13) - Organisation of Pottery Production (PQ)

In the lecture we will examine the organisation of pottery production via ethnographic and archaeological examples. Different scales of pottery production will be contrasted in terms of their location, spatial organisation, infrastructure, products, intensity, labour organisation and relationships to other activities. Special attention will be given to the topics of standardisation and craft specialisation.

The short questions for Assessment 1 will be handed out at the end of the lecture.

Seminar (16.11.18, 3:30-5:00 pm, B13) - Ethnography of Traditional Pottery Production (PQ & MM)

Following the lecture, we will watch several short films on traditional pottery manufacture, discussing the evidence for organisation of production, standardisation, specialism and labor organisation.
Recommended Reading:


Week 7

Lecture (23.11.18, 2:00-4:00 pm, B13) - Distribution, Trade and Exchange of Pottery (PQ)

In the lecture we will consider the mechanisms and driving forces by which finished pottery is distributed from the producer to the consumer, including the twin topics of trade and reciprocal exchange. We will outline the various models that are used to study pottery distribution and the ethnographic and archaeological evidence for these. Special emphasis will be given to the identification of ancient pottery distribution using compositional and macroscopic data and the interpretation of the reasons and mechanisms behind it.

There will be no practical this week.

Recommended Reading:


Week 8

Lecture (30.11.18, 2:00-4:00 pm, B13) - Consumption, Use and Formation of Pottery Assemblages (PQ)

In the lecture we will cover the final steps in the pottery life cycle that include use by the consumer, repair, recycling, breakage and finally the incorporation of pottery in the archaeological record. The concepts of use and intended versus actual function will be considered via ethnographic examples, as well as in terms of the macroscopic and microscopic archaeological evidence that is left on/within ancient pottery. We will consider the topic of breakage and the extent to which the form, size and vessel numbers of ‘living’ pottery are represented by a ‘dead’ assemblage of sherds. Lastly, we will examine the ways ceramic artefacts can be altered during burial and how this affects our ability to interpret past cultural processes from them.
There will be no practical this week. Recommended Reading:

**Week 9**

Lecture (7.12.18, 2:00-3:30 pm, B13) - Recording and Interpreting Pottery Assemblages

In this weeks lecture, we will outline the main methods used to assess archaeological pottery assemblages after excavation. This will include refitting and reconstructing vessels, quantifying, drawing, typological classification and macroscopic fabric classification.

Practical (7.12.18, 3:30-5:00 pm, Petrie Museum) - Typology and Seriation (AG, PQ & MM)

In the practical we will use the Petrie Museum collection to explore the development of typology and seriation. We will examine the original documents and pottery vessels used by Flinders Petrie to establish pottery sequence dating in 1899, and discuss the method’s problems and continuing relevance to archaeology today.

Recommended Reading:


**Week 10**

Lecture (14.12.18, 2:00-3:30 pm, B13) - Scientific Approaches to Archaeological Ceramics (PQ)

In the final lecture of the module, we will look at how scientific techniques from the earth sciences, chemistry and physics can be used to analyse and interpret archaeological ceramics. These include mineralogical and microstructural approaches such as thin section petrography and scanning electron microscopy, geochemical techniques such as X-ray fluorescence and molecular approaches such as gas chromatography. The value of these methods will be outlined in terms of the characterisation of ceramic composition, the interpretation of pottery provenance, the reconstruction of manufacturing technology and the consideration of vessel function.

Practical (14.12.18, 3:30-5:00 pm, B13) - Scientific Approaches to Archaeological Ceramics (PQ & MM)

In the last practical we will examine ceramic composition under the microscope using thin section petrography and learn how to interpret raw materials, provenance and technology. A
demonstration of bulk instrumental geochemistry will be given using a portable X-ray fluorescence device.

Recommended Reading:


5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Libraries and other resources

In addition to the Library of the Institute of Archaeology, the UCL Science Library also has holdings of particular relevance to this degree.

Information for intercollegiate and interdepartmental students

Students enrolled in Departments outside the Institute should obtain the Institute’s coursework guidelines from Judy Medrington’s office (email j.medrington@ucl.ac.uk), which will also be available on the IoA website.

Health and safety

Please complete the UCL Safety Induction eLearning Module and Principles of Laboratory Safety. Use the search box in Moodle to look up ‘Principles of Laboratory Safety’ and click the ‘enrol me’ underneath ‘Self enrolment student’.

APPENDIX A: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES 2018-19 (PLEASE READ CAREFULLY)

This appendix provides a short précis of policies and procedures relating to courses. It is not a substitute for the full documentation, with which all students should become familiar. For full information on Institute policies and procedures, see the following website: http://wiki.ucl.ac.uk/display/archadmin

For UCL policies and procedures, see the Academic Regulations and the UCL Academic Manual: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/srs/academic-regulations; http://www.ucl.ac.uk/academic-manual/

GENERAL MATTERS
ATTENDANCE: A minimum attendance of 70% is required. A register will be taken at each class. **If you are unable to attend a class, please notify the lecturer by email.**

DYSLEXIA: If you have dyslexia or any other disability, please discuss with your lecturers whether there is any way in which they can help you. Students with dyslexia should indicate it on each coursework cover sheet.

COURSEWORK

**LATE SUBMISSION:** Late submission will be penalized in accordance with current UCL regulations, unless formal permission for late submission has been granted.

The UCL penalties are as follows:

The marks for coursework received up to two working days after the published date and time will incur a 10 percentage point deduction in marks (but no lower than the pass mark).

The marks for coursework received more than two working days and up to five working days after the published date and time will receive no more than the pass mark (40% for UG modules, 50% for PGT modules).

Work submitted more than five working days after the published date and time, but before the second week of the third term will receive a mark of zero but will be considered complete.

**GRANTING OF EXTENSIONS:** Please note that there are strict UCL-wide regulations with regard to the granting of extensions for coursework. You are reminded that Course Coordinators are not permitted to grant extensions. All requests for extensions must be submitted on the appropriate UCL form, together with supporting documentation, via Judy Medrington’s office and will then be referred on for consideration.

Please be aware that the grounds that are acceptable are limited. Those with long-term difficulties should contact UCL Student Disability Services to make special arrangements. Please see the IoA website for further information. Additional information is given here: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/srs/academic-manual/c4/extenuating-circumstances/

**RETURN OF COURSEWORK AND RESUBMISSION:** You should receive your marked coursework within one month of the submission deadline. If you do not receive your work within this period, or a written explanation, notify the Academic Administrator. When your marked essay is returned to you, return it to the Course Co-ordinator within two weeks. You must retain a copy of all coursework submitted.

**CITING OF SOURCES and AVOIDING PLAGIARISM:** Coursework must be expressed in your own words, citing the exact source (author, date and page number; website address if applicable) of any ideas, information, diagrams, etc., that are taken from the work of others. This applies to all media (books, articles, websites, images, figures, etc.). Any direct quotations from the work of others must be indicated as such by
being placed between quotation marks. Plagiarism is a very serious irregularity, which can carry heavy penalties. It is your responsibility to abide by requirements for presentation, referencing and avoidance of plagiarism. Make sure you understand definitions of plagiarism and the procedures and penalties as detailed in UCL regulations: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/current-students/guidelines/plagiarism

RESOURCES

MOODLE: Please ensure you are signed up to the course on Moodle. For help with Moodle, please contact Judy Medrington’s office (email j.medrington@ucl.ac.uk).

INSTITUTE OF ARCHAELOGY COURSEWORK PROCEDURES

General policies and procedures concerning courses and coursework, including submission procedures, assessment criteria, and general resources, are available on the IoA website. It is essential that you read and comply with these. Note that some of the policies and procedures will be different depending on your status (e.g. undergraduate, postgraduate taught, affiliate, graduate diploma, intercollegiate, interdepartmental). If in doubt, please consult your course co-ordinator.

GRANTING OF EXTENSIONS

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